

BOOK REVIEWS

The Book of Acts. By F. F. Bruce. NICNT. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988, 541 pp., \$24.95.

The late F. F. Bruce revised his 1954 commentary, resulting in the present volume. He has extensively updated his bibliographic sources, provided a new translation, improved the style of writing at many points and interacted with some new research in Acts. The revision also has a helpful new general index and a select bibliography.

In place of the ASV, Bruce provides his own excellent translation of the Greek text, which captures Luke's meaning effectively. Although there are some places where the translation is strained (e.g. 4:12, "there is no saving health in anyone else"), overall it greatly enriches the commentary. The outline for Acts has been improved, and the comments are focused on smaller pericopes of text.

Bruce shows that Acts is the second part of Luke's history of Christian origins (the first part being the gospel of Luke). Acts provided the canonical bridge between the gospels and the Pauline corpus. Furthermore, Acts was a crucial volume in the second-century conflicts of the Church with Marcion because it upheld the validity of Paul's apostleship. Bruce sees the purpose of Acts as tied directly to Luke's purpose in the gospel. Luke was concerned to accurately record the origins of Christianity and defend the Christian faith to Theophilus (someone already partially familiar with it) and to others, whether Christian or pagan, who had questions about the legitimacy of the Christian faith. Acts was written between A.D. 69 and 96, and Lukan authorship is assumed. It is unfortunate that Bruce's introduction is particularly weak; there is no real discussion of the theology or text of Acts. Extensive footnotes on the readings of the Western text in the commentary are most helpful, but there is no explanation in the introduction about the various textual traditions.

In spite of these weaknesses, Bruce's real strength is in making the book of Acts understandable in light of its historical background. In this regard the discussion of the Jerusalem council in Acts 15 and Paul in Corinth are examples of Bruce at his best. The reader will understand the text not only in light of its *Sitz im Leben* but also in light of its relationship to other events in the NT. While one will differ with Bruce on certain matters, his comments are well founded and insightful. The pastor or student will particularly benefit from Bruce's careful exegesis.

A revised edition like this one must be evaluated not only from the perspective of its present form but also in comparison to its first edition. Bruce's commentary remains a helpful study of Acts, particularly if one is looking for a first commentary on Acts. But the volume is disappointing if one is looking for an examination of the current issues in Luke-Acts studies, the theology of Acts, or matters of prolegomena. In spite of the new bibliographic sources it should be noted that most often the information is relegated as additions to the footnotes instead of providing the basis for fresh discussions in the commentary. At the same time it must be remembered

that Bruce has also written another commentary (*The Acts of the Apostles: Greek Text*) that handles many of these matters more thoroughly.

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Paul and His Letters. By Leander E. Keck. Proclamation Commentaries. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988, x + 164 pp., \$9.95 paper.

Keck first wrote *Paul and His Letters* for the Proclamation series in 1979. The book under review is a revised and enlarged edition of that work. In keeping with the general nature of the series, Keck's contribution is not a commentary in the usual sense. It is, rather, an introduction to Paul and his theology. This second edition includes a substantial clarification of Paul's understanding of faith/trust. The bibliography has been expanded from 24 to 53 works and reflects interaction with recent scholarship (to 1987). The most significant change is the addition of a 33-page appendix surveying "Paul's Theology in Historical Criticism."

The key to the book is the concept that "the man and his message are not identical with the letters" (p. 1). This statement establishes the general approach of the book and previews its content. For Keck the important spheres of study are Paul, his message as originally preached, and his message as clarified in the letters. Each element is examined in turn.

Paul—the man and his work—has raised questions for readers of every generation. Part 1, "The Quest for the Historical Paul," includes two chapters that survey major issues in Pauline studies. "Paul the Problem" sketches the apostle in relation to the NT, early Christianity, and critical scholarship. "The Theology of Paul and the Theology of the Letters" addresses the character, issues and background of Paul's letters as each relates to his theology.

Paul's basic message may be inferred from allusions in his letters to his previous preaching/teaching. Part 2, "The Gospel Paul Preached," consists of three chapters that examine significant aspects of that message. "The Pivotal Event" argues that the cross and resurrection form one focal point of Paul's message. "The Salvific Response" proposes that the response of faith and trust is a second, equally important focal point. "The Deeper Logic of Paul's Gospel" presents Paul as a holistic thinker who often expressed his understanding of truth in terms of polarities.

