

BOOK REVIEWS

Reference Works for Theological Research: Supplement of Additions and Changes. By Robert J. Kepple and John R. Muether. Philadelphia: Westminster Theological Seminary, 1986, 48 pp., \$5.00 paper.

When the second edition of Kepple's *Reference Works for Theological Research* appeared in 1981 it was generally recognized as the best one-volume bibliographical guide of its kind, superseding an otherwise excellent work by J. Bollier, *The Literature of Theology*, which had been published but two years earlier. Kepple's volume does have some clear and deliberate limitations. For example, many of the most basic tools for Biblical studies such as commentaries and lexicons are not listed directly. Instead Kepple's book often focuses on a secondary or even tertiary level, listing more specialized bibliographies and bibliographical guides for specific subject areas. As a result, some kinds of reference works are simply omitted, including standard editions, collected works and critical texts. In addition, because Kepple sees no need to duplicate the splendid achievement of John McCabe's *A Critical Guide to Catholic Reference Books* (2d ed., 1980), he favors Protestant tools when such a distinction is appropriate. Not surprisingly there is also some bias toward English-language works. Despite these restrictions in scope and coverage, Kepple's book is a far better bargain than the poorly organized, error-ridden, and often misleading attempt at more exhaustive bibliographical coverage by G. E. and L. Gorman, *Theological and Religious Reference Materials* (4 vols., 1984-).

One obvious problem with any bibliographical guide is that it needs to be kept sufficiently up-to-date to make it interesting, useful and reliable. Kepple has attempted to overcome this deficiency by means of periodic supplements between fully new editions. Hence the brief work under review is the third such supplement. Beginning with this supplement, Kepple's efforts are aided by those of Muether. Fortunately they have chosen to make their supplement cumulative and have added a good index, though the index is limited to the supplement. This supplement takes on particular significance since a wholly new edition of the original has been delayed by its very success.

Reviews of reference works inevitably entail suggestions for future editions. Kepple is widely respected as an authority on the use of microforms and on computer applications to librarianship. He could further aid readers by adding a brief discussion of how emerging technologies are transforming the research process, with special attention to wholly new types of and approaches to reference tools. As a bare minimum, annotated lists of on-line indices and databases should be drawn up for inclusion. Or if they were dispersed throughout the book rather than segregated, there might at least be a special index by means of which one could trace them.

Though there are currently chapters on general religious and theological encyclopedias and on missions and the third-world Church, separate coverage of non-Christian religions is almost nonexistent. Persons engaged in theology can no longer afford such a disregard for other faiths, and some basic reference works need to be listed for each of the major religions. For example, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (both editions) and Weeke's *Muslim Peoples* (1984) would be among the essential titles for Islam.

Of course the list of specific titles that one might recommend is very long indeed, and only a few can be noted here. In the age of the electronic Church it is difficult to comprehend how the authors could have chosen to omit the *Annual Directory of Religious Broadcasting* (1978-). Wycliffe Bible Translators publishes a magnificent catalog of the

world's living languages (over 5,000), primarily to aid in a systematic assessment of the need for Biblical translations, but *Ethnologue* (10th ed., 1985) has other uses as well and comes with a separate index volume. It must surely rank among the very best of reference works, though it remains too little known among reference librarians and bibliographers. The World Council of Christian Churches has produced a *Directory of Christian Councils*, which should help people sort out the confusing tangle of ecumenical meetings. The entry for the "Area Handbook" and "Country Study" monographic reference series (DC 92) would be enhanced by mention within the annotation of the complimentary serials, *Background Notes* and "American Universities Field Staff Reports."

But such comments should not detract from one's genuine appreciation for what has been achieved. As J. L. Harner underscores in his recent brief monograph, *On Compiling an Annotated Bibliography*, "intelligent, accurate, thorough, efficiently organized" bibliographical guides require careful thought and hard work. Kepple and Muether are to be congratulated for their considerable success.

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Lifeviews: Understanding the Ideas that Shape Society Today. By R. C. Sproul. Old Tappan: Revell, 1986, 220 pp., \$13.95.

According to the author's preface, *Lifeviews* is intended as a "layman's guide to understanding complex strands of ideas that shape our culture." Its goal is to make the difficult ideas of philosophy simpler in order to equip laymen as more effective missionaries to their own culture. As such, Sproul's book tries to plow in ground broken by Francis Schaeffer in books such as *The God Who Is There* and *Escape from Reason*. Though he dissents from Schaeffer's interpretation of Aquinas in the only passage where Schaeffer is extensively treated, it seems clear that in many respects Sproul is standing on Schaeffer's shoulders and, in some ways, may be an answer to Schaeffer's frequent prayer that others would come along to improve on his own work.

The book has two major sections. In part 1 Sproul analyzes the current scene and concludes that secularism—a kind of willful ignorance of the eternal and transcendent dimension of life—is the dominating worldview of our day. He divides the secular outlook into six cultural manifestations: pessimistic existentialism, sentimental humanism, pragmatism, positivism, relativistic pluralism, and hedonism. He shows how their seeming diversity finds its unity in their common denial of the eternal. Part 2 applies the Christian worldview to the areas of economics, science, art, literature and government.

Like Schaeffer, Sproul is trying to popularize ideas that are normally only consciously thought about by professional philosophers. He sees that such a task is made necessary because our thinking is conditioned by these ideas as they become embodied as assumptions in our society. Unlike Schaeffer, he does not try to introduce original thoughts and new interpretations that cannot adequately be defended in a popular presentation. It must be stated that Sproul is only able to avoid such problems because Schaeffer's work—which was truly radical when it first appeared in the sixties—had come before. *Lifeviews* is not a seminal book because it does not have to be. But it is a useful book. In this reviewer's judgment it would be just about perfect as a textbook for an introductory philosophy course on the high-school level. Its format of thirteen brief chapters with discussion questions at the end of each would make it amenable to use as adult Sunday-school material for one quarter.

One minor irritant is the style. All the sentences are short. Most are of about the same length. Most have the same basic structure. There is no variation. They sound

like the ones in this paragraph. Sustained exposure to them will drive you crazy. Schaefer's style was unnecessarily difficult. Sproul errs in the opposite direction. C. S. Lewis showed us it was possible to be an effective popularizer able to make difficult ideas simple without making them simplistic, and yet to do it in elegant and sprightly prose that was a joy to read in itself. We still await another of his stature.

Most members of ETS would probably not learn anything new about philosophy from reading *Lifeviews*. But they might learn something of how to talk about the philosophical ideas they do know with people who are not members of such a learned society. And Christian school teachers and Sunday-school teachers should take note of it as a useful tool for their ministries.

Donald T. Williams

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Heaven and Hell: A Biblical and Theological Overview. By Peter Toon. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986, xv + 223 pp., \$8.95 paper.

This is a book that sets out to perform a needed task. It does it in a clear and informed way. The author states that the book is a sequel to his work *The Ascension of our Lord* (Thomas Nelson, 1984). The stated purpose is to be a basic introductory text "for students in colleges and seminaries and as a theological handbook for pastors, preachers, and teachers" (p. vii).

Toon's training is in historical theology, and he does not write as a Biblical scholar. Nevertheless the book has numerous discussions of Biblical passages, and his notes reveal his interaction with the standard commentaries and theological wordbooks.

The form of the book is to give a survey of the Biblical evidence (chaps. 1-5) followed by a survey of an historical and theological overview (chaps. 6-9).

Toon's conclusions are not novel. He works within the framework of a general judgment, followed by heaven and hell. He expounds with emphasis Jesus' teaching on judgment and hell. In common with much of Church teaching he puts his emphasis on the future heavenly kingdom. Heaven is both a place and a state.

In his discussion on hell he reviews the controversies in the Church, both ancient and modern, on hell as eternal/everlasting punishment and hell as annihilation. The twentieth-century views of B. F. C. Atkinson and J. Wenham on conditional immortality or annihilation are examined. Toon is not dogmatic, but he favors the traditional Church position.

He devotes a chapter to universalism and surveys the fathers from Origen and Gregory of Nyssa to Schleiermacher and Barth.

Other good features of his work are a discussion of purgatory with an examination of the traditional support and a consideration of the intermediate state and soul sleep.

The book contains a bibliography but unfortunately no indices. It has two appendices: (1) "Encounter with Satan," in which he argues for the reality of rebellious angels; and (2) "He descended into Hell," the Apostles' Creed statement concerning Jesus. Toon believes that Jesus, after his bodily death on the cross, "in His naked human spirit passed through into that transcendent, supernatural realm of departed spirits" (p. 219).

From the reviewer's point of view, as a premillennialist I would like to have seen more stress on the redeemed and renewed earth where righteousness dwells. Toon mentions the problem of integrating the believer's death and the *parousia* with the belief in God's future judgment. He mentions that the early Church believed that the result of the future assize "was effectively brought forward to the moment of death." I am not sure that Toon has stressed enough the importance of the fact that the justified one shall

not come into judgment and that perhaps the traditional Church doctrine of a general resurrection and general judgment needs some modification.

Edwin A. Blum

The Subversion of Christianity. By Jacques Ellul. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986, 224 pp., \$9.95.

Like Socrates in Plato's *Apology*, or Isaiah's watchman of the night (Isa 21:11-12), Ellul the intellectual gadfly continues to write in order to arouse us from slumber and lethargy. *Subversion* accomplishes that goal in a more explicit way than any of his other forty-odd works and thus illustrates the programmatic at work in all his corpus. Here he examines how and why Christianity, which by nature and in every respect should be subversive and revolutionary, has been perverted into its "exact opposite." The problem is not simply deviation or contamination but a wholesale mutation, so that "Christianity has become a constant force of antisubversion" (chap. 1, "The Contradiction").

Ellul locates the "Chief Forms" (chap. 2) of this "flagrant contradiction" in a complex of three interrelated political, ideological, sociological and theological factors. First, "everything goes back to a phenomenal change in the understanding of revelation, namely, the transition from history to philosophy. I believe all the errors in Christian thought go back to this" (p. 23). Instead of listening to Scripture as God's Word by which he questions and judges us (cf. Barth), we turn the Bible into an answer book that ostensibly supports our pet philosophical systems and moral codes. Second, its very success deformed Christianity, starting with Constantine's conversion. The Church, quite involuntarily, became a wealthy and prestigious powerbroker, making the original gospel of nonpower a practical impossibility. Thus the tragic irony that Kierkegaard noted: Christianity has been abolished by its very success, victimized by its entrenched and "crushing triumphalism" (p. 39). Third, Ellul suggests that "the revealed deposit contained within itself a number of germs that could give birth to perversion. . . . Very quickly the church found intolerable and inapplicable features in what Jesus demanded and proclaimed" (p. 41). Instead of rejecting the gospel, which at least would have been honest (cf. Kierkegaard), the Church reconstructed and softened it.

Beyond this "what" of the first two chapters, Ellul proceeds to the "how" in chaps. 3-7, where he notes five connections. Three of these chapters offer little that is new to those who have read Ellul: desacralization and sacralization in chap. 3, moralism in chap. 4 (but see his insights on antifeminism, pp. 73-84, 90-94—a prime example, he says, of moralism), and political perversion in chap. 6. In response to four great waves of immorality in history, the Church responded by turning the gospel into a law. In politics the Church has neglected the parts of Scripture that are antipolitical "in the sense that it refuses to confer any value on political power, or in the sense that it regards political power as idolatrous" (p. 113). While Scripture requires political expression by believers, Christians must never forget two caveats: We must (1) proffer truly unique alternatives while avoiding conformity to existing sociological trends and (2) make political choices for "purely human reasons"—that is, without baptizing those choices with theological justifications ("Democrats side with the poor," "Republicans promote godly morality").

More original and perhaps most tenuous in his reasoning are the two chapters on Islam (chap. 5) and nihilism (chap. 7). Islam contributed to Christianity's subversion by providing a model that Christians too readily imitated. Ellul traces this Islamic influence through its belief in fate, holy wars, its derogatory attitude toward women, slavery and colonizing. Nihilism, in the sense of an "attitude toward life" and not in a philosophical sense, resulted when society failed to provide people with any meaning or values. Chris-

tianity is "at the root of all the historical evil of modern nihilism" (p. 140).

Chapters 8—9 move from the "what" and the "how" to the "why." This after all is "The Heart of the Problem" (chap. 8). Taken in its unadulterated form the Christian gospel is really a "scandal" that if we were honest we would admit we find offensive and even revolting. Instead of admitting this "social intolerability of revelation" (p. 158) we struggle to make the gospel acceptable. In that process we transform it into its exact opposite. Ellul focuses on five "great evangelical verities" that we water down to bland acceptability: grace, the fatherhood of God, the path of nonpower and weakness, freedom, and the beatitudes (why not a literal reading of these, for example?).

In addition to all our sinful, human efforts that pervert Christianity, Ellul also points to the "Dominions and Powers" (chap. 9), which, he writes, are different from us and belong to a different sphere but only exist in and by relation to us. They are, we might say, privative and/or parasitic. Eager to avoid any Manicheism, Ellul suggests that these "powers" exist "relative to some expressions of human activity" (p. 175). He finds six evil "powers" in the Bible, each of which is characterized by its function: Mammon (money), the prince of this world (power), the prince of lies (deception), Satan (accusation), the devil (division) and death (destruction). These powers "have achieved an explosive victory, using the very truth of Christ to advance their own grandeur" (p. 190).

Ellul moves full circle in chap. 10 ("Eppur Si Muove!"). Despite its tragic subversion by man and by evil powers the true Church "still moved ahead." We paint a false picture if we only point to its hypocrisy and repression. Such a portrait promotes falsehood "emanating from the prince of lies and meant only for propaganda" (p. 192). Without defensively denying just criticisms we need to be aware that one could write "another whole history of the church that would move from 'lighthouse' to 'lighthouse' (Baudelaire)" (p. 201). Indeed the Church has always witnessed resurgences and incarnations of the truth that redress the subversion, seen in theologians and mystics (Francis of Assisi, Pope Celestine V, John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila, Luther, Múnzer, Las Casas, Kierkegaard, Kagawa, Barth, "and a hundred others"), in popular movements (anabaptism, the awakenings, Lech Walesa's "Solidarity" movement), and especially in the countless lives of God's hidden saints whom no one will ever know.