The fact that each of Paul's letters addressed a specific situation means that the theological statements in them must be viewed in light of that situation. Part 3, "What Paul Fought For," focuses on Paul's clarification of three particular themes of his message as provoked by controversies within his churches. "Dimensions of Trust" explores the implications of the faith/trust response in terms of its adequacy, obligations and ethics. "Spirit and Body" investigates Paul's clarification of the spirit/flesh misunderstanding, his theology of the body, and the resulting ethical significance. "The Moral Integrity of God and the Human Situation" examines the way in which Paul's letters clarified his understanding of God's righteousness, his law and his faithfulness.

It should be noted that Keck's presuppositions are not those of the typical reader of this *Journal*. He holds only seven of Paul's letters to be genuine. Those that are genuine have been edited, and at least two (2 Corinthians and Philippians) are composite. The reader should not prejudge the book on this basis but should be aware of the scope of the material being used. On the whole, the use of that material is con-

cise and balanced. There is good recognition of and interaction with major issues in modern Pauline scholarship. The discussion often adjusts common but inappropriate approaches to familiar passages. The expanded discussion of epistolary issues is helpful, the enlarged bibliography is welcome, and the appendix provides a useful summary of the study of Paul's theology.

Careful reading of the book suggests that Keck adopts the view that Paul was a product of Hellenistic Jewish Christianity. It would have been preferable if he had advised readers of that fact since this perspective influences his interpretation in places. In other places the reader is forced to engage in interpretation of his own to discern the main point of the discussion; this is particularly true in the chapter on the deeper logic of Paul's gospel. Summary paragraphs would have been helpful. Editorially, 6 pages of new material have been added to the body of the book in 8 fewer pages. The smaller print is a bit harder on the eyes than that of the first edition.

Not every reader will agree with all of Keck's conclusions, but most should be challenged by his approach and stimulated by his insights. The book offers a different way of thinking about Paul and his letters. It is scholarly, provocative, and readable.

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Israel's Law and the Church's Faith: Paul and His Recent Interpreters. By Stephen Westerholm. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988, viii + 238 pp., \$14.95 paper.

This excellent survey and critical evaluation of the status of Pauline studies at the close of the 1980s is set against the background of Luther's formative influence on the Protestant exposition of Paul. The trends with which Westerholm interacts are current, particularly "the new perspective on Paul" (J. D. G. Dunn) and on first-century Judaism, which has resulted from the research of E. P. Sanders. Yet Westerholm, unlike many of those whose views he describes, takes Luther seriously as an interpreter of Pauline theology: "Students who want to understand Paul but feel they have nothing to learn from Martin Luther should consider a career in metallurgy. Exegesis is learned from the masters" (p. 173). With exegetical acumen and with literary grace (and wit) he demonstrates the weaknesses as well as the contributions of twentieth-century attempts to correct the Reformers' understanding of Paul.

Chapter 1 summarizes Luther's exposition of the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith as background for the modern debate over Paul and the law. Part 1 (chaps. 2-6) surveys the twentieth-century discussion. Early in the century W. Wrede and A. Schweitzer challenged Luther's conviction that justification is the center of Pauline theology, arguing against Luther that Paul employed justification by faith only to polemicize against Judaism (Wrede) or that the real center of Paul's soteriology was "Christ-mysticism" (Schweitzer).

Other twentieth-century scholars have questioned Luther's portrayal of Judaism as propounding a works soteriology, arguing that rabbinic Judaism laid stress on God's gracious initiative in his covenant with Israel. C. G. Montefiore argued that the Judaism from which Paul was converted to Christian faith must have been non-rabbinic Hellenistic Judaism. In H. J. Schoeps' view Paul the Christian polemicist reinterpreted and distorted the rabbinic faith in which he had been raised. E. P. Sanders believes that, as a Christian, Paul remained largely in agreement with the theological tenets of the "covenantal nomism" of Palestinian Judaism.

Luther's understanding of Paul was influenced by his own struggles of conscience. But W. G. Kümmel's influential study of Romans 7 (summarized by Westerholm in detail) and K. Stendahl's argument that the problem of the "introspective conscience" originated with Augustine challenge the assumption that Paul was preoccupied with individual guilt.

How did Paul evaluate Jewish attempts to attain righteousness through observing the Mosaic law? Are such attempts a symptom of human arrogance, a denial of our creaturely dependence (R. Bultmann)? Or was it good and possible for Jews to achieve righteousness through the law, until Christ's death absorbed sin's harmful consequences (U. Wilckens)? Or was the question of the possibility of righteousness through law observance secondary for Paul, answered negatively only because he had come to believe that Christ is the only means of salvation and that law righteousness hindered the Gentile mission (Sanders)?

Other scholars find Paul's statements on the law to abound in self-contradiction, either because of a development of his theology from the writing of Galatians to the balanced presentation in Romans (J. W. Drane, H. Hübner) or because of unresolved tensions that remain constant throughout Paul's ministry (H. Räisänen).

Part 2 (chaps. 7–11) gives us Westerholm's own understanding of Paul's teaching on the law, justification, and Christian behavior. An accurate understanding of Paul must begin with clarity regarding what he means by "law" (*nomos*). While Paul can apply the term to the entire Pentateuch or the OT Scriptures as a whole, most frequently *nomos* in Paul refers to the commandments delivered to Israel through Moses. Although grace is revealed in the OT Scriptures ("law" in the broader sense), the focus of law as commandment (the narrower sense, typical in Paul) is on what humans must do, on works. In this sense the law stands in contrast to such elements as grace, faith, and promise in Paul's discussions. Law cannot be reduced to ceremonial elements that distinguish Israel from the Gentiles, to "identity markers" (contra Dunn). It entails all the obligations that God laid on Israel at Sinai. Nor is the law to which Paul juxtaposes justifying faith merely a legalistic distortion of the Torah on the part of his opponents. Paul himself contends that obedience to law would lead to life.

Judaism emphasized that God's grace initiated Israel's covenantal status, calling for a response of law observance (and repentance for missteps) on the part of Israel, leading to "divine approval on the day of judgment" (p. 145). Thus although rabbinic Judaism must not be caricatured as teaching a simplistic soteriology of works alone, the law did serve a soteriological function in its religion. It was Paul, not his opponents, who perceived that divine grace and human achievement are mutually exclusive alternatives in soteriology. Paul agrees that the keeping of the law would lead to life if its commands were observed. But he is more pessimistic than his contemporaries within Judaism regarding the possibility of anyone's observing the law, thereby achieving right standing and life before God's tribunal. Since Christ's death for our sins alone saves, it follows that all have sinned (as the OT Scriptures testify) and stand in need of this salvation that comes only as God's free gift, only to faith. To be sure, this is Paul's conviction as a Christian. He is reasoning back from Christ, the solution, to the depth of the human plight under sin. But this observation does not peripheralize Paul's conviction concerning the law's weakness, attributable to the inability of humanity under sin to keep its statutes. Nor is justification by faith merely a polemical accessory to Paul's core theology. Rather, justification of the ungodly expresses quintessentially the centrality of divine grace that is foundational to all Paul's thought.

A tension exists between Paul's affirmation that the law was given by God himself "for life," on the one hand, and his statements that the law was exploited by sin

to increase transgressions and that this too is God's design for the law, on the other. This tension is not unique to Paul but rather permeates the OT Scriptures and is axiomatic for first-century Jewish thought: Sin is contrary to God's will, yet God uses sin to accomplish his gracious purposes. The introduction of the law has yielded the knowledge of sin, the accounting and even the proliferation of transgressions in the history of Israel. This does not mean that Gentiles who do not have the law are not accountable for their sin, but Israel faces a heightened responsibility and serves as a paradigm of universal human wickedness. Although neither God nor the law are to be blamed for the multiplication of transgressions, it is integral to God's redemptive plan, which leads to Christ's cross.

Paul does not view the law as the revelation of God's will for Christian behavior. There is overlap between the law's commandments and the ethical standards that Paul presents as characteristic of "walking in the Spirit" (the ethical guide for those in Christ). Paul says that Christians' behavior fulfills the law's righteous standard in a way that the behavior of those who pursue righteousness in the law can never do. Nevertheless Christians are not under law, for they have died to the law and are freed from its curse and sanction, and "when the sanctions of the law have been removed, its demands have no force" (p. 221). Westerholm suggests that the traditional distinction between "ceremonial" aspects of the law (which have been abrogated) and "moral" aspects (which continue in force) is foreign to Paul, who treated the law (in the narrower sense) as a unity and gave his churches no guidelines for discriminating categories of temporary or perpetual commandments. The law was given to Israel for the time before Christ's coming. Christians are led by the Spirit—in part, to be sure, through the ethical instruction of Spirit-led apostles.

The strengths of Westerholm's work have been suggested in the survey above: skill in selecting major issues and representative proponents to survey, clarity and justice in presenting the positions of other exegetes, respect for interpreters of Paul from earlier ages, cogent exegetical reasoning, and (perhaps rarest of all in theological studies) a writing style that delights as it instructs. Evangelical scholars may believe that Westerholm grants too much to Räsänen's charges of inconsistency against Paul (pp. 175, 219), but the overall thrust of Westerholm's argument is that the tensions that moderns find in Paul either can be resolved exegetically or are characteristic of Biblical teaching as a whole (and thus are not unique to Paul).