Subversion exhibits several of Ellul's strengths. First, he reads Scripture with a rare combination of simplicity and creativity. In his treatment of the many "hard sayings" of Jesus, for example, he avoids the common temptation of watering them down. Indeed for someone who has made freedom the hallmark of his proposed ethic Ellul reminds us that "practice is the touchstone of truth. It is by practice that we have to appreciate or not the intentions or purity of doctrine" (p. 4). It is just this failure of simple, literal praxis, he suggests, that reveals the depth of perverted faith. Second, Ellul's analysis of Christian political involvement corrects abuses of enthusiasm on the right and on the left. That Ellul receives vigorous praise and criticism from both quarters only reveals his refusal to capitulate to facile answers in this area. Third, evangelicals especially can profit from his reminder that without the "theology of the cross" any "theology of glory" is a perversion. In Luther's words, used with such great effect by Kierkegaard, "faith is a perturbing thing," and it brings with it the certainty of suffering, offense and scandal, not worldly security, prestige and success.

Ellul would strengthen *Subversion*, and his entire corpus, if he could address several weak points. I have already mentioned the chapters on Islam and nihilism, which I found both tenuous and hard to understand.

Second, although Ellul knows that the Church cannot avoid being a sociological institution he makes one feel that any and all such manifestations are, *ipso facto*, subversions. Everyone agrees that the Church needs to be "completely mobile, fluid, renascent, bubbling, creative, inventive, adventurous, and imaginative" and that fringe movements on the periphery often make this vital contribution. Like it or not, though, most of us

live our Christian lives within communities of faith that are quite banal, so it is not only discouraging (on the practical level) but disconcerting (on the theological level) to read that the Church "can *never* be organized or institutionalized. . . . Thus even on the humble level of the church, revelation cannot be organized or experienced socially" (p. 157). This criticism becomes even more severe when one sees the visible Church as a Scriptural mandate (Calvin) and not just a practical necessity.

Third, Ellul needs to clarify his ideas on "power" and the "powers." He fails to take note of the dialectical tension in Scripture regarding the use of power. He has typically stressed only the negative pole of this dialectic: that power is unjust, domineering, always and without exception the enemy of God and God's ways. True enough. The question, though, is not whether Christians should use power, for we cannot avoid doing so. After all, the essential core of the gospel has to do with "the power of God for salvation." Jesus is the very "power of God" (1 Cor 1:24), and his kingdom (Mark 9:1; Luke 4:14; 1 Cor 4:20) came with power. Christians today live by that same power (Acts 1:8). A positive and constructive exposition along these lines would provide a more complete reading of Scripture.

Furthermore it is hard to tell when reading Ellul whether the demonic powers/dominions have an ontological existence of their own. At first glance he seems to give a clear "no" to the question, saying that all such language that hints at that view is mere "convenience" (p. 177). The problems of this view include the facts of experience (to which many missionaries can attest) and the testimony of Scripture. Again, in his eagerness to avoid Manichean dualism Ellul fails to take his normal "dialectical" reading of Scripture that holds both sides of an issue in creative tension.

Since retiring from the University of Bordeaux several years ago, Ellul has continued a vigorous writing schedule. *Subversion* points to more good things to come. Those who have enjoyed his past work will here find more food for thought. Those who have dismissed him as a pessimistic naysayer will find more grist for the mill. The loss is all theirs.

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A Karl Barth Reader. Edited by Rolf Joachim Emler and Reiner Marquard. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986, 117 pp., \$6.95.

This slender volume is one more celebration of the centenary of Barth's birth. Drawing upon a variety of his sermons, addresses, letters and the *Dogmatics*, the editors organize some 75 entries into eight thematic chapters. An epilogue and short chronology of Barth's life complete the work. The result is a handy, accessible volume that succeeds admirably in its purpose: to introduce Barth to newcomers and to provide supplementary material not readily available in English to those familiar with him. Summarizing such a work proves difficult, of course, and risks oversimplification of Barth's genius. Still I found it beneficial to my own thinking to do just that.

We begin with hearing God's sovereign word of grace in Jesus Christ. With no attempt at self-vindication of "apologetic nonsense," theology begins cheerfully and comfortably with the normative guide of Scripture, which sets all the ground rules. Our response requires "active attention," for "essentially, to be a Christian is to be governed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, by the liberating knowledge of God's gracious coming to the human race" (p. 30). Because of God's decision in Jesus Christ, "we may be redeemed because we already are redeemed." Graced with that gift, we are freed to trust God alone (not any political or theological program), bear witness to his salvation, serve others, ameliorate suffering and overcome evil.

Barth's ultimate intention of course was to craft a "pilgrim theology that would cut across all existing theological possibilities, right, left, and center—understanding, embracing, and transcending them all" (p. 103). That goal means theology must engage in constant self-renewal and that its function remains penultimate, for, like John the Baptist whom Barth so admired, theology points away from itself to Jesus Christ. In words that echo question 1 of the Heidelberg Catechism, we might summarize Barth's work, put forth so well in this book, in his own words: "True trust in God . . . begins when we realize that if there is salvation, comfort or direction, it is not in me, or above me, or under me, but wholly and utterly in Jesus Christ my Lord, who has done it all for me. He, and he alone, provides it" (p. 53).

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Evangelism on the Cutting Edge. Edited by Robert E. Coleman. Old Tappan: Revell, 1986, 156 pp., \$5.95.

Here is a collection of essays on some major issues involved in helping or hindering the spread of the gospel. They are well worth reading. All of the contributors are related to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and the editor is well known for his extensive and perceptive writings in the field of evangelism.

Some of the issues confronted are universalism, religious pluralism, lowest-common-denominator ecumenism, defective views of Biblical inspiration and authority, contextualization that runs the risk of becoming syncretistic, demonic forces, and self-centeredness. Each chapter includes a brief biographical note, is clearly captioned with subheadings, has informative footnotes, and concludes with questions for further reflection.

W. D. Taylor's essay, "The Cry for Justice and Liberation," shaped by his involvement in Latin America, makes plain "the absolute priority of the eternal saving gospel of Jesus Christ" while not minimizing "the cry for social justice and liberation" so often exploited by Marxists. "Biblical evangelism . . . centers in human lives, seeing them transformed by the saving knowledge of Christ and integrated into authentic local churches. But man must live by both breads: the Word of God . . . and the daily bread for human sustenance" (p. 60).

L. M. Perry discusses "Preaching for Decision." Responsible preparation for evangelistic preaching is characterized by dependence on the Spirit and an awareness of one's audience: apathetic, doubting, hostile, believing. The gospel must be communicated in a style that is lucid and articulate, after the pattern of him who used "language that confronted people where they lived and then awakened a positive response" (p. 119). What about the call for decision, and the danger of manipulating people for statistical results that gratify the preacher's ego but do nothing to advance the gospel? The issuing of an invitation, based upon the presentation of Christ as Savior and Lord, is certainly necessary to decision. But we must be sensitive as to the invitation method most appropriate in a given situation and rely on the Spirit to convict and convert. "Ultimately, the decision is precipitated by the truth of the message. . . . How Christ is lifted up in all the glory of His grace, finally, will be the measure of any evangelistic sermon" (p. 124).

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Unmasking the New Age. By Douglas R. Groothuis. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1986, 175 pp., \$6.95 paper.

The New Age movement is a worldview that is attempting to become the dominant worldview of our culture. It already influences every facet of this society. As a result Christians should become aware of its beliefs and influence. This book presents the distinctives of New Age thinking, the history of the movement, and the ways in which New Age thinking is entering our society, and it provides the Christian with ways of challenging the New Age movement.

New Age thinking seeks to replace society's dominant worldview of humanism with that of eastern monism. Groothuis begins by contrasting the six tenets of monism with the Christian perspective. Next he discusses the hope of personal and social transformation that is expressed in the most popular New Age book, *The Aquarian Conspiracy* by M. Ferguson. Following Ferguson's major themes Groothuis shows the infiltration of New Age thinking into holistic health, psychology, science, politics and spirituality.

The goal of holistic health is treating the whole person—body, mind and spirit. This treatment can be spiritually dangerous when it is performed in a monistic or occultic framework. His summary of Biblical wholeness, however, is relegated to a few isolated passages. Psychology has evolved into transpersonal psychology and the human potential movement. Self-actualization in fact is merely an overinflated view of the self. Science has been largely influenced by metaphysical thinking. Energy is deified, and the universe becomes an "unfolded order of unbroken wholeness." Scientific theories cannot encompass the whole of reality, so there is no firm basis for inferring the ultimate nature of reality from empirical observation.

New Age mysticism ultimately ends in a political agenda. Transformationalist politics claims that it will be able to form the first unified global community. Groothuis presents the evidence for a "global conspiracy" without being alarmist or associating New Age politics with undue apocalyptic imagery.

New Age spirituality, which is a hybrid of eastern religions, neo-pagan and occult ideas, seeks to gain adherents disillusioned with traditional Christian answers. This is evidenced by the resurgence of interest in nature religions, occult practices and mystical encounters. Groothuis critiques New Age spirituality by refuting the doctrine of reincarnation, exposing the error of monistic ethics, and presenting the positive case for the personal God rather than an impersonal deity.

In conclusion, this volume is a significant Christian response to a movement that is threatening to become the dominant worldview. There are difficulties in assessing the size or influence of this network because there is no formal membership *per se*. Groothuis stays away from undue exaggeration of either its size or influence. The chart on p. 167 is a valuable summary of the philosophical distinctives of secular humanism, the New Age and Christianity. New Age thought is clearly presented for those who do not have a philosophical background. While the New Age worldview was clearly presented, the Christian response was somewhat weak in the areas of health, science and politics. Ministering to those involved in the New Age movement is unusually difficult. As a result I think that the section on "Witnessing to the New Age" needs more philosophical critique and methodological consideration. New Age thought has emphasized some issues that Christians have neglected in the past decade. As a result this well-researched book will present us with the challenges of New Age thinking and hopefully encourage us to provide Biblical, culturally relevant alternatives particularly in the sciences, politics and spirituality.

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Imagination: Embracing a Theology of Wonder. By Cheryl Forbes. Portland: Multnomah, 1986, 199 pp., \$12.95.

While this book ought to be required reading for theologians, they are probably too busy to read something that talks so much about imagination and metaphor. These are things we think about in our spare time, and we do not have much of that these days, what with all the pressure to teach, write and do research. But it is this very problem that makes the discussion of the book important. Let me give two reasons why you should consider taking this volume on your next study leave.

First, the book is fun to read. It is filled with sparkling images and stories. It is impossible for Forbes to be boring. After we have put the book down we feel we have made a fast friend. We will forever after see Forbes smelling new books (I thought I was the only one to do that), or out digging in her yard. And who can forget the story of recovering the fishing spot where her grandfather used to take her fishing? Her accounts of the background and work of C. Potok or M. L'Engle or of the way Mary Poppins "invented" P. L. Travers offer fascinating insights into the creative process. It suggested to this theologian at least that he spend less time deciphering other people's thinking and more time rummaging in the attic of his own imagination, or even reflecting on God while trimming the roses.

Second, the book shows that imagination is essential to thinking about God. Anyone who urges theologians to tell stories and subscribe to *Scientific American* and *Field and Stream* should probably be canonized. Formerly an editor at *Christianity Today* and at Zondervan, Forbes is now a writer. She urges all of us to see life as a living metaphor. If this is so, she argues, theology should be the dramatic account of these metaphors. "Our theologians," she writes, "should tell us stories. I'm certain they should read more stories to find out how it's done." Appropriately she reminds us that Jesus taught by means of images and stories. Moreover theology is about life, not only about thinking. We need to learn, she argues, "to recognize [Christ's] metaphors and live through them. That is what theology is all about."

Or at least theology ought to include this. For the careful reader will also quarrel at points with her characterization of theology and theological truth. I am not sure it is helpful to simply argue that imagination is the image of God in us, or to insist that the true test of imagination is how it helps you relate to others. Jesus is certainly a primary model for the way we can do theology, but should we not also listen to Job, to Hannah, to Jonah? Perhaps if we opened the much-needed dialogue with Forbes we could persuade her that theological reflection is not only dissection but also collection. It is a search for a basket suitable (expansive enough) to hold all the good things God has for us.

But there is a deeper problem with telling stories. It is important that we know we have got the story right. For in the end I felt like a bookstore owner struggling to keep up with all the fiction that comes in the door (does Forbes have any clue how big a story theology is?), being told by a customer that I really ought to carry more stories. But perhaps she is right: I need to clear a larger space in my store for the Story, learn to sing it, draw it, even dance it with some of the vitality and joy that this book conveys. Perhaps this way people around will know which of the many stories competing for their attention is the right stuff.

William A. Dyrness

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Thine Is the Kingdom—A Biblical Perspective on the Nature of Government and Politics Today. By Paul Marshall. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986, 160 pp., \$7.95.

Dutch Calvinism has always been impressive in its sophisticated treatment of Chris-

tian worldview issues, articulating better than most a holistic understanding of the kingdom of God. Marshall's latest contribution is a worthy product of this tradition and a most refreshing alternative to the numerous media-driven attempts by Christian politicians to Christianize America from the top—that is, by electing Christians who will enforce a particular brand of moralism by passing Christian legislation. Marshall demonstrates admirably that developing a Christian worldview has more to do with seriously evaluating the Biblical ideas of stewardship and providence than it does religious sloganeering and the proclamation of individual righteousness by virtue of proper association. The author's objective is to help readers develop a framework for thinking Christianly about politics, as opposed to developing "right" or "correct" positions on specific issues.

In exploring the concept of politics in Scripture, Marshall initially traces the progress of the cultural mandate of Gen 1:28 through both OT and NT, demonstrating the progressively responsible role of human beings as shapers of history. The divine pattern is revealed as humans in the image of God are put into the world with a task to accomplish. Though sin corrupts and perverts this task the calling remains, even as the Biblical focus appears increasingly to be directed away from the original plan toward redemption. But the emphasis on redemption is accompanied by a broadening recognition of God as a universal God, in Daniel in the OT and the cosmic redemption of Paul in the NT. Human stewardship of the earth is ultimately perfected at the coming of Christ (end times), which is the final working out of the cultural mandate in the context of a city—that is, a creation of human culture. From this Biblical foundation Marshall demonstrates that God is interested in reconciling all of creation—not only the internal lives of believers, but architecture, food, furniture, art, music, etc.

Marshall is most enlightening in his discussion of justice and his proposal for a providence-intensive hermeneutic that views politics as a ministry, though not in the popularized sense of seeking a Christian America. The author's fundamental evaluation of justice calls attention to the numerous Biblical references to this concept, many of which are often overlooked—for example, in Daniel's dealing with national behavior. Consistent with his understanding of justice as a dynamic-relational concept (it is not legalism), justice is a drive to make things right. Marshall does a good job of relating the Biblical ideas of covenant, law, etc., to their contemporary equivalents, speaking of government's prophetic function and insisting that justice is not always served when government is simply the "bellwether of public opinion." Responsible government recognizes the existence of a just order beyond the popular will and law—for example, the fundamental rules of human conduct used at Nuremberg to prosecute crimes against humanity.