Westerholm's discussion of the law and Christian behavior (chap. 10), while it rightly notes that the law's role in relation to the life of the people of God is forever changed by the coming of Christ, leaves the impression of a greater ethical discontinuity between the Mosaic law and Pauline Christianity than can be documented from Paul's writings. Acknowledging the overlap in content between the moral demands of the Mosaic code and the new ethic of the Spirit, Westerholm does not explore the source of this continuity in the holy character of God. Unlike his sensitivity elsewhere to Paul's continuity with the OT prophets, in this chapter (pp. 207 ff.) Westerholm does not acknowledge that a distinction between ceremonial stipulations and moral commands within the Mosaic law is not an alien structure imposed by later Reformed exegetes but rather finds its roots in the OT (e.g. Ps 51:16-17; Isa 58:2-7) and in Paul himself. For Paul the Spirit makes circumcision obsolete and irrelevant (Gal 5:5-6; 6:15), but the Spirit also yields the fruit of love, which fulfills the law's specific ethical demands (as Westerholm recognizes) (Rom 13:8-10). This difference in the effect of the Spirit's coming on two types of commands is what the ceremonial/moral contrast aims to describe. This is not to nullify Westerholm's main point: The law is a whole, and as a whole its function in God's redemptive history as custodian of Israel "until Messiah" has been completed. But

Paul knows that the Spirit's presence does not preclude Christians' need for ethical instruction by Christ's messengers, and he affirms the law's usefulness (as it is interpreted by Spirit-guided apostles in the light of Christ's redeeming work) in revealing God's will for Christians' behavior.

Westerholm's treatment of Paul and the law not only brings clarity and exegetical sense to the present discussion among scholars but also does so in a way that is both accessible and inviting to seminary students and other young theologians.

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Difficult Passages in the Epistles. By Robert H. Stein. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988, 162 pp., \$7.95 paper.

Stein has been at the forefront of evangelical scholarship in the current decade with such fine works as *An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus* (1981), *Difficult Passages in the Gospels* (1984) and *The Synoptic Problem* (1987). This work is no exception. It continues the series of difficult-passage/saying books. Stein is a skillful exegete in his sensitivity to the historical and grammatical dimensions of a Biblical passage.

Stein employs a four-step hermeneutical methodology, which involves an examination of the author's words, grammatical syntax, authorial context, and the larger context of the entire Biblical canon. This methodology allows the potential interpreter to discover that the techniques used in exegeting a gospel (historical narrative) are different from those used when one interacts with the epistles (literary genre). "The issues we meet in the Epistles are more linguistic in nature, and in this work we shall seek to illustrate how one can come to understand the meaning which an author gave to his words" (p. 12). The methodology assists the interpreter in asking the right questions of the text. This hermeneutical development is a strength of Stein's since his main goal is not to offer pedantic interpretations of texts but to teach—through illustrations—how to interpret a specific text.

Stein addresses over twenty Scriptural topics/passages in his presentation. He has an excellent section entitled "Is New Testament 'Wine' the Same as Today's Wine?" It is well balanced (yes, Jesus drank wine—but it was mixed with water) and demonstrates familiarity with first-century cultural norms and extracanonical literature. Stein's treatment of Rom 8:28—"Are We to Praise God for All Things?"—is to be commended. He makes an important exegetical and homiletical distinction when he states: "To praise God *while* we have cancer is indeed appropriate, for because of his nature and deeds God is worthy of praise: but to praise him *for* cancer is to praise him for evil, and this is far from appropriate" (p. 73; italics his). This may ruffle the feathers of some sincere Christians who quote Rom 8:28 at the most inappropriate places (e.g. the funeral parlor), but Stein demonstrates that the verse does offer hope and consolation for those in crises.

One troubling aspect of the book concerns not what Stein includes but what he omits. For example, one of the highly debated Scripture passages in evangelical circles is 1 Tim 2:11–12, which concerns the issue of silence and authority of women in the Church. There is, unfortunately, no discussion of this verse or any related verses that deal with women and/or their role in the Church. There is also no mention of the difficult and often debated verses that describe the charismatic gifts (e.g. 1 Corinthians 12, 14). It is obvious that a book of 162 pages cannot be expected to

exhaust every difficult issue. One can only speculate that Stein's "difficult" selections were predetermined by his initial audience (his book first appeared as a series of articles in *The Standard*, the denominational journal of the Baptist General Conference). I believe a book that purports to address the difficult passages in the epistles cannot avoid the above-mentioned topics.