The most potentially fruitful discussion in the book is Marshall's call for a legitimate Christian social analysis. He is quite correct in pointing out that much of the problem lies in the fact that our categories of analysis are not shaped by faith. However, his use of liberation theology to illustrate this weakness is unfortunate, since it is far from clear that Marxist categories are always the predominant force behind liberation theology that Marshall seems to suggest. It can well be argued theologically that though the Spirit-directed faith of the poor has made use of Marxist categories it has used them to the extent that these analytical tools reflect Biblical categories and provide for a more just order than the relevant capitalistic categories. It is a difficult issue and one that could have used more exposition from the author.

In the latter part of the book Marshall applies some of his principles of social analysis to the areas of economics and international relations and, to a lesser extent, other issues such as pornography and abortion. Though a few of his conclusions are troubling in their simplicity—for example, the argument for limited censorship in pornography cases—they do exhibit some preliminary methodological attempts to work out the implications of the theoretical framework developed in the first part of the book.

This is a fine work, and it will be especially useful to those seeking a challenging primer for relating faith to the understanding of social and political issues. Like so many from the Toronto school, Marshall has done his homework, and it shows. His holistic and providential perspective is refreshing as an instructive rebuttal to the reactionary and limited-issue politics of so many on the Christian right. It ought to find its way into the hands of college students and other laypeople serious about developing a conceptual framework for understanding all of life from the perspective of the Christian faith.

David N. Murchie

Rockland Community Church, Golden, CO

Psychology and the Christian Faith. Edited by Stanton L. Jones. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986, 258 pp., \$11.95.

For the past ten years or so, many Christians have been calling for a cease-fire in the warfare between Christianity and psychology. They have done so by advocating an integration of the two. Unfortunately, however, useful guidelines for conducting that integration have rarely been presented. This collection of essays seeks to redress that oversight. It is not a "how-to" book. It is a "sampler of topics in integration." The authors were asked to take a general area of psychology and to demonstrate how Christians might interact with some aspect of that area. In this purpose the book succeeds. It provides the reader the example of eleven scholars, most of whom are psychologists, "doing" integration. As such it might serve as sort of a primer for those beginning the task of integration.

A chief strength of the work is its diversity of approaches to integration. The authors have written eleven chapters on the subject, each with its own unique approach. Sometimes these are in direct opposition to one another (as is the case with the chapters by Evans and MacKay). These differences are not glossed over or patched up by the editor, as might have been the case. Instead an editorial approach is embraced that embodies the spirit of healthy integration itself—i.e., that integration is an individual affair.

It is interesting to note, however, that of eleven chapters on the integration of psychology and the Christian faith four are by nonpsychologists. Certainly the study of human behavior is a multidisciplinary field. Yet considering the intended audience (college students of psychology) of a book of this nature it might have proven more beneficial to limit the discussion at hand to practicing psychologists.

Many students nevertheless will find this introductory reader a good starting point in their own quest for an integration of psychology and the Christian faith.

Robin Wentworth

University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg

Founding Fathers: The Puritans in England and America. By John Adair. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986, 302 pp., \$10.96 paper.

It is a sad fact that many evangelical Christians still view the Puritans as poor friends. Perhaps we fear that being associated with them will damage our reputations. The happy effect of historian Adair's work may well be that these stalwart Protestants of another day will undergo a rehabilitation in evangelical eyes even as they have in the eyes of cultural historians.

The book, written for the nonspecialist, succeeds admirably in demonstrating that

Puritanism in old and New England was inextricably bound up with the Renaissance and Reformation movements and with the advance of liberty—all forces still at work in our modern world. Written with an extraordinary vividness, the book by its deft use of anecdote and quotation provides the reader with glimpses of Erasmus on an English journey by horse, life aboard the Mayflower and in the fledgling colonies, tensions inside the Long Parliament, cavalry skirmishes in the English Civil War, and the joys of Puritan domestic life. So inviting is the sketch on Adair's canvas that the major disappointment of the book is surely the utter absence of footnotes or endnotes identifying the author's sources. This thwarts the reader's urge to know more. An excellent annotated bibliography at volume-end is a poor consolation prize.

Yet for all this Adair is a surer guide to cultural, political and colonial developments in the period treated than he is to matters theological and ecclesiastical.

One notable weakness of the treatment provided is the author's proclivity (common among British historians) to minimize the role of the continental Reformation in shaping British Protestantism. Yet the suggestion that Puritanism can be chiefly accounted for by native English Lollardy with a good dash of Luther added (Adair's approach) gives too short a shrift to the concerted effort, initiated in Cranmer's time, to bring the English Reformation abreast of south German and Swiss developments. Under such an approach the critical epoch of Marian exile became a mere fling with Protestant extremism. Puritan clamorings for religious conformity with developments in Scotland, France and Switzerland receive nary a mention. Contra Adair, G. R. Elton has argued that Puritanism, rather than being native, was a typically English fusion of foreign and native influences. Such an insight is a necessary corrective both to those who argue for an insular Puritanism and for those who chastise the Puritans for modifying continental theology. Such a proper approach gives the necessary wide berth to the influence of continental theologians and their translated works in England and Puritan adaptations.

Again, lack of sufficient attention to the religious controversies of the first decade of the Elizabethan settlement creates the impression that Puritanism sprang forth, fully formed, in the vituperative Marprelate Tracts in the reign's third decade. At stake is the question of whether Puritanism was the sire of separatism and independency. The majority of modern writers on the question seem united (contra Adair) in defining Elizabethan Puritanism as that stalwart Protestantism engendered in and continuing under Anglicanism. Adair's neglect of the rise of Puritan dissent in the 1560s, dissent largely contained within Anglicanism for decades to come, leads to the blurring of distinctions between Puritanism as a continuing Anglican phenomenon and separatism.

Perhaps most open to question is the notion, implied in the work, that Puritanism is the force produced by the irresistible course of Renaissance and Reformation in England. Such a thesis, baldly stated, would amount to "party" history, but this is certainly not what Adair is aiming to provide. However, the perhaps unwitting effect of the work's argument is that we are left at an utter loss to explain the rise of non-Puritan Anglicanism, which came to the fore under Whitgift and successors. Was this development not rooted in Renaissance and Reformation as well? In truth, Puritanism sprouted from a tree stump broad enough to send up numerous shoots.

Kenneth J. Steward

Lacombe, Alberta, Canada

Biblical Limericks: Old Testament Stories Re-Versed. By D. R. Bensen. New York: Ballantine, 1986, 96 pp., \$6.95.

It was inevitable, I suppose. Somewhere, sometime, someone was bound to write a

few OT limericks and get them published. And now it has happened. But Bensen's little volume contains far more than just a few. He has composed seventy (naturally!) in all—and here is his seventieth:

The patriarchs lived centuries, then
 God shortened the lifespan of men;
 And so, to conform
 to the Biblical norm,
 This last verse makes threescore and ten.

Clever? Indeed—but Bensen has lots of surprises in store for his readers in the other sixty-nine limericks.

It should be said at this point that his theology will not always be greeted with acceptance, and several of his poems are irreverent (as other reviewers have noted) if not downright blasphemous. The majority, however, demonstrate not only a literary flair but also a penchant for the unexpected. A few examples:

Blind Isaac on Esau did dote,
 But Rebekah gave Jacob her vote;
 By careful finessing,
 The patriarch's blessing
 She got him (and, too, Esau's goat). Gen 27:5–41

Sarah felt sore as a boil
 That the son of a slave doomed to toil
 Should share Isaac's lands—
 "Let him live in the sands!"
 (Underneath which lay oceans of oil.) Gen 21:8–21

"My end's near, but do not repine,
 Elisha, for all will be fine."
 At his time to expire,
 They saw Chariots of Fire,
 Without even standing in line. 2 Kgs 2:8–11

My favorite? I have two, and since I have not been able to decide between them, here are both:

Jacob worked out his full stint
 To win Rachel, with never a hint
 That aught was awry—
 Then Laban so sly
 Said, "Now, *bubbie*, read the small print." Gen 29:20–26

Hebrew freedom did Pharaoh inhibit,
 And mercy declined to exhibit,
 Till throughout his nation
 A chorus batrachian
 Repeated, *ad nauseam*, "Ribit." Exod 8:1–6

Introduced by Isaac Asimov and illustrated with woodcuts by Albrecht Dürer, Bensen's limericks blend the old with the new in a way that is often nothing sort of delightful. Though I blushed at some and shuddered at others, most of them caused me to chuckle or laugh. In fact, at one point I was actually tempted to submit a few of my own limericks to a publisher—but not to worry: I quickly subdued any such irrational urge.

Ronald Youngblood

Both/And: A Balanced Apologetic. By Ronald B. Mayers. Chicago: Moody, 1984, xi + 251 pp., n.p. paper.

The long-standing, albeit broadly defined, dispute in Christian apologetics between rationalism and empiricism (customarily hailed as "the battle between presuppositionalism and evidentialism") is claimed to be reconcilable, according to Mayers. For him the primary question in Christian apologetics is not that we must choose either presuppositionalism or evidentialism but, rather, that the Christian apologist must employ both presuppositionalism and evidentialism.

The author begins with three chapters that serve as the foundation on which the remaining chapters of the book are built. First, he defines the discipline of apologetics, examining both the Biblical warrant and the Church's philosophical task. In chaps. 2—3 Mayers examines the two philosophical areas in which presuppositionalists and evidentialists often lock horns: ontology and epistemology.

In the next four chapters he attempts to show that Biblical theology (chap. 4), the great apologists from Augustine to Kierkegaard (chap. 5), the NT saints (chap. 6) and the Church fathers (chap. 7) have not been entirely presuppositional or evidential (although some have emphasized one method more than the other, with the possible exception of Kierkegaard who saw "evidentialism" as being ultimately faith-destroying). In chap. 8 Mayers concludes with a brief summary of his both/and apologetic.

What makes this book so interesting is Mayers' desire to ground his apologetic solidly upon the Bible and Church history. We all have come across the apologist who is so infatuated by a particular philosopher (whether it be Anselm, Aquinas, Kierkegaard or Wittgenstein) that he sometimes ignores clear Biblical examples that seem to disagree with his favorite thinker. Although I am not altogether sure that Mayers is correct in every area, I believe that this is an important and unique contribution to a long-standing debate.

Francis J. Beckwith

University of Nevada at Las Vegas

Between Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America. By Mark A. Noll. San Francisco: Harper, 1986, 255 pp., \$19.95.

Under sponsorship of the Society of Biblical Literature, this book seeks to show how Christian scholars in America have tried to operate in the two "worlds" in which they live. One is the world of pious church association, families, and other associations of faith and fellowship. The other is the world of critical scholarship as it has been carried on in university centers. The survey is restricted mainly to the period after 1880.

Noll's previous writings have centered in large part (*The Princeton Theology: 1812–1921*, for example) on what went on in prestigious and important schools. He seems to assume that only there does the kind of critical (i.e., objective and scholarly) study and writing take place that is the interest of this book.

The summary of the book on the jacket is accurate. To summarize the summary: Evangelicals competed with nonevangelicals from within the academic world in the universities until about 1900. From 1900 to 1935 they retreated to the fortress of fundamentalism, speaking to themselves and concentrating on preserving the integrity of the Christian message, including the inspiration of Scripture and its authority. From 1935 to the present there has been a gradual reengagement with the world of criticism from within that world and a now-sizable participation of evangelical scholarship in the critical enterprise. This means to Noll that evangelicals teaching (or otherwise operating)

at the great universities are producing significant critical literature. The author names the writers whom he esteems as being critically competent and the places from where they operate. "The world's broad field of [academic] battle, in the bivouac of [scholarly] life" in Noll's survey does not extend much beyond the prestigious university environs.

This book has not been written for the comfort of those who have been trained (and who train others) in church-sponsored colleges and seminaries where a first order of business is to "commit" a deposit of truth "delivered" (2 Tim 2:2; Jude 3) to a rising generation of "faithful men." The author is aware that what these schools have done and do has some importance, and yet there is little interest in such places or admiration for them in this book, aimed as it is at members of the Society of Biblical Literature.

The author has shielded himself from severe criticism from the evangelical quarter by early and repeatedly acknowledging that he has narrowed his field of inquiry. So do not feel neglected if your highly esteemed school or favorite author has seemed to be neglected by omission. Noll had a difficult writing assignment.

Robert Duncan Culver

Houston, MN

Jesus: Lord and Savior. By F. F. Bruce. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1986, 228 pp., \$7.95 paper. *An Evangelical Christology: Ecumenic and Historic.* By Bernard Ramm. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985, 229 pp., \$14.95.

Two recent Christologies signal the maintenance of contemporary and scholarly affirmations of Chalcedonian orthodoxy. Bruce makes his second contribution to The Jesus Library series under the general editorship of M. Green. While the other books of that series address particular topics, here Bruce offers a general treatise that responds to the gospel question: "Who do you say that I am?" Like Ramm, Bruce answers the question with specific reference to the dictum that "it is not the historical Jesus, but Jesus Christ the Preached One, who is the Lord" (Bultmann). Bruce demonstrates how the common disjunction made between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith proves not only untenable but perilous. Though we know him today only by faith, it is "by faith He is known to be a person as real as the Jesus of history was known to be by sense. More than that: by faith He is known to be identical with the Jesus who was seen, heard, and touched on earth" (p. 147). To separate the Preached One from the historical Jesus makes him "the product of our faith instead of the ground of our faith, if not indeed . . . a figment of the pious imagination" (pp. 19, 21). In twenty short chapters Bruce examines both aspects of Jesus' identity, and for that reason the book reads like a theological life of Christ. After several introductory chapters he reviews the earthly life and ministry of Christ in a roughly chronological progression (birth, Galilean and Judean ministries, last supper, etc.), while concluding chapters explore several important titles: Son of God, incarnate Word, Savior, prophet, priest, king, judge and Lord.

Ramm's approach is more theological, creedal and historical than Biblical. He styles the book as a "tract for the times" that meets head-on the Bultmannian school. Meticulously organized (he numbers his paragraphs), his eleven chapters account for the major foci of Christology: its importance and methodology, critical issues, deity, humanity and kenoticism, virgin birth, sinlessness, titles, and modern contributions. I especially appreciated his affirmation that "by necessity" orthodox Christology scandalizes all human pretensions. "It is an offense to our sense of natural order . . . scientific history . . . intellectual competence . . . and moral worth" (p. 22), a point we do not shy away from but expect and affirm. There is, then, a fine line between defending and explaining what Paul calls a great mystery (1 Tim 3:15-16): "The incarnation can be understood up to a

point or else it would be nonsense to affirm it. But . . . there is that aspect of it not available to human understanding. It cannot be totally clarified. It has a mysterious dimension human rationality can never relieve" (p. 35). Other strengths include the fine bibliography (pp. 209–229) and the concluding chap. 11, which reviews and summarizes the work.