The book could be used in a number of ways. In the church it can be used as a text in an adult Sunday-school class. Parishioners and teachers need to grapple with the difficult passages presented in the epistles. In the college and/or seminary it could be used, along with *Difficult Passages in the Gospels*, as collateral reading for a course in NT introduction or hermeneutics. I think Stein's book would have been strengthened if he (and Baker Book House) had limited the scope of this book in anticipation of future volumes. The book, for example, could have been limited to the difficult passages in the Pauline letters, followed by a work addressing the Johannine letters, followed by one on the catholic letters. This streamlined focus would allow further development for each of the selected "difficult" passages.

Stein has produced a volume that will assist the expositor and challenge the exegete. The evangelical community anxiously awaits further scholarly contributions from his pen.

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The Message of 2 Corinthians. By Paul Barnett. Downers Grove/Leicester: InterVarsity, 1988, 188 pp., \$9.95.

Barnett's volume is a fine addition to the Bible Speaks Today series. The book is a well-written, insightful look at the most personal of Paul's letters. Barnett achieves his goal of showing how God's power is manifested through weakness (p. 4) by providing for us a humble and transparent apostle Paul. The picture of Paul that Barnett paints is one of a loving and dedicated pastor, intent on winning back the affections of his children. Anyone who reads this work will have a new appreciation for the apostle.

After brief opening remarks (pp. 7-8) and an outline of the letter (p. 9), Barnett provides us with a helpful introduction (pp. 13-22). Several topics are included: Paul's relationship with the Corinthians, the importance of 2 Corinthians, the "super-apostles" who oppose Paul at Corinth. Discussion of these topics enables one to get a handle on the issues and questions that surround this letter, though it would have been beneficial also to include a brief discussion of the many theories that try to explain the "structural unevenness" of 2 Corinthians (p. 16). Barnett acknowledges the tension that exists between apostle and church, a tension intensified by the presence of "super-apostles." Barnett identifies these intruders (pp. 18-22) as Jews who seek to keep Jewish Christians at Corinth under the Mosaic covenant and to bring Gentile Christians under the mandates of the apostolic council (Acts 11). Although not all will agree with this identity of the newcomers, Barnett does an admirable job of trying to maintain his position throughout his work despite the disparate material in 2 Corinthians (i.e. despite the data suggesting that the intruders were Jewish versus the data inferring that they were Gentile).

Following the introduction, Barnett launches into the commentary proper (pp. 23-188). He takes us through the letter passage by passage (using the *NIV*), guided by the following outline: Paul's reason for writing (2 Cor 1:1-2:13), the

ministry of the new covenant (2:14–7:4), Titus' news from Corinth (7:5–9:15) and Paul's third visit to Corinth (10:1–13:14). Each of these sections is divided into several points, a format that is easy to follow.

Beginning with the opening verse of the letter, Barnett builds his case for understanding 2 Corinthians as a defense of Paul's apostleship, one given credence by the "weaknesses" evident in his ministry (especially to the Corinthians). In Barnett's opinion 2 Corinthians is a work inspired by the "personal crisis" Paul underwent during his second visit to Corinth. One result of this untimely visit was the rejection of Paul by the Corinthians, a rejection that hurt Paul deeply and prompted him to write rather than visit the church at Corinth at this time.

Barnett succeeds in showing us how Paul presents (re-presents) himself to the Corinthians as a true apostle of God, in contrast to the "super" or "false" apostles who revel in triumphalism. When measured against these highly successful envoys (who take pride in mystic and paranormal abilities), Paul's ministry of suffering (cf. 6:3–10) and lack of rhetorical skills (10:1–7) look pale in comparison. As a result 2 Corinthians reflects an ongoing battle between Paul and the other "ministers" in Corinth, with the Corinthians as the audience for Paul's defense.

In addition to showing Paul as "weak and foolish" in the eyes of the Christians at Corinth, Barnett has adeptly related such a picture to contemporary life. Time and time again Barnett exhibits strong expository skills in relating 2 Corinthians to today. It becomes an up-to-date letter for the Church entering the twenty-first century.

On pp. 139–155 the author discusses chaps. 8–9, which describe the collection for the poor. In these pages Barnett emphasizes the reasons for giving and the need for church leaders to proceed with caution when addressing Christians concerning the act of giving. Especially helpful is Barnett's insistence that giving is beneficial for God's people, even if such an act does not result in material wealth (pp. 152–155).

Equally enlightening is his discussion on leadership, as epitomized by Paul (p. 175). In short, the apostle shuns the temptation to create a circle of admirers (as did his opponents) simply to bolster his ego. In contrast Paul faithfully serves the Lord he met on the Damascus road and ministers without ulterior motive. In light of the temptation inherent in serving churches of today (whether on the local scene or via the media), these words ring relevant and true.

These are but two examples of Barnett's insight that caught my attention. In addition, the overall writing style makes for a lucid presentation. Each main section contains introductions and summaries so that the reader is always aware of what is on the writer's mind. There are helpful footnotes (some humorous, e.g. p. 174 n. 7) and a map (p. 19).

Despite my high opinion of this book, I would like to offer some suggestions for improvement. Overall it suffers from imbalance, since the first 100 pages of commentary are devoted to chaps. 1–6 while the last 7 chapters of Paul's letter are crammed into 65 pages. One gets the impression after reading Barnett's discussion of chaps. 7–13 that much in this section was quickly passed over (e.g. only one page on the "thorn in the flesh"). Another concern (as stated earlier) is Barnett's failure to incorporate discussion about the unevenness of 2 Corinthians. One receives the impression that it is a letter composed at one sitting. Such an impression fails to address adequately the several zigzags the letter takes (e.g. 2:14; 6:14; 7:5; 8:1; 10:1).

Moreover, for one who has taken great pains to describe Paul in all his weaknesses and humanness, Barnett surprisingly ignored R. Martin's commentary on 2 Corinthians. The latter is quite helpful in presenting the Paul that Barnett wants his readers to know.

There were a few unfortunate slips into sexist language (e.g. pp. 58, 175) and (not necessarily to be laid at the feet of Barnett) a number of typos (e.g. "ho" for "do," top of p. 83; p. 49 n. 12), as well as a lack of indices.

These criticisms should not, however, diminish the worth of this book or discourage anyone from reading it. It could easily serve as a useful tool for Bible study and is more than adequate to supplement seminary courses based on Martin's or V. Furnish's work. Barnett's book will open the eyes of those who think Paul to be impervious to criticism, alert ministers—new and seasoned alike—to the perils of serving congregations, and (above all else) teach every Christian of the need to seek God's power in weakness. As Paul says, "When I am weak, then I am strong" (12:10b).

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Meaning and Truth in 2 Corinthians. By Frances Young and David F. Ford. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987, \$15.95 paper.

Every so often a book comes along from within the ranks of those that we evangelicals variously call "critical," "liberal" or "modernistic" scholars that alters the course of critical scholarship for years to come. This book has the potential to be one of those, both because of its content and because of its scholarly and stylistic mastery.

The book is the flagship of a new series that seeks "to bridge the gap between biblical scholarship and the larger enterprise of Christian theology" (p. vi). The series responds to "a sense that systematic theology and biblical studies were finding it more and more difficult to act as dancing partners, each following its own agenda, unable to synchronize their steps or even grasp what the other was about" (p. 1). This book effectively closes that hermeneutical gap for 2 Corinthians.

The book examines the thrust of the text as a whole (chap. 1), the genre and Hellenistic background of the letter, including a powerful defense of its unity (chap. 2), Paul's Jewish background as reflected in the text, and particularly his conscious and unconscious use of the OT (chap. 3), a hermeneutical base for doing word, sentence, context and reference studies (chap. 4), how other hermeneutical systems stand up in the face of 2 Corinthians and what sorts of "extended meanings" are legitimate and what are not (chap. 5), Paul's use of metaphor, particularly his "economy of God" imagery (chap. 6), sociological factors that affect interpretation (chap. 7), what the text says about Paul's authority (chap. 8), and what the text says about God (chap. 9). Chapter 10 is a fresh translation of the text. The book does not follow a commentary format, but in the course of these chapters it deals with virtually every passage of 2 Corinthians. A complete Scripture index makes it easy to locate comments on a specific reference, so it can be used as a commentary with minimal effort.

2 Corinthians proves to be a unity once we understand its genre as "Paul's apology in the quasi-technical sense of a 'speech for the defence,' an *apologia in absentia* for Paul's style of mission" (p. 27). This represents a major departure from mainline criticism, and evangelicals can applaud it. On the other hand, some features will bother evangelicals. Perhaps the most distressing paragraph is the incongruous attack on inerrancy on p. 227. The section that asserts the authority of the Biblical canon, based as it is on this inadequate view of Scripture, is the weakest part of the book (pp. 225-232).