In the last several years Protestant theologians have produced a spate of fine tomes on the person and work of Christ (Wells, Stott, Webster, McGrath, Morris, McDonald, Torrance). These two add to those fine resources and deserve wide use among pastors, students and teachers.

Daniel B. Clendenin

William Tyndale College, Farmington Hills, MI

What Are They Saying about Paul? By Joseph Plevnik. New York: Paulist, 1986, 114 pp. paper.

Plevnik's survey of recent study of selected aspects of Paul's thought is the latest of such surveys being published by Paulist Press. Given the extreme brevity of the work, it is obvious that some difficult choices have to be made about what will be included. Plevnik has chosen to treat the Damascus road experience, the resurrection of Christ and its meaning, justification by faith, the cross and hope. Each topic is briefly introduced by reference to "authentic" Pauline letters (the *Hauptbriefe*, 1 Thessalonians, Philippians, Philemon), after which current scholarship is surveyed.

Plevnik notes the significance attributed by Paul to his encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus and dismisses attempts to downplay this significance. This encounter was historical and was basic for Paul's understanding of several key matters in his theology. Plevnik's interest in the resurrection is revealed by the two chapters he devotes to it. In the first he argues, against Bultmann, Barth, Pesch and Marxsen, that Paul narrated the resurrection appearances of Jesus in order to confirm the historicity of that event. In the second Plevnik assesses the theological significance of Christ's resurrection for Paul, stressing particularly its salvific import in terms of its guaranteeing the eventual deliverance and transformation of all who belong to Christ. He criticizes several scholars (Barth, Bultmann, Moltmann, Lohfink) for rejecting or reinterpreting Paul's futuristic eschatology.

Justification by faith, as Plevnik notes in the next chapter, no longer divides Protestants and Roman Catholics in the way that the doctrine once did. Contemporary Protestant scholarship has both defined justification in new terms (Käsemann, etc.) and removed it from the center of Paul's thought (Stendahl, Sanders). Roman Catholics, on the other hand, are now more prepared to admit the judicial significance of the language (Fitzmyer, Kertlege). Plevnik himself welcomes this movement, concluding that justification cannot be considered the "center" of Paul's thought and viewing Kertlege's modification of Käsemann's approach particularly favorably. The chapter on the cross focuses not on the atonement, as one might expect, but on the believer's union with Christ and its significance. In the final chapter Plevnik devotes most of his space to a brief exposition of Paul's teaching, touching on recent scholarship only to side with Beker against Bultmann in stressing the reality of future transformation.

Plevnik's generally conservative stance will be applauded by most evangelicals. He rightly criticizes many of the more radical approaches to the topics he covers for importing an alien philosophy into Paul's teaching. More troublesome is the question about the purpose and scope of the book. Granted, Plevnik was apparently writing under severe—perhaps even unrealistic—space limitations. Even so, both the choice of topics and the

scholars cited can be criticized for not providing the reader with a fair understanding of what indeed is being said about Paul. Topics that have received the most attention in recent years—Paul and Judaism, and his teaching on the law—are given only a paragraph or two. And while no one would want to diminish the significance of the resurrection of Christ for Paul or the faith, it has not been a major focus of Pauline studies recently. Moreover there are some curious omissions in the topics that are treated. The most significant monograph on Paul's Damascus road experience in many a year, by S. Kim, is not even mentioned. The monographs by Hübner, Räisänen and Sanders on the law are likewise not included. (Some of these may have appeared too late for inclusion, although the bibliography does include a 1983 work, the same year in which Räisänen's and Sanders' books were published.) These weaknesses mean that the book can be recommended only for those seeking some discussion of selected topics in Paul's teaching. It does not fulfill the promise of its title.

Douglas Moo

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

Romans. An Exposition of Chapter 1: The Gospel of God. By D. M. Lloyd-Jones. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985, xii + 394 pp.

Lloyd-Jones' exposition of Romans 1 arrived on my desk just as I was about to begin writing my own exegesis of the chapter for a commentary. I found his exposition here to be much of a piece with his studies of Rom 3:25—8:39, released some years ago. There is little exegetically that is novel, and little or nothing that advances the scholarly study of Romans 1. But the exegesis is careful, informed and reliable. And there is much wise, sensible and sobering application. And of course it is this latter that was Lloyd-Jones' concern. This volume, like his others, reproduces (with minor revisions) sermons preached at Westminster Chapel. Unlike the others, however, Lloyd-Jones himself did not live to edit the sermons for publication. This has been done by Bethan Lloyd-Jones (a son?).

The exegesis of Romans 1 follows the Reformed/Puritan tradition in which Lloyd-Jones himself stood. Rom 1:3–4 is applied to the two natures of Christ, the resurrection being a "declaration" of the eternal divinity of the Son. Paul's proclamation of the "obedience of faith" (v 5) is understood as a call for obedience to the gospel message, an obedience that consists in faith. Verse 16 states the theme of the epistle, v 17 is its exposition. "Righteousness of God" means the righteousness that God gives as a gift and that is acceptable to him. Lloyd-Jones places great stress on the wrath of God, viewing v 18 as a summary applicable to both Gentiles and Jews.

All this is nothing very new, but what makes the volume valuable are two things. First is the extended application of the theology of these verses to contemporary Church and society. Lloyd-Jones' tendency to squeeze the utmost out of a verse along these lines is well known. And while one might quibble here and there about whether the application is as firmly rooted in the text as one might wish, Lloyd-Jones' excursions on these matters almost always hit on a matter of real concern and provide solid Biblical/theological guidance. His moving description of what it means to minister "in the spirit" (cf. v 9), for instance, is worth the price of the book. And this leads to the second great value of Lloyd-Jones' work. His deeply spiritual approach to the text and reverence toward the meaning he found in it shine through on every page and act as a challenge to any of us who would turn exegesis into no more than an academic exercise. Let Lloyd-Jones himself speak to this: "Let us, therefore, always approach the Word of God with reverence and with humility. Let us never come to read it without praying to be enlightened by the

Holy Spirit. Let us come to learn, not to have our own prejudices confirmed, or to turn something down. Let us come with open minds. Let us receive the words. . . . And above all, let us ever, as we think of Him and talk about Him, remember who He is and what He is" (p. 387).

Douglas Moo

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL

The Parthenon and Its Sculptures. By John Boardman. Austin: University of Texas, 1985, 256 pp., \$35.00.

1987 is the tercentenary of the siege of the Acropolis in Athens by a Venetian army, who succeeded in piercing one of the walls of the Parthenon with a mortar shell. Packed with gunpowder and grenades, that most classic of all temples—which has long and justly been acclaimed as the most beautiful building in the world—was shattered by a terrible explosion that instantaneously transformed it into the romantic (and subsequently partially reconstructed) ruins that continue to attract universal admiration.

The present Parthenon was erected in the middle of the fifth century B.C. during the benevolent rule of Pericles and under the supervision of Phidias, one of the greatest sculptors of all time. Originally built as a temple of Athena, goddess of wisdom and protectress of the city-state named in her honor, it was later turned into the Greek Orthodox Church of Holy Wisdom (*Hagia Sophia*), still later into a Catholic cathedral dedicated to the Virgin (*Parthenos!*) Mary, and eventually into a Muslim mosque. Although it survived all such vicissitudes for more than 2,100 years, its final fateful function as a Turkish powder magazine led to the 1687 attack that almost destroyed it.

The book under review is concerned mainly with the marvelous sculptures that adorn(ed) the Parthenon's frieze, which circumscribes the building in a continuous panel that stretches for more than five hundred feet. Carved from Pentelic marble quarried from the local hills, the figures on the frieze depict an especially important enactment of the Panathenaic procession and festival, perhaps in commemoration of the heroic defenders who had died at the Battle of Marathon half a century earlier (490 B.C.). The execution of the work had to be absolutely perfect: "What the human eye might miss, the divine might criticize" (pp. 34–35). The result was a series of portrayals of men and animals unparalleled in the annals of artistic achievement, representing the highwater mark of Greek Classical sculpture.

The best of the figures are the so-called Elgin marbles, shipped to England at the beginning of the nineteenth century by Lord Elgin, British ambassador to the Ottoman empire, and purchased by the government in 1816 for the British Museum, where they remain one of its greatest treasures. The marbles "are in virtually as good condition now as they were when they were removed [from Athens], which is more than can be said for what was left behind" (p. 216).

Unfortunately, during the present century more damage has probably been done to the Acropolis buildings in general than in all of their previous history. The feet and hands of three million visitors a year have worn and defaced them, the use of untreated iron clamps has turned out to be more destructive than preservative, and the noxious atmosphere of modern industrial Athens has badly corroded the marble from which they were so exquisitely fashioned.

Fortunately, however, a number of measures—tentative and inadequate though they be—are now being taken to halt the deterioration. A few years ago the Parthenon was declared off limits to visitors who, from a respectable distance, may now look at, admire and photograph it but no longer walk on or in it. Archeologists have recovered additional

fragments of the frieze figures, now displayed in a museum on the site. And governmental officials are exploring means to prevent further pollution damage to the figures still in position on the temple itself.

Last but not least, continued study of the Parthenon sculptures by distinguished experts like John Boardman will enhance our understanding not only of them but also of their creators. His splendid book is but the latest in an outstanding series of volumes about the Parthenon and/or its frieze written during the past thirty years. The photographs by the talented David Finn demonstrate an ability to portray sculpture in ways that are sure to please the most jaded eye. My copy repeated the signature including plates 117–124, but I was delighted to see them twice—only to be disappointed on discovering that the signature including plates 125–133 was missing.

More than 1,900 years ago a famous “tourist,” the apostle Paul, said to a group of Athenians, “I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship” as well as altars and temples (Acts 17:23–24). Despite the fact that he saw them at their best—the finest that “man’s design and skill” (17:29) could produce—he also saw through the spiritual emptiness that they reflected. Although it is surely true that “time and man have dealt more gently with the Parthenon than with many monuments of Classical antiquity” (p. 216), and although our esthetic response may yet be one of admiration and awe as we marvel at the consummate beauty resulting from the common grace of the Holy Spirit at work through the ancient artisans, our spiritual response will nevertheless be the same as that of Paul. In the final analysis, the Parthenon and its sculptures were dedicated to unknown gods.

Ronald Youngblood

Sociolinguistics and Communication. Johannes P. Louw, ed. United Bible Societies Monograph series 1; London/New York/Stuttgart: United Bible Societies, 1986, x + 146 pp., \$5.95.

The divide between Biblical studies and sociolinguistics—long untraversed—is now being bridged. These essays from a conference at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa, contribute solid planks to the growing superstructure.

E. Nida (pp. 1–49) offers a good, concise introduction to sociolinguistics, treating functional linguistic categories, the role of social structures, language variables such as levels and dialects, and modes of communication (preaching, etc.), among others (discussion of “isomorphic analysis” [pp. 28 ff.] is confusing). But more importantly it confirms a welcome shift away from the encumbrance of Chomskian linguistics (not giving it up completely [p. 46], Nida makes pertinent criticisms of its abstract, logical approach that often neglects real language [pp. 4–5]). When treating NT texts, however, Nida leaves himself open to the (certainly inaccurate) criticism that modern linguistics has little practical benefit for Biblical studies. For example, his outline of Matthew needs fleshing out. By contrast a fine Biblical application of sociolinguistics is P. Cotterell’s “The Nicodemus Conversation: A Fresh Appraisal” (*ExpTim* 96 [1985] 237–242; cf. “Sociolinguistics and Biblical Interpretation,” *VE* 16 [1986] 61–76).

The second essay, by V. N. Webb (pp. 50–82), augments Nida’s article, including a different analysis of varieties (his distinction between standard language, vernacular and register is less appealing). This elliptical article probably requires more background than the average reader brings. His major examples are from Afrikaans, and for those unfamiliar with this language the point is often obscured. Ghost entries in the bibliography are annoying.

B. C. Lategan’s essay (pp. 83–95) shifts the mood of the collection, presenting an

analysis of reception theories as well as placing sociolinguistics within the larger interpretive contexts of speech-act theory, historical criticism, "theologies of interest" (he criticizes materialist readings for their "denial of the possibility of intersubjective communication through texts and a rejection of interpretation as a meaningful activity" [p. 89]) and sociology. For the initiated or inquisitive this essay proves challenging, with Lategan effectively probing many inconsistencies of reception theories. His bibliography is helpful.

B. A. Müller (pp. 96–102) briefly treats homiletics as an aspect of sociolinguistics. His citation of German research that the sermon does not reach the "lower social classes" because its "indirect, reflective and linear" style does not communicate to their "direct, nonreflective, 'analogous'" (p. 98) style raises questions. Perhaps more disconcerting is his discovery that preachers tend "not to answer the question 'What is true?' but rather [emphasize] what is practical" (pp. 100–101).

J. P. Louw concludes, first (pp. 103–115) taking up the vital need for interpreting within a context of "paralinguistic and extralinguistic features" to establish "a comprehensive semiotic framework" (p. 105). Most helpful is his exposition of interpretive levels, differentiating the word, the sentence and the context (p. 112). As Louw says: "Frequently, different persons agree as to the meaning of individual lexical items and grammatical constructions, but they may differ radically as to the interpretation of a biblical passage because of different background information and quite diverse theological orientation" (p. 106; cf. p. 111 with reference to "layers of meaning"). His comments on translation are probably the book's most incisive, stating that "a translation is . . . a representation of a particular understanding of a text. There is clearly no such thing as an absolutely accurate [?] reading, and consequently also no such thing as an absolutely accurate [?] translation" (pp. 105–106; the word "accurate" is unfortunate). Many of his examples could make use of recent secondary literature. In the final chapter (pp. 116–146) Louw recounts several interesting instances of trained linguists reconstructing the contexts of sermons and radio talks. This provides a word of caution to Biblical scholars. If modern linguists can occasionally run far afield in evaluating contemporaneous examples, it behooves those reconstructing the context of documents at least two thousand years old to be extremely careful in promoting their views.

Much sociolinguistic theory and practice is based upon knowledge of speakers, receptors, and specific historical, cultural and social factors. However, there has not been enough reflection on the precarious position of purely epigraphic languages—i.e., languages whose only remains are written, often far removed from original contexts, precise knowledge of the authors and recipients, and native speakers. The Biblical documents fall within this category, as do many other ancient texts. Some therefore rely heavily upon traditional historical-critical study, as does Webb, who calls it "indispensable" for "reconstructing the role of the psychological, social, and situational factors in text construction" (p. 80). But the historical-critical method has lately come under heavy and damaging criticism, with many of its assured results proving implausible. This says nothing of its unspoken (and often untenable) presuppositions regarding language, nature, culture, mindsets and history. In the end the primary datum for analysis must be physical remains, including especially written texts. Does this question the value of sociolinguistics? No. Its contribution is enhanced by guiding more restrained reconstructions on the basis of the epigraphic evidence, allowing the texts to establish the parameters for positing implied audiences and authors, as well as contextual features.

The book has no indexes or composite bibliography and is inconsistent in its internal references and use and means of footnoting.

Stanley E. Porter

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Christian Anarchy: Jesus' Primacy Over the Powers. By Vernard Eller. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986, 267 pp., \$13.95 paper.

Since the election of Ronald Reagan and with it the rise of evangelical political consciousness, the book market has been flooded by various tomes aimed at establishing the proper relationship between the believer and the state. Eller has read/watched with interest over the past few years and has been dismayed with both the left's and right's quest for a modern synthesis. Rather than advocating a realm religion, Eller suggests that the believer be neither an adherent to a realm religion nor the victim of one. Eller proposes that the believer become anarchistic in his/her approach to bearing the cross.

Lest the reader misunderstand Eller, he carefully places stipulations upon his controversial title. Eller traces the word "archy", which he spells "arky," to its Greek root meaning "priority, primordial, principal." Thus, writes Eller, "arky identifies any principle of governance claiming to be of primal value for society" (p. 1). Because the resurrection has shown Christ to be victorious over all earthly powers and archys, Eller admonishes the Christian to deepen his/her union with Christ Jesus and to make no allowances for human allegiances. The Christian is to be an anarchist.

Eller is quick to point out that the Christian left is not free from the charge of being archy builders. Eller makes a case study of the peace movement to illustrate the Christian zealotism of the liberal left. According to him, "current Church literature and teaching often give the impression that we Christians consider it more important for a person to join us in opposing nukes than in worshipping Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior" (p. 89). On the right, Eller would have us substitute the abortion issue or allegiances to the Republican party as merely another means of Christian zealotism.

Eller is keen to articulate that his newly-discovered synthesis is not so new at all. He discovers parallel theology in the writings of Bonhoeffer, Barth and Ellul. As further proof for its validity Eller discovers this theme in the major narratives of the OT. Moreover he stresses that Christians must not prioritize the human archy (Eller calls this zealotism), nor must they prioritize revolution. Jesus was neither a zealot nor a revolutionary. Rather, Jesus, in the pericope of Jesus and the tribute money, advocates the absoluteness of God alone. Accordingly Christians are to find the balance of their lives in God alone as well.

Our choices are to be neither for the establishment nor for revolution, because both are human constructs. For Eller, positions and principles are derived from our fallen nature, our fallibility, not from our union with Christ. Therefore the Christian must privately discern his/her own position according to the merits of each individual case. In this way the Christian will not idealize the kingdom of God but will promote the coming kingdom with grace, justice and true freedom. Faith is not to be confused with a faith position, though our faith may give rise to a position taken in faith.

This trumpeting of our individual faith is unsettling on one level. Eller, a true product of the radical reformation, fails to understand the intimate relationship between the Bridegroom and his bride, the Church. The collective body of believers are those whom Paul calls the "pillar and foundation of truth." Rather than alienating ourselves from the community of faith, we ought to make our goal the cultivating of shared discernment. The community of faith is not an establishment, nor is it revolutionary. A divinely ordained institution (establishment for promotion of a particular work) does not fit Eller's theology and thus weakens his thrust.

Eller's call is radical and forces the reader to examine long-held positions. The author's insightful evaluation of the Christian's position in relation to the world is evident. Compassionate (often parenthetical) in style and scathing in its critique of previous

assessments, Eller's work may not convince. But it will challenge.

John M. Kenney

The Stony Brook School

Basic Theology. By Charles C. Ryrie. Wheaton: Victor, 1986, 544 pp., \$14.95.

Ryrie has written this survey of Christian theology primarily for the lay or nonspecialist reader. Consistent with this purpose the language of the book has been kept simple, explanations are uncomplicated, the text is illumined with illustrations, and minimal use of notes is employed. The volume contains ninety-four chapters divided among fifteen main sections. The chapters, however, are of quite unequal length. The longest, "The Tribulation Period" (chap. 84), covers fourteen pages, whereas many chapters are only three pages long (chaps. 3, 17, 19–21, etc.), others two pages long (chaps. 1, 48, 72, 77), and one chapter but a single page long (chap. 18). The book contains brief indices of Scripture texts and subjects. Hebrew and Greek words are given only infrequently and in transliterated form.

The opening section, entitled "Prolegomena," briefly defines terms, describes various kinds of theologies, and discusses the issue of ultimate authority. Ryrie suggests that it is important for each Christian to "read theology" and to "study theology" (p. 9), but with other treatments of the discipline the reader is not shown how to do theology for himself or herself. (The reader might wish to consult volume one of G. Lewis and B. Demarest, *Integrative Theology*, Zondervan, 1987, where a specific method for doing theology is set forth in detail.) In this opening section Ryrie repels liberal and Barthian objections to proof-texting and suggests that such objections are rooted in a bias against conservative theological conclusions. While there is much to be said for such a claim, it may also be that some scholars legitimately protest the common practice of appending Scripture references to unsubstantiated theological assertions without careful exegetical treatment.

In chap. 6, "The Perfections of God," Ryrie dismisses the traditional twofold categorizations of the attributes of God while discussing the divine perfections in the usual way. His development appeals to older discussions, such as G. Clark's article in *Baker's Dictionary of Theology* (1960), while neglecting G. Lewis' creative sixfold categorization and exposition of the divine perfections in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (pp. 451–459). In the same chapter Ryrie describes the relation between divine sovereignty and human freedom as an "antinomy," unreconcilable by the human mind and accepted by faith. It may be, however, that careful analysis of the nature of human willing vis-à-vis divine sovereignty could produce more of a rational resolution to the problem short of appeal to antinomy.

In chap. 12, "The Inerrancy of the Bible," Ryrie suggests that evangelicals ought to address the Bible's accuracy in positive rather than negative terms. "The inerrancy of the Bible means simply that the Bible tells the truth. Truth can and does include approximations, free quotations, language of appearances, and different accounts of the same event as long as they do not contradict" (p. 82). Consistent with this line of reasoning, Ryrie and evangelicals similarly inclined ought to speak of the Bible's veracity rather than its infallibility or inerrancy. In chap. 30, "The Bible and Origins," Ryrie upholds six literal, twenty-four-hour days of creation, a worldwide (universal) flood, creation with the appearance of antiquity, and a fashioned earth and life forms that are young rather than old. Catastrophism rather than uniformitarianism is commended as the guiding principle of God's creative activity.

Basic Theology contains a very helpful section on "The Holy Spirit" (sec. 11). Con-

cerning spiritual gifts, Ryrie concludes that all charismata remain valid today except the gifts of apostleship and prophecy, and probably also miracles, healings and tongues (chap. 65). Interaction with the "signs and wonders" emphasis of Wagner, Wimber, *et al.*, would have been a helpful addition to this important subject. In the section on ecclesiology (sec. 12) Ryrie observes that modern congregationalism is not totally congregational, because within the system leaders possess authority to make decisions independently of congregational participation. The NT pattern, according to Ryrie, "seems to include a blend of congregational and federal (elder rule) government, limited to the local level" (p. 411). Ryrie adds that "the principal offices in the church are to be filled by men" (p. 413). He leans heavily on the argument that elders and deacons are to be "husbands of one wife."

Ryrie's treatment of eschatology (sec. 13) is more than twice as long as his coverage of the doctrine of God (sec. 2) and discussion of the person and work of Christ (sec. 8). This reviewer judges that evangelical theologians ought to devote more attention to the major themes of God, Jesus Christ, and Christian salvation as they relate to pressing issues of the world here and now, rather than creating elaborate timetables of end-time events from quasi-apocalyptic passages whose symbolic language is not always clear in its details. In his polemic against posttribulationism, Ryrie argues *ad hominem* that pretribulationists are more expert in matters eschatological because it is they, not posttribulationists, who promote conferences on Biblical prophecy and eschatology.

Lay people and Christian workers, particularly those orientated toward dispensational teaching, should find *Basic Theology* a helpful and stimulating survey of basic Christian doctrine. Although the trained student of theology will want a more thorough treatment of the subject, even the mature theologian will find insights embedded in this book helpful to his or her own theological reflection.

Bruce Demarest

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Responsible Faith: Christian Theology in the Light of 20th-Century Questions. By Hans Schwarz. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986, 448 pp., \$23.95.

This well-written, Lutheran systematics text commends itself to the student of theology for a number of reasons. Schwarz writes as a contemporary Lutheran scholar who is in dialogue with other theological traditions. He fairly presents post-Vatican-II Roman Catholic positions on many doctrines. He interacts with the Reformed and eastern traditions as well. His favorite partners in dialogue are Bultmann (with whom he agrees too much for my liking) and Luther (whom he treats accurately for the most part).

Schwarz capably summarizes the historical development of many doctrines. His apt quotations from important figures enhance the value of the book. The overall effect of Schwarz' inclusion of historical theology is to provide a traditional starting point for each doctrine considered. At times, however, I found myself desiring more evaluation of the historical material.

In spite of my appreciation of the aforementioned virtues, I have problems with the book. Schwarz is dependent upon critical Biblical studies. For example, according to Schwarz the Yahwist account of creation in Genesis 2 was written before the Priestly account in Genesis 1. "Evidently, the account in Genesis 2 no longer sufficed to convey the faith in God the creator and so a new attempt was made to proclaim the same old faith. We should note, however, that Genesis 2 was not thrown out. It still conveyed the message for some" (p. 36).

Although Schwarz tries to be fair to the various theological traditions, at times he

slips into pejorative language. What premillennialist would approve of the following description of chiliasm? "The final judgment has often been conceived of as the great awards day, especially by those adhering to the chiliastic hopes of a 1000-year rule over, and at the expense of, others" (p. 397). At other times he bends over backward to find some good in a theological tradition with embarrassing results: "While we cannot concede the truly sacramental character of these additional five sacraments . . . the redemptive or preserving activity of God addressed in them should not be taken lightly" (p. 357).

Schwarz is a strong supporter of the ecumenical movement (p. 333). In particular he thinks that the World Council of Churches has been responsible for "immense progress toward representing the whole people of God" (p. 337). At times he too easily glosses over doctrinal differences between the churches. After discussing Lutheran, Reformed, Roman Catholic and Orthodox understandings of the eucharist he says: "It becomes clear that with different conceptual tools each of these views attempts to assert the actual presence of Christ in the sacrament. The discovery that we all seek to make the same point about Christ's presence in the Eucharist is exciting and significant" (p. 369).

At times it is difficult to know where the writer stands on some of the doctrinal issues he discusses. Are the Jewish people in need of the gospel of Christ, or are they already a part of God's kingdom (pp. 322, 338)? He seems to agree with the affirmation of the Council of Chalcedon that Christ was *vere deus et vere homo* (pp. 232-234). Yet he follows Bultmann in separating the Christ of faith from the Jesus of history: "*Jesus of Nazareth* was a historical figure who walked on this earth. *Jesus the Christ* did not live on our earth nor was he a historical figure—judged by the usual historical criteria" (p. 207; italics his). He acknowledges a final judgment (pp. 396-398) and yet veers close to and hopes for universalism (pp. 256, 336-337, 399-400).

Schwarz includes a helpful bibliography at the end of his work, which he has organized topically according to the chapter headings of the book. Very few theologically conservative books are included.

This book is best suited for advanced college students or seminarians. I do not believe that Schwarz has succeeded in his desire "to speak, in a comprehensible and comprehensive way, without becoming overly burdened with specialized knowledge" (p. 9). The book is filled with theological jargon that would prohibit any but the most dedicated lay person from understanding it.

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Resurrection and Moral Order: An Outline for Evangelical Ethics. By Oliver O'Donovan. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986, 284 pp., n.p.

O'Donovan sets out to move beyond a defense of Christian morality to an exposition of it. That exposition is threefold: (1) the objective reality, the achievement of salvation through the death and resurrection of Christ; (2) the subjective reality, the presence of the Spirit in believers and in the Church; (3) the life of love. Following a standard procedure, the main lines of argument are set in large type and the more nuanced discussions of those arguments are set in smaller type. That there is as much or more detailed treatment in the large-type sections of this volume than there is in comparable volumes taken in their entirety is an indication of the richness of O'Donovan's account.

O'Donovan rejects any dichotomy between creation ethics and kingdom ethics. Christian morality is rooted in Christ's inauguration of the kingdom. But Christ's inauguration of the kingdom, his resurrection from the dead, is also the vindication of the created order. The objective aspect of Christian ethics is Christocentric, and because it is Chris-

to-centric it is also creation-oriented. Redeemed humanity regains its position as God's vicegerent over creation.

In the objective aspect of Christian ethics the emphasis is on God the Son, while in its subjective aspect the emphasis is on God the Spirit. The Holy Spirit conveys to us the immediacy and authority of redemption as well as calling forth our free response to it. The life of love is the response to redemption.

Outlining this threefold treatment of Christian ethics does not begin to capture the depth and subtlety of O'Donovan's discussion. In the abundance of issues explored, my attention focused on four in particular. The first two, the critiques of historicism and "evangelical law," seem to be on the mark. Historicism, the view that all teleology is historical teleology, is found wanting. It does not allow for the distinction between natural structures and their sinful distortions. It locates the fulfillment of history exclusively within the historical process, thus disallowing divine fulfillment from "the outside." "Evangelical law," the view that "the church mediates Christ's moral law to the individual" (p. 165), runs the risk of minimizing Christ's commands and undermining the freedom of the believer.

While O'Donovan's critiques of the historicism and evangelical law seem to be well executed, those concerning divine authority and the unity of the virtues seem to be problematic. According to him, "in the face of divine command our reason declares its own authority suspended" (p. 131). But it is not clear how this suspension of reason can be described in such a way as to allow for the testing of spirits (1 John 4:1). Further, O'Donovan affirms Augustine's account of the unity of the virtues and thinks that the apparent diversity of character in allegedly virtuous moral agents can be explained in terms of different callings. But while two persons with different callings might express the same virtues differently, that does not explain why some persons seem to possess one or more (but not all) of the cardinal virtues.

Historicism, evangelical law, divine authority, and the unity of the virtues are but a portion of the wealth of material in this volume. *Resurrection and Moral Order* would be an ideal text for a graduate seminar in theological ethics.