Nevertheless, we should not let higher-critical problem texts such as this one detract from the book's significance. At every point the authors take pains to move

from the stratosphere of criticism to the more foundational question: "So what?" They interact with critical literature and deal with the questions of their peers. They treat the question of Paul's authority, defined on p. 207 as "a form of the exercise of power which involves the right to power. It entails obedience and so is essentially interactive, a social relationship whose meaning and interpretation are vital to the nature of any community." They show how this authority develops along six facets in 2 Corinthians, but they do not stop there; they move on to a brilliant application of this authority to the modern Church. In all this their ultimate guide is Paul himself, communicating his gospel with a power to change hearts. Young gives a personal and moving testimony to the influence that 2 Corinthians has had on her spiritual life in the course of preparing this book (p. 136), and chap. 9 is described as a "theological essay, a fragment of the sort of theology that can be done through engagement with 2 Corinthians" (p. 235). The latter part of this essay is a stirring homily about the face of Christ (2 Cor 4:6) and what an encounter with that face means for believer and nonbeliever alike. It wraps up with a masterful defense of the Trinity. 2 Corinthians is, in many ways, a complex and confusing book, but this work leads us through the maze and brings us face to face with Jesus Christ as Paul understood him, the Son of God and the heart of the gospel.

This is the most exciting book I have read in many years. It represents a new direction for critical research and can open up a new world for evangelicals if taken for the pivotal departure that it represents. It should be required reading for every student of hermeneutics, and for professors as well. Perhaps the highest compliment I can give it is this: I will definitely read it again, this time for edification.

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Word Biblical Themes: Philippians. By Gerald F. Hawthorne. Waco: Word, 1987, 118 pp., \$8.95/\$6.95.

Hawthorne has written two commentaries on Philippians. The first is volume 43 in the *Word Biblical Commentary* series and was published in 1983. That volume is an encyclopedia of information about this mighty epistle. The list of abbreviations alone contained in the volume is 11 pages long. Hawthorne said he spent four years in the development of that commentary, and the quality of his work shows it.

Now this smaller commentary has come out under the general title of *Word Biblical Themes*. It is among the first of another series of Word commentaries (one on Psalms by L. Allen was released with this one), with the promise that two more titles were scheduled for release in 1988. The thrust of this series, according to the publishers, is to be theological. It is their intention that these "volumes present theological summaries of much of the research in the WBC . . . providing a concise summary of the overarching theology of the biblical books." Hawthorne has not failed to live up to their expectations.

Since I also reviewed Hawthorne's WBC commentary, I have some perspective on both works. This one, by comparison, is little but mighty. It is a mere 118 pages in length and omits the major scholarly components of the larger work: It has no lengthy bibliographies, Greek is used sparsely (although the author's facility in the language is obvious to the informed reader), and the prose of the book makes its contents more readily accessible to laypeople. This also is part of the publishers' intentions. They have aimed these volumes at "the busy pastor, Sunday school teacher, and the layperson . . . for practical application."

Hawthorne begins with an information-packed introduction in which he familiarizes the reader with the context of Philippians, its author, and his audience. He then launches into seven interesting and artfully crafted chapters that focus on the theological themes in this joyous epistle to the church so near to Paul's heart. The themes dictate the content of each chapter; he does not move chronologically through an outline of the epistle in sequence. Instead he systematically gathers together the pertinent references from throughout the epistle and weaves them together to develop the theological theme in question.

Each chapter is a joy to read. It is obvious that Hawthorne has an intimate familiarity with this epistle. He draws his data from the length and breadth of Philippians to establish the theological pictures of "The Character of God," "The Providence of God and the Problem of Evil," "The Person of Christ," "The Christ-hymn," "The Call to Salvation," "The Christian Life" and "The Note of Joy." This approach is desirable, if not preferable, in Paul's writings because they are far from systematic.

In the chapter titled "The Person of Christ" Hawthorne draws on Paul's 47 references to Christ in the epistle and points out how "the preeminence of Christ pervades Philippians." After acknowledging that all of Paul's thinking is influenced by his perceptions of Christ, Hawthorne says that he will "gather up and systematize Paul's 'random' remarks about Christ in" the epistle (p. 42). He then launches into a systematic presentation of the names/titles of Christ beginning with "Jesus." He shows how Paul used the names and titles of our Lord to convey theological concepts to the Philippian Christians. He draws on OT meanings of the terms and compares and contrasts them with the nuances of Christian meaning that developed in the Church. Following his discussion of the separate and combined terms, the writer speaks of "Paul's reasons for saying 'Jesus Christ is Lord'" (pp. 52-54). Throughout this chapter the reader is reassured of the deep spiritual devotion Paul had to the Lord Jesus Christ. Hawthorne has a deep sense of the apostle's spirituality and conveys it to the reader in sensitive and meaningful ways throughout the book.