David Werther

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The Logic of God Incarnate. By Thomas V. Morris. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1986, 220 pp., n.p.

One of the most exciting recent developments in philosophy of religion has been the move on the part of various Christian philosophers to tackle problems normally reserved for the sphere of the systematic theologian. Unlike their predecessors in centuries past, theologians today seem to have little grasp of logic and little skill in careful analysis and argumentation. Hence their treatments of theological issues often are superficial or sloppy. Or, if they are evangelical, they make little advance beyond Biblical theology. Take for example the incarnation. This central dogma of the Christian faith has been attacked by J. Hick and others in the "myth of God incarnate" camp as being logically incoherent. Unfortunately most evangelicals never get beyond H. M. Relton's retort, "the Person of Christ is the bankruptcy of human logic"—a response hardly apt to inspire confidence in one's faith or to commend it to unbelievers.

Enter Morris, one of a number of brilliant, young Christian philosophers who have gathered at the University of Notre Dame. Morris claims that "a few simple metaphysical distinctions and a solid dose of logical care" will suffice to explicate and defend the incarnation against all of the present philosophical attacks (p. 9). His book vividly illus-

trates how the Christian philosopher of religion can be of invaluable assistance in the task of doing systematic theology in general and Christology in particular.

According to Morris, the central claim of the incarnation is an identity statement—viz., that the Second Person of the Trinity is one and the same person as Jesus of Nazareth. This leads him to a helpful discussion of identity statements and the principle of the indiscernibility of identicals. He shows the errors that result from misunderstanding the incarnation as the claim “Jesus is God” rather than “Jesus is God the Son.” After arguing brilliantly against monophysite and representational Christologies, he lays out a defense of Chalcedonian, two-nature Christology.

The chief problem confronting the claim that Christ had both a divine and a human nature is that the essential properties of the natural kind “humanity” seems to be incompatible with the essential properties of the natural kind “divinity.” For example, it seems essential to humanity to be contingent but essential to deity to be necessary. So how could Christ possess both of these mutually exclusive properties? Morris makes the bold move of claiming that while contingency is a common human property it is not an essential human property. Contingency is essential to being merely human but not to being human *per se*. The incarnation entails the claim that Christ was truly human, not merely human, and therefore Jesus’ humanity does not preclude his being necessary as well as omniscient, omnipotent, and so forth.

But in order to be faithful to the Biblical portrait of Jesus as sharing the human condition (as well as nature) Morris introduces further distinctions. He rejects kenotic Christology (1) because he believes divine attributes such as omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence are essential to divinity and hence cannot be surrendered and (2) because kenotic theology cannot affirm any substantive view of divine immutability. Rather, distinguishing between “person” and “mind,” Morris presents a dyothelite Christology according to which the person of the Son had two minds or ranges of consciousness, one containing the other. “The divine minds had full and direct access to the earthly, human experience resulting from the incarnation, but the earthly consciousness did not have such full and direct access to the content of the overarching omniscience proper to the Logos, but only such access, on occasion, as the divine mind allowed it to have. There thus was a metaphysical and personal depth to the man Jesus lacking in the case of every individual who is merely human” (p. 103). Because God is essentially good (argued at length in chap. 5), God the Son could not sin. But Morris argues that the temptations of Christ, nonetheless, were very real. This is true because it is only the epistemic possibility of sinning, rather than the physical possibility, that is conceptually linked to temptation. According to Morris, these two minds of Christ belong to one person because the human mind did not possess a set of personal and cognitive powers distinct from those of the Logos.

Morris has thus given a sophisticated and contemporary defense of the ancient doctrine of *enhypostasia*. What are we to make of it? My major stumbling block is his seemingly insupportable claim that contingency, nonomnipotence, nonomniscience, and so forth are not essential properties of human nature. Could there exist human beings who are necessary, omnipotent, omniscient beings? True, they would not be considered merely human. But if they lacked a divine nature they would be wholly human, a conclusion that seems fantastic. Morris would no doubt say that only a person who also has a divine nature can be a necessary, omnipotent, omniscient human being. But in such a case it is the divine nature that brings these superlative attributes to such a person, not the human nature. So why not say that the human nature itself lacks those attributes and that the person possesses them in virtue of the divine nature? This involves no contradiction, so long as predication is of the person with respect to the nature, as the scholastics saw. Thus Christ was omnipotent with respect to the divine nature (the power of God) but limited in power with respect to the human nature (the strength and abilities of the

human body and mind). Or, again, he was omniscient with respect to the divine nature (the overarching range of consciousness), but limited in knowledge with respect to the human nature (the human range of consciousness). We must remember that the Christian doctrine of the incarnation does not assert that the divine nature became incarnate but that the Second Person of the Trinity became incarnate—that is, he took on a human nature in addition to his divine nature. Hence it is perfectly reasonable to say that human nature is essentially contingent, nonomnipotent, etc., and to affirm that the person of Christ was necessary, omnipotent, etc., with respect to his divine nature while also being contingent, etc., with respect to his human nature. Thus if it be asked, for example, whether Christ was omnipresent during his state of humiliation, the answer is that he was with respect to his divine nature but that he was not with respect to his human nature. To speak in this way is simply to refer either to the properties possessed by the pre-incarnate or extra-incarnate (Zwingli's *extra-carnem*) Logos or to the properties possessed by the human body and finite range of consciousness that the Logos had in his incarnate state of humiliation.

Morris considers this defense of the coherence of the incarnation (pp. 48–55, 146–147) under the rubric of reduplicative predication. But despite his malaise with propositions like “Christ *as God* never came into existence, but Christ *as man* did come into existence,” I do not see that he presents any objection to their coherence. In the end he rejects the reduplicative solution because it cannot solve the problem of Christ's impeccability: It makes no sense to say, “Christ as God could not sin, but Christ as man could sin.” This is an objection with which I heartily concur. We should agree that Christ could not sin. But all that means is that peccability is not essential to human nature—an unobjectionable truth, because the beatified are impeccable and yet human. But the inapplicability of reduplicative predication in this case must not induce us to abandon it in other cases and to assert instead the less credible claim that human nature is not essentially contingent, and so forth.

There is much more in this book to commend it, including very helpful and interesting discussions of general issues such as natural kinds, individual essences, the philosophical versus revelational concepts of God (which Morris nicely reconciles in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Anselm), broadly logical necessity, personhood, divine goodness, reasons for affirming Christ's deity, and the Trinity. Theology teachers, please read this book!

William Craig

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Offense to Reason: A Theology of Sin. By Bernard Ramm. San Francisco: Harper, 1985, 187 pp., \$15.95.

Ramm certainly needs no introduction to the readers of this or any other evangelical journal. Within the past few years he has given us the controversial *After Fundamentalism* and his enriching survey of the doctrine of Christ, *An Evangelical Christology*. His latest effort is *Offense to Reason*, an examination of the theology of sin that D. Bloesch hails as “Ramm's magnum opus.”

Ramm's central thesis is threefold: “(1) The Christian doctrine of sin is offensive to the reason and repelled by the intelligentsia and academia; (2) without this doctrine of sin much of human life and history remains forever opaque; (3) with it a shaft of light is cast upon personal existence, social existence, and the course of history, giving clarity that nothing else in the religions of the world nor the philosophies of the world can provide” (p. 163). Ramm is at his best while expounding the third point of this thesis. He insists that only the Christian concept of sin is capable of making sense of human exist-

tence and experience. Although sin itself is beyond our ability to explain, "without it we cannot explain anything" (p. 1).

Ramm is careful not to reduce sin to a merely rational definition, for sin is essentially irrational. Nevertheless he does provide in chap. 1 something of a description of sin. "By sin we mean the sum of all the litanies of human woes, evils and sufferings" (p. 2). Consequent to listing many of those evils, he concludes: "Sin is contradiction; sin is violence; sin is serpentine subtlety. Sin is moral inertia; sin is inhuman response to tragic human suffering" (p. 2). But if we are fully to comprehend sin, assuming that is possible, we must remember that "sin is primarily defined with reference to God. . . . Sin is a relational concept in that it can only be properly defined in the human-to-God relationship" (pp. 93-94).

Ramm decisively rejects all extra-Biblical attempts to explain sin in other terms. Among such non-Christian explanations are (1) conditioning (i.e., environmental influence); (2) mores or social customs ("sin is nothing more or less than going contrary to accepted social mores," p. 4); (3) an appeal to phenomenological neutrality ("sin is somebody's subjective judgment on experience," p. 5). If the Christian concept of sin has lost its vitality, it is not difficult to identify several contributing factors: (1) a loss of the sense of transcendence, (2) the development of secular psychiatry wherein sin serves only to damage people "by increasing their sense of unearned guilt" (p. 6), and (3) a relativistic or conventionalist interpretation of law.

The Enlightenment thoroughly renounced the orthodox Christian doctrine of sin. In its wake numerous secular versions emerged. Ramm surveys these attempts to explain human evil in chap. 2. He discusses Hobbes, Spinoza, Voltaire, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel and Marx. He also mentions Freud, Skinner, E. O. Wilson, E. Becker, S. L. Chorover and A. Camus. (In a later chapter he conducts a similar survey of the concept of sin among several more prominent theologians of the past two centuries. Included there are Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Rauschenbusch, Kierkegaard, Tillich, Barth and H. Berkhof.) Ramm suggests that, if anything, his survey shows that "the Christian doctrine of Original Sin (or of sin) is not an esoteric, in-house, intramural Christian topic. It is not a theme known only to gnostic Christian initiates. It is a problem at the center of both personal and social life" (p. 36).

Chapter 3 gives Ramm's interpretation of the Biblical evidence concerning sin. He rightly insists that "the doctrine of sin can only be understood reflexively from the cross" (p. 39). In other words, "the measure of sin must be read backwards from the cross" (p. 38). Ramm does not hedge when it comes to the grim facts of Scripture: Sin is undeniable and universal. Much of this chapter (and a later one) is devoted to a discussion of Rom 5:12. According to Ramm, "the issue in the debate over Romans 5:12-21 is by what means the sin of Adam is connected with the sinfulness of the rest of humanity" (p. 51). After briefly mentioning several theories (in which he, somewhat surprisingly, links W. G. T. Shedd with the "platonic-ideal theory" rather than with seminalism), he concludes that the text of Romans 5 "does not reveal the manner in which generic Adam is connected to sinful humanity" (p. 56). Personally, I believe that Paul may be interpreted with more precision than Ramm allows. Although he includes J. Murray's *The Imputation of Adam's Sin* in the bibliography, there is virtually no mention of imputation in the book.

Perhaps the most controversial element in Ramm's treatment is his discussion of Adam, which first appears in chap. 4. Ramm seems to suggest that science has made it impossible to believe in the historicity of an individual named Adam and his fall. As he says concerning Genesis 2-3: "It is not ordinary, simple history, for historical science knows nothing of talking serpents, trees with theological significance, or God walking, working, and talking as the Great Gardener of Eden. It sees God anthropomorphically. God formed humanity like a potter works with clay; God planted a garden like a farmer; God breathed into Adam using lungs; God was heard walking in the garden as if his

steps made noise; and God sewed garments like a tailor. As good biblical interpretation affirms, anthropomorphisms cannot be taken literally. Yet the church throughout the centuries has read Gen. 2—3 as if it were looking on a literal stage on which these things were literally happening" (p. 69). Ramm's approach to Genesis 2—3 is what he calls "narrative theology," which means that "theology is being expressed by telling a story" (p. 69). In narrative theology "history is the vehicle, not the literal message" (p. 70). Theology by narration means that "the generic or type is more important than the individual or person. Gen. 2—3 concerns the generic relationship of the Creator to the human race, the generic relationship of the creature to the creation, and generic temptation. Adam is a generic man, Eve is the generic woman, and the sin is a generic sin" (pp. 70—71). Ramm affirms, nevertheless, that "the Fall is a historical event" (p. 81). Thus he writes: "Somewhere, sometime, something happened so that creatures who were once upon a time (if we grant the evolutionary theory at this point) animals, and whose behavior was characterized by animal patterns, began to sin" (p. 81). Needless to say, much of Ramm's discussion of original sin is devoted to the way in which the Biblical data must be reinterpreted and refashioned to conform to what he believes are the irrefutable findings of modern science. Obviously this approach will greatly reduce the appeal and cogency of Ramm's book for many in the evangelical community.

Ramm's treatment of sin is otherwise conventionally evangelical. He affirms native depravity (pp. 88—89) and does not hesitate to specify the ominous and eternal consequences of sin in terms of divine wrath and condemnation (pp. 111—112). He has helpful discussions on temptation, the relation of Satan and the demonic host to human sin, and the proper way to preach sin. Ramm's description of the impact of sin on art, economics, philosophy, psychology and counseling, science, world religions, politics, and sociology is excellent.

It is unfortunate that an otherwise helpful volume on sin is marred by a repudiation of the individuality of Adam and Eve. Although Barth (upon whom Ramm is, not surprisingly, much dependent) and others have tried to make exegetical and theological sense of Romans 5 while rejecting the historical Adam, I find their efforts unconvincing. For it was by one man, the first Adam, says Paul, that we have fallen, and by one man, the last Adam, that we have been rescued.

C. Samuel Storms

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By His Grace and For His Glory: A Historical, Theological, and Practical Study of the Doctrines of Grace in Baptist Life. By Thomas J. Nettles. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986, 442 pp., \$12.95 paper.

There is in Baptist circles, especially Southern Baptist circles, an ongoing attempt to define important "Baptist distinctives." Needless to say, there are differences of opinion—many of which, however, lack historical awareness. Recently there have been helpful attempts to discuss these issues by Baptist historians such as E. G. Hinson, J. L. Garrett, and W. B. Shurden. Now, in the most comprehensive attempt to date, Nettles has produced a significant study of the distinctive role of Calvinism in Baptist life. It will serve as a building block for future interaction and discussion regarding these important matters.

Nettles previously has co-authored a similarly important work on *Baptists and the Bible* with R. Bush. The focus of this work, however, is soteriological. Nettles is himself a thoroughgoing Calvinist and seeks to present a theological apologetic for that position in the middle section of this book. The first section is devoted to historical surveys of

representative Baptist leaders who modeled a consistent Calvinism. The concluding section shows the practical values of Calvinistic theology for missions, preaching and evangelism. It is the first section that best supports Nettles' case and that is perhaps the most important.

The historical section traces the thought of such persons as B. Keach, J. Bunyan, J. Gill, A. Fuller, I. Backus, A. Judson, J. Leland, and L. Rice, among others. The latter part of this section traces the Calvinistic thought in Southern Baptist leaders from W. B. Johnson to E. Y. Mullins. Included in the discussion are the contributions of J. L. Dagg, P. H. Mell, R. Fuller, J. Boyce, J. Broadus, B. Manley, F. H. Kerfoot, J. B. Gambrell and J. B. Tidwell. In this section Nettles certainly demonstrates with thorough documentation that theological leadership in the Southern Baptist Convention from 1845 to 1920 was Reformed in both precept and practice. Nettles notes that the shift in Calvinistic thought began to occur with E. Y. Mullins and L. R. Scarborough. I think that Nettles is on firm footing in this conclusion, though perhaps some of these leaders had already begun to question limited atonement and irresistible grace. Yet overall his work is sound (and has been confirmed in a recent dissertation by P. Basden at Southwestern Seminary, a work done independently of Nettles').

Nettles attempts to show that moves away from Calvinism led to universalism and even to unitarianism. In these types of arguments there are generally as many exceptions as examples to support or disprove the theory, and of course such is the case here. It is similar to those non-Calvinists who attempt to show that Calvinists are either nonevangelistic or not missionary-minded. Both are "slippery-slope" arguments that are less than convincing. I might add it is to this stereotype of Calvinism that the third section of the book is devoted, and Nettles carefully demonstrates the fallacy of that argument.

The middle section is a restatement of the basic themes of Calvinism: depravity, election, particular redemption, irresistible grace, perseverance of the saints. The work is generally well written, and his arguments are easy to follow. His discussion of particular redemption is certainly interesting. He argues (following Gill and contra Fuller) that the death of Christ was not only intended for the elect alone but sufficient for the elect alone. I found his argument unconvincing and lacking exegetical support.

In a day when freedom and self-determinism are emphasized and when grace is overshadowed, Nettles' work is a clarion call for Baptists to reconsider this important tradition. This is not to say that Nettles' book settles the question of Baptist distinctives. We also must recognize the influence of the radical reformers upon Baptist life. It is a less-than-balanced history that presents only one of these elements.

I am quite sure that Nettles realizes this. Yet his purpose is to address those who today are attempting to rid Baptist life of its Calvinistic roots and influence. For those persons the first section of Nettles' book is must reading. The last section is also a helpful remedy to the unfair and inappropriate arguments that continue to abound. I recommend the book heartily, even though I find the middle section occasionally unconvincing. Despite some minor weaknesses the book should be read by all students in Baptist colleges and seminaries, not to mention pastors and lay persons as well.

The doctrines of grace and the themes of election cannot be ignored. A return to a theocentric Christianity in word and deed is certainly necessary in this anthropocentric age. Perhaps reflection upon a typical Spurgeon witticism would be healthy contemplation for us all. The British pulpit giant had no doubt that God had chosen him before he was born, for, said Spurgeon, "God would never have done so afterward!" Nettles' work is worthy of contemplation and study. He has not said the final word, but it is an excellent place to begin.

David S. Dockery

Criswell College, Dallas, Texas

God and Science: The Death and Rebirth of Theism. By Charles P. Henderson, Jr. Atlanta: John Knox, 1986, 186 pp., n.p.

Henderson tackles one of the most pressing theoretical issues Christians face today: How should Christian truth-claims be understood and expressed in the age of science? His book traces the thought of Einstein, Freud, Darwin, Marx, Teilhard, Tillich, Capra and Zukav on the question of religion and science. It concludes with Henderson's claim that, from the current impasse between religion and science, new and powerful arguments for theism can be constructed.

Henderson observes the antithesis between the two settings where the book was conceived: the big city of New York, and the small town of Athens, Vermont. The contrast between the technological megalopolis and the idyllic town is striking. But even in Athens the farmers have large television antennae in their wheat fields, symbols of the intrusion of science into every sphere of our lives. The danger in a technological age is that God may become a dinosaur, shoved to the irrelevant edge of our experience.

One of Henderson's major themes is that science is overcoming the categories in which this culture has dualistic thought. Theologians in the past have grappled with dichotomies between science and religion, flesh and spirit, body and soul, God and nature. But, claims Henderson, just when theologians have despaired of ever crossing these gulfs, the gulfs have vanished.

For example, a division between science and religion is no longer tenable. Einstein's notion of relativity shows that everything is related to the speed of light. But this does not mean that God has been disproved, for science and religion possess a "deep correspondence" and an "interrelated purpose" (p. 17). In fact a new concept of God can be developed out of science itself. Henderson promises that his analysis of the major thinkers he discusses will lead to "a new proof for God" when it shows that belief in God is consistent with all that science is discovering (p. 174). Henderson's basic technique, therefore, is to turn the great critics of religion against themselves and to find in their philosophies of science the seeds of a new theism. The logic of modern skepticism can lead to the rebirth of faith in God.

To consider a specific example, Henderson argues that Freud can help Christians to have a better view of life, for Freud's insights enable religion to trim away what is unauthentic. Genesis anticipates Freud, for it agrees with the psychologist that sexuality is an important part of life. But Genesis also avoids the Freudian error by showing that the spiritual and physical work together in the deepest experiences of life. Modern Christians, however, often agree with pornographers in separating the spiritual from the physical: "The disembodied spirituality of popular religion is locked in a continual struggle against the dispirited hedonism of secular society" (p. 40). But, by learning properly, Christians can realize that "far from putting an end to faith, Freud inadvertently provided fresh support for a biblical view of creation and life transformed under the rule of Creator God" (p. 41).

In a similar fashion Henderson continues through his list of important thinkers. He turns each one on his head in some way in an attempt to show that there is unexpected support for theism in the critics' own arguments. Based on this reasoning he claims that "when one carries the new scientific theories to their logical conclusions, more often than not, one discovers surprising confirmation for the most ancient insights of religion. In fact, all the arguments that are used today in defiance of God may be turned inside out to be used in God's defense" (p. 7).

Henderson's approach is commendable. For starters, it is positive and aggressive. It is neither defensive nor skittish. He writes that "modern theologians have surrendered to scientific atheism just at the moment this opponent was about to self-destruct" (p. 174). His style is rich and suggestive. His insights are legion—as, for example, when he

writes that the evolutionists, Darwin and S. Gould, "prove . . . Paley right: wherever we find design, there must be a designer" (p. 61).

Further, Henderson has addressed an area that has not been discussed fully and adequately by evangelicals. Systematic theology written generations ago is not adequate for today. And this is so not only because of the many advances in Biblical theology but also because of the evolution of culture. Systematic theology must be written today with, among other things, an acknowledgment of the effect science has had on the consciousness of this century. Philosophy of science is a growing and fruitful field. Evangelicals could profit by a theology of science.

Yet there are some lingering problems in Henderson's book. He is rather optimistic. It is, he says, "quite possible that the opening years of the twenty-first century may be known as the new age of God" (p. 23). It might be hoped that his prediction is correct. He takes a critical view of Scripture, mentioning in the same category as creation myths the stories of Genesis and the epic of Gilgamesh.

What might be thought to be defects only from the evangelical perspective, however, do not appear to be his most serious problems. The biggest difficulty arises because the promised proof is inadequate. Belief in God can be tested, Henderson declares, just like any scientific hypothesis. There are facts that would count both for and against Christianity.

Now this forthrightness is refreshing in a day when neo-orthodoxy has abandoned any willingness to debate with non-Christians philosophically. But just what would count against Christianity? Serious catastrophes like a nuclear holocaust would falsify theism, says Henderson, for it "would be a precise refutation of the Judeo-Christian faith" (p. 171). One wonders whether Noah's flood would have counted as a refutation. Or would Jews, taking this criterion, come to the conclusion that the Nazi holocaust has falsified belief in God?

What counts as positive evidence? "To the extent that the love and justice of God can be realized in a community of faith, that community itself becomes the living proof of the reality to which it speaks and to which it prays" (p. 171). Proof, in other words, grows out of the actual living of life. It cannot operate on the level of philosophical speculation alone. Though this means that the proof will always be an "interim argument for God," it is the only way to live out authentic faith in the face of scientific realities.

How then can this practical proof be achieved? Henderson's answer is twofold: The Church must show through its life that faith is compatible both with the deepest human longings and with the widest scientific discoveries. "Then one has in fact established a new proof for God" (p. 174).

Is this argument adequate? It seems not, for several reasons. First, to show that a particular religious perspective is compatible with the discoveries that flow from the frontiers of science is not to show that the religious view in question is the only view compatible with science. Compatibility is basically the test of coherence: Do the ideas being tested fit together logically? And coherence, while it is a valuable test, is a negative test. Two ideas that are logically incoherent cannot both be true. Assuming the truthfulness of science, a perspective that contradicts science must be false. But a viewpoint that is coherent with science may be only one of several views that pass the test of coherence.

Second, one implication of this point is that Henderson's test could work equally well in proving several worldviews true. Theoretically, Buddhism could be interpreted so that it becomes consistent with the insights of science as they are discovered. Then we are faced with a situation where Judeo-Christian theism and a form of Buddhism are both confirmed by the test for truth being employed. But how shall the choice between these two be made? Henderson argues provocatively that scientific atheism does not pass his test. At this point he has some valuable insights to offer. But one could easily imagine

religious perspectives other than Christian theism that might also pass his test.

Third, Henderson implies that his test is implemented when Christians move society toward justice and love. Later he says that Christians will find that theism is compatible with the deepest longings of the human soul. But these criteria are biased in favor of Christianity. That the deepest longings of the soul are fulfilled by loving, just, personal communion with God and neighbor is a notion derived from the Christian worldview. So to use that as the test for the correctness of any particular religious perspective is to beg the question in favor of Christian theism.

In a word, Henderson has promised more than he has delivered. But philosophical reservations notwithstanding, *God and Science* offers suggestions on a program for further reflection that cannot be ignored if evangelicals are to avoid doing theology out of contact with culture. It is not enough simply to rebut the Tillichs of each age. If this is God's world, then evangelical theology needs to do more in response to science than nitpick about peripheral problems in evolution.

Henderson seeks a provocative vision of a single perspective from which both theology and science can operate (p. 161). Evangelicals must engage the obvious benefits of science and integrate them in their current expressions of timeless, inscripturated truth. There exists a need for a sophisticated encounter with science if theology is to be relevant in coming decades. Despite shortcomings, Henderson's volume insightfully discusses issues that evangelicals would do well to consider.

David K. Clark

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Less than Conquerors: How Evangelicals Entered the Twentieth Century. By Douglas W. Frank. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986, 310 pp., \$14.95 paper.

Fundamentalism and American Culture (1980), George Marsden's thought-provoking study of the roots of contemporary American evangelicalism, provided Douglas Frank with the motivation for this examination of turn-of-the-century evangelicalism that he calls "largely an edifying footnote" (p. x) to Marsden. But where Marsden's work was primarily an objective analysis, Frank's volume makes no bones of its essentially subjective nature. What Frank gives us is not at all a conventional exercise in historiography but a sort of extended meditation on history's deeper lessons, alternating critique of figures such as Charles G. Trumbull and Billy Sunday and causes such as dispensationalism and the "victorious life" movement with rumination on Biblical passages and candid discussion of Frank's own spiritual pilgrimage. It is this latter devotional material that constitutes the book's heart.

Frank writes in opposition to those on evangelicalism's left (he notes D. Dayton's *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage*, 1976) and right (he mentions Jerry Falwell and Francis Schaeffer) who, for all their differences, share a tendency to romanticize aspects of nineteenth-century American Protestantism as a means of establishing precedents for their own divergent versions of contemporary evangelical social activism. Frank argues that the evangelicalism of that era, far from offering us a healthy model for the integration of evangelism and community involvement, actually carried within itself the seeds of its own destruction. Nineteenth-century evangelicals, no less than their twentieth-century heirs, danced to the tune set by their culture. Was an industrializing America in need of sober-minded, hard-working laborers? Fine: Robert Speer and others would develop the theme of "character building" as a means of encouraging Christians to a life of struggle and upward striving. Did all this character building in industrialized America lead mainly to neuralgia and unhappiness? Well and good: Hannah Whitall Smith and

others would advance the idea of the victorious life as a means for Christians to find peace and fulfillment as they "let go and let God."

Frank's stinging critique of Billy Sunday is especially telling: His analysis, buttressed by a painstaking examination of Sunday's sermons and correspondence, traces the outlines of a man who, through his proselytizing on behalf of the cult of "manliness," became "a blind guide who, together with his followers, fell into a pit" (p. 224). Most of the book's historical material, though, is drawn from secondary literature, so that Frank's argument stands or falls with the sources on which he relies. Where these are sound—Marsden's *The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience*, for example—so are Frank's conclusions; where they are questionable—R. Lovelace's reductionist critique of Charles Finney, which Frank swallows whole, is one clear case—Frank's conclusions too seem questionable. Exegetical passages as well are overly dependent on secondary material, so that, for example, J. Ellul's rhetoric-laden excoriation of modern urban life in *The Meaning of the City* is cited as confirming the notion that in the Bible "the city is humanity's alternative to trusting in the Lord" (p. 26), a conclusion as hyperbolic as even Ellul at his most prophetic. Finally, given Frank's heavy reliance on secondary sources, it is surprising that he failed to make use of G. Fackre's *The Religious Right and Christian Faith* (1982), a work that identifies problematic tendencies in contemporary fundamentalism identical to those that Frank describes in turn-of-the-century evangelicalism.

Such criticism notwithstanding, Frank's volume unquestionably breaks new ground in evangelical historiography. Where scholars such as T. Smith (*Revivalism and Social Reform*, 1957) and Dayton have found in nineteenth-century evangelicalism a sort of golden age from which the militant fundamentalism of the early twentieth century marked a decline into baser metals, Frank has identified unexpected virtues—a chastened assessment of human abilities, for example, and a quickened sense of Christians' pilgrim status on this earth—in that lost generation of believers. His revisionist account of the world of his grandparents thus represents as well a coming to terms with the world of his parents, the environment that shaped him—and that shaped most of us as well. *Less than Conquerors* takes its place among the handful of books that help us to understand not just the events of a long-forgotten time and place but the secret recesses of our own hearts. This book is highly recommended.

George W. Harper

Boston University

Among the Soviet Evangelicals. By Samuel Nesdoly. Carlisle: Banner of Truth, 1986, 207 pp., \$6.45 paper.

According to Nesdoly, the portrayal of Soviet evangelicalism in much of the popular literature is too singular in its outlook. In order to counterbalance the often lopsided and simplistic views presented in sensationalist literature he wrote this book with three clear objectives: to stimulate thoughtful readers to investigate the life of Soviet evangelicals more thoroughly, to challenge western Christians to greater commitment and more vigorous witness, and to convey his personal sense of heritage in the Russian Baptist movement. The book, written in a personalized, popular style, is designed to reach a wide audience. Though the author's approach is more anecdotal than scholarly, he does employ the qualities of balance, perspective and comprehensiveness. For those desiring a more scholarly treatment of Soviet evangelicalism he suggests the works of six prominent authorities as additional reading.

The book relates the experiences of Nesdoly and his wife while doing research in the

Soviet Union on the history of the Russian Baptist Church. The book, written in travelogue style, presents snapshots of Christian and non-Christian life in the Soviet Union. Six recurring topics permeate the book, and he uses the snapshots to develop them: Church-state relations, interchurch relations, Christian commitment, church growth, the Christian's role in society, and life in the Soviet Union. He offers the stories with little or no commentary, letting them speak for themselves.

Nesdoly clearly demonstrates that Soviet evangelicalism is as complex a structure as western evangelicalism. Simple, black-and-white descriptions, like the sensationalists give, will not suffice in describing it. Soviet evangelicalism is more properly seen as "a three dimensional, multi-media kaleidoscope."

Overall, Nesdoly fulfills his objectives. He gives the reader a balanced and realistic sense of the condition of evangelicalism in the Soviet Union, and he certainly challenges the reader by the depth of commitment of the Soviet evangelical. He draws upon experiences from eight different churches in at least three major cities—Leningrad, Moscow and Kiev—each of which is in a different cultural segment of the country. This up-to-date book even includes an epilogue, dated 1985, where he summarizes the situation under the rule of Mikhail Gorbachev.

The book is well written and reads easily. Its many stories bring the reader quickly into the life of the average Soviet citizen. Anyone interested in knowing more about life in the Soviet Union or the state of Soviet evangelicalism would enjoy this book. It certainly challenges the mediocrity of western Christianity with a level of excellence that is almost nonexistent in the west.

Steve Clinton and Jim Wunder

Reimagining America: A Theological Critique of the American Mythos and Biblical Hermeneutics. By Charles Mabee. Macon: Mercer University, 1985, xv + 154 pp., \$13.95.

In this introductory volume to a series entitled *Studies in American Biblical Hermeneutics*, the author attempts a new departure in the quarter-century-long civil-religion debate by initiating a dialogue between the American self and the Bible. In so doing he casts aside the civil-religion model of R. Bellah and the religion-of-the-republic approach of S. Mead in favor of the "American mythos" idea of literary scholar S. Bercovitch. The latter insists that the time has come to lay to rest the mythos that has been at the root of so many of the nation's woes—namely, that America was a chosen nation, a covenant people who functioned as a light to the world and as a political messiah to lead mankind out of the wasteland of despotism and absolutism. Mabee argues that this is the interpretative key to the national experience and that the use of Biblical hermeneutics will open one's understanding to the meaning of the mythos and its typology.

The origins of the American mythos are found in the religious culture of early New England. The Puritans saw themselves as an exceptional people with a divinely appointed mission, and the typological exegesis of the Bible by Puritan preachers produced factual prefigurations of what Christ finally did. Their use of the "language of Canaan" resulted in a view of history that defined America's purpose. Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson then established an alternative version of the mythos of a people set aside from the world for the purpose of cleansing and renewing it, but this liberation of the human spirit was to be led not by the Church but by those freed from its dogmatic grip. Yet they spoke as nonecclesiastical theologians who, instead of trying to breathe new life into the worn-out doctrines of the churches, acted as new Adams in a new Eden. They saw the Bible as a book of great moral resources for the new society but one devoid

of the artificial underpinnings of ecclesiastical authority. They were the theologians of the developing myths of exceptionality and mission.

Herman Melville developed the most searching critique of the inner darkness of the myths in *Moby Dick*, and Mabee goes into an intriguing analysis of the book and its theological meaning, especially as revealed through its characters. (Why he did not also examine *White Jacket*, the book in which Melville makes his most profound civil-religion statement, is a mystery to this reviewer.) Then he moves on to a discussion of R. Pirsig's 1974 work, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, which he feels addresses the sacredness of American life by critiquing the valuelessness of secular society and the shallowness of American existence. The author compares Pirsig's critique with the NT's hermeneutics of orthodoxy, time and immediacy, and he shows that western Christendom lacks an adequate response to the present.

He concludes that Christian theology needs radical surgery in order to penetrate the metaphysical structure of the American experience. He says that "the one-dimensional hermeneutics of time found in the New Testament is inadequate for authentic universality," and so is the "simplistic scheme of sin/repentance/forgiveness that tends to characterize institutional religion." Until this surgery is courageously performed, "Christianity will remain merely an isolated appendage to the inner meaning of our cultural existence."

In my opinion, however, Mabee's fanciful and disjointed journey through American thought is little more than acupuncture. His own theology desperately needs some radical surgery—the kind that comes from the gospel. In short, the study is far too sketchy, the different discussions do not hang together well (especially a long parenthesis on Job included in the Melville chapter), and it does not make much historical sense. One hopes that the other volumes in the series will succeed better than did this one.

Richard V. Pierard

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Everything Is Politics But Politics Is Not Everything: A Theological Perspective on Faith and Politics. By H. M. Kuitert. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986, 183 pp., \$8.95.

In Kuitert's view the institutional Church should not issue political or social statements, develop political action programs, or participate in any other political activities. When the Church does this it polarizes its members and violates its own integrity. Even worse, it undermines its own reason for existence.

Kuitert rejects the reductionism of modern liberation and protest theologies that equates the gospel with politics. He notes that evangelical Christianity has become imbalanced by a too-healthy revival of political concern. Kuitert's alternative is a finely-tuned definition of the gospel as the outline proclamation of God's salvation revealed in Jesus Christ. For Kuitert, politics is not everything, and he asserts that there is more to life than political problems and more to Christian faith than a normative theory for political action. Jesus, he reminds his readers, was not the helmsman of a political movement and did not offer a collective, revolutionary path to the kingdom of God on earth. All who market the gospel as merely a message of social change do violence to God's redemptive revelation.

One of the text's strengths is Kuitert's concern for carefully defined terms. He distinguishes between Church and Christian citizen, salvation and social well-being, gospel and faith, pastor and church. Although the book's thesis in a nutshell is that the Church's essential responsibility is a redemptive one, Kuitert acknowledges that a faith motive may cause—should cause—a Christian to be concerned about the physical and emotional

needs of his fellow man. Kuitert states: "The Christian church is not the world's welfare worker, though welfare work is desperately needed. Christians too take part in it. . . . The question of bread is a primary question for all human beings, but the Christian church is not the organization that sees to bread. There are other organizations of bakers. And again other organizations have been formed for the distribution of the bread. Christians can be bakers; the church cannot. Christians are judges and arbiters, but the church has not been appointed for that" (p. 172). He thus neatly avoids a one-sided presentation.

Kuitert's work is a needed corrective. Even good ideas, once set in motion, often go farther than expected or develop in unintended directions. So it is with Christian social and political concern. Evangelicalism has rediscovered social and political affairs and is the better for it. But some elements within evangelicalism commit the institutional Church to ideological and partisan political action, some make political remarks in the pulpit, some register voters in church lobbies and write congressmen during worship services. When does the Church stop being the Church and become a political organization? Kuitert answers with a balancing perspective.

His thinking also should benefit liberal Protestantism, which stands even more in need of a reawakened sense of purpose than does evangelicalism. True, some people do live a hell on earth, and Christians must do all they can to improve the human social condition. But if that is all that is done by either individual Christians or the Church, then they condemn some people to living a hell in Hell.

The primary weakness of the text is stylistic. It is very difficult to read—perhaps because it is translated from Dutch. For this reason, along with the theological character of the work, it is not a book for the novice or the weekend reader.

Rex M. Rogers

Cedarville College, OH

Understanding the Atonement for the Mission of the Church. By John Driver. Scottsdale/Kitchener: Herald, 1986, 286 pp., \$19.95.

Driver's main burden is to help us recover the full-orbed Biblical view of the atonement. The book divides into three sections. In the first part (chaps. 1—2) Driver presents his major thesis and his primary contention with the traditional views of the atonement. The second section (chaps. 3—12) is devoted to a more extensive re-examination of ten major images of the atonement. In the final section (chaps. 13—15) Driver attempts to draw out the implications of his treatment as they pertain to the mission of the Church.

According to Driver, the Church's doctrine of the atonement has suffered from what he calls Constantinianism. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ has been reduced to an abstract legal transaction that has permitted people and structures to remain in sin without any radical change. The Constantinian matrix that gave rise to this situation is threefold: a demand for rationality, a misconception of law, and a preoccupation with personal guilt. The demand for rationality has caused the doctrine of the atonement to be reduced to one or two essential images instead of allowing us the richness of images as found in the Bible. The misconception of law is due to our reading the Biblical text with Roman legal concepts in mind rather than considering that the atonement's context is God's covenanted community. Consequently law is abstracted from the context of grace. This in turn has caused us to be preoccupied with personal guilt and to overlook the social and cosmic dimensions of sin and righteousness. While I was able to find certain emphases edifying and various points clarifying, on the whole the book was dissatisfying. Driver, throughout, overstates himself and then later partially corrects his overstatements.

For instance, Driver initially reprimands the west for its demand for rationality and system in expounding the doctrine. This rationality he says has led to a reductionism—seeing the atonement in principally juridical terms—the wrath-satisfaction-justification complex. Driver then argues that the key to understanding the atonement is by admitting all of the images of the atonement into our understanding of it. But later he admits that “some of the images may be judged to be more central than others for one reason or another” (p. 244). Not surprisingly, he finds more affinity with the image of reconciliation and its attendant social implications.

In the last section of his book, Driver attempts to make the case that each image of the atonement must fit a particular contemporary situation. This he sees as important for our mission strategy. But when it comes to stating the individual contemporary context that each image fits, we are shown merely that the images were addressed to Jewish or Jewish-Gentile audiences.

What is purported to be a critique of substantive issues is actually a matter of emphasis. Had Driver, as a missionary, spent more time drawing out the social implications of the various images for the atonement, his book would have contributed much. As it is, such a book has yet to be written. The reader will find more help by consulting L. Morris' work or the recently released treatment on the atonement by H. D. McDonald.

Alfred J. Poirier

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Be My Witnesses: The Church's Mission, Message, and Messengers. By Darrell L. Guder. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985, xiv + 237 pp., \$10.95 paper.

What is the nature and purpose of Christian missions in the modern world? Drawing upon his own wide experience from around the globe, Guder offers his contribution to the contemporary debate. His missiology is also ecclesiology, for he challenges the Church not only to rethink the essence of its mandate but also to reorient its structures and ministry accordingly. The title reflects his foundation text (Acts 1:8) for the definition of the Church's mission, and his work is an attempt to explore the various dimensions of that key phrase.

The book is divided into four sections. The first (chaps. 1—2) is an effort to propose a theology of missions centered on incarnation, which is understood as God's way of disclosing himself throughout Biblical history, at first in his Son, and then through the Church. Part two (chaps. 3—4) juxtaposes the Church as an empowered witness in Acts with its failures in history and its deadening institutionalism. Part three (chaps. 5—9) expounds his perception of the breadth of the concept “witness” as he examines what “being,” “doing” and “saying” the witness imply. The last section (chaps. 10—12) is a call to the Church to evaluate how it interprets itself and accomplishes its ministry: The Church should be aware of any elitist attitudes and various forms of cultural bondage and have as its preeminent goal the equipping of all the saints for mission.

Guder is at his most helpful, I believe, in his observations on church mentality and objectives. Insightful are his discussions concerning the various ecclesiastical models (pp. 49—53, 105—111) and the importance of relating the sacraments and spiritual activities to the task of mission (pp. 211—219). Balanced, too, is his appreciation for the necessity of organizational structures (pp. 66—71) and the complementary roles of both ordained offices and the general ministries of all believers (chap. 11). Throughout his work Guder exhorts the Church not to bifurcate the benefits of its calling and the responsibility of election. All the elements of the witness are essential. They must be integrated and congruent for the Church to have an effective outreach. Finally, while many who take

an "incarnational" position minimize the importance of proclamation and too easily take ideological sides, Guder is firm in declaring the centrality of the Word and in warning against contextual influences that might distort the gospel (chap. 9).

Though thought-provoking, this book does exhibit several shortcomings. An obvious weakness lies in its format. The intended audience is the educated lay person, and so footnotes and many scholarly references have been excluded. But, surely, not to include any sort of index (e.g. Scriptural or topical) reduces the usefulness of a work of this length and complexity for that audience. Moreover Guder refers his readers (and remember they are to be lay persons) to authors without giving titles (e.g. E. Stanley Jones, p. 22; Kittel and Colin Brown, p. 136) or even mentioning them in his selective bibliography. He does, though, give them the bibliographic details of E. Geissler's book (p. 221)—but it is printed in Germany. More care should have been taken to be more consistent or to provide a longer bibliography.

Several critical parts of the book lack a good exposition of the Biblical text. Though Guder goes into some detail with 1 Peter 3 (pp. 160–167) to explain his view of evangelization and with Ephesians 4 (pp. 205–211) to develop his concept of the equipping ministry, no such care is taken, for example, in his chapter "What Is the Gospel?" (pp. 75–90). He must be aware, however, that this is a crucial topic of debate, and he may have limited the impact of his thesis by not giving more attention to important passages and by simply alluding to a few texts so as to broadly describe the gospel in terms of reconciliation in all its dimensions. Another instance would be the section "The Prophetic Witness" (pp. 174–177). Though the need for the Church to speak out is clear, where does he develop this mandate Biblically? What are the means and the limits? He praises the Barmen Declaration of 1934 as over against those who remained silent before Hitler, but what of those like Bonhoeffer who became involved in the assassination plot?

At the close of his book Guder offers the pedagogical insights of E. Geissler as helpful correctives to traditional views of authority (pp. 221–225). To be honest, this was a bit surprising: After stressing a relational and incarnational approach, he turns to a model that still does not avoid what P. Freire would label a "banking" concept of theological education and training. The pedagogical authority is a facilitating agent—but not a fellow learner and pilgrim—who still controls the process of growth. I would challenge Guder to rethink his model or at least to expand it beyond its western limitations.

Lastly, a minor point: There is no need, though it is presently a common practice, to portray the view that defends propositional truth and inerrancy as contrary to a dynamic idea of God and his Word in history (p. 23). These are false alternatives and can unnecessarily polarize the debate through caricature.

The blurb on the back cover calls this book "the most refreshing and challenging work on missionary theology to come out of this country." From my perspective that evaluation is overstated. This attempt to bring missiology and ecclesiology together may not be totally satisfying or convincing, but perhaps the effort itself is the book's greatest asset and its most important challenge to the Church.

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