While it is no mere rehash of the material in the larger commentary, the book obviously is the product of a mind that has been saturated with the contents of the epistle. God's graciousness and Paul's total commitment to Christ Jesus the Lord are evident everywhere. It is a book well worth reading.

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1 and 2 Timothy, Titus. By Gordon D. Fee. New International Biblical Commentary series. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988, xvii + 332 pp., \$7.95.

This commentary is a revision by the author of his 1984 contribution to the Good News Commentary series. He informs the reader that the present commentary is "substantially the same" (p. xi) as the previous one, although the Biblical text is now the *NIV*. The commentary, although not technical, is ideal for students, pastors and teachers. It is a model of clarity and organization and consistently reflects a judicious examination of exegetical issues. Indeed, even though the commentary is brief I think it is one of the best available on the pastoral epistles. Fee's skill in writing commentaries is as evident in this volume as it was in his magisterial volume on 1 Corinthians.

The distinctive and creative contribution of the commentary is found in Fee's thesis that the pastorals were written to address specific situations in the churches.

The purpose of the letters, contrary to most scholars, is not to write a manual for the Church that includes instructions for the organization of the Church. Instead, Fee contends that each of the pastorals is best explained as a response to false teachers who were threatening the churches. The pastorals, then, are interpreted in the same way as most of the other Pauline letters. They were written to specific situations in the churches, providing concrete advice for the particular problems being encountered in local congregations.

A cogent defense is also offered for the Pauline authorship of the pastorals. Fee argues that the specific historical situations displayed in the letters are best explained if they were written in Paul's lifetime, demonstrating again his careful attention to the historical situation of the documents. He also uses a number of traditional arguments to defend Pauline authorship and is particularly effective in showing that the claim that Pauline theology is radically transformed in the pastorals cannot be substantiated.

One of the most controversial passages in the pastorals is 1 Tim 2:8-15. Here Fee applies his thesis that the pastorals were occasional documents written to correct specific situations in the churches. Thus he contends that women are only forbidden to teach men because of the influence of false teachers upon women. Therefore Paul is not making a normative statement for all time about women teaching men. Rather, he forbids women from teaching in this particular situation since they have been adversely influenced by the false teachers.

Fee's general thesis that the pastorals were written to counter particular problems in the churches is convincing. He rightly sees that false teachers in the churches shaped and informed the way Paul wrote the pastorals. Evangelicals who ascribe to the traditional view of the letters often consult them for establishing or justifying the organization of the Church. Such a use of the pastorals is not precluded by Fee's commentary, although—if Fee is correct—serious and careful thinking is needed in order to articulate how Paul's specific advice to churches facing heresy should be applied to today's Church.

The issue of the normativity of Paul's specific advice arises again when we consider Paul's teaching on women in 1 Tim 2:9-15. It seems to me that Fee overemphasizes the *ad hoc* nature of Paul's teaching here. He is probably correct that the false teachers influenced women (cf. 2 Tim 3:5 ff.), but it is interesting to note that none of the false teachers named in the pastorals is a woman (1 Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 2:17-18; cf. 3:6). Thus Fee does not adequately explain why Paul reserves for women alone the prohibition against teaching men. Indeed, Paul's teaching here seems to be more than *ad hoc* since he appeals to the creation order in 2:13 to justify his prohibition of women teaching men authoritatively, a verse that Fee skates over rather quickly.

Also, Fee's claim that "elders" was used as "a covering term for both overseers and deacons" (p. 22; cf. p. 78) seems incorrect. He offers no evidence to support his assertion, and the NT nowhere makes such an explicit identification. There is clear evidence that "elders" and "overseers" are two different words to describe the same office (Titus 1:5, 7; Acts 20:17, 28). And it is also evident that "overseers" and "deacons" are two distinguishable offices (1 Tim 3:1-13; Phil 1:1). Two responsibilities of the overseer/elder—namely, teaching and governance (1 Tim 3:2, 4-5; 5:17)—are not predicated of deacons. Thus, contrary to Fee, it is more likely that elders and overseers describe the same office, and this office is distinct from the office of deacon.

My review should not end on a negative note, for I recommend this commentary on the pastorals enthusiastically to my students. The exposition of the meaning of

the text is lucid, there is consistent attention to the flow of thought in the text, and the historical situation of the letters is taken seriously.

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1 Peter. By J. Ramsay Michaels. WBC 49. Waco: Word, 1988, lxxv + 337 pp., \$24.95.

It is to the credit of the editors of the WBC series that volumes on the neglected books of the canon have received early publishing dates. Consider Smalley's work on the Johannine epistles and Bauckham's on Jude and 2 Peter, as well as Bruce's volume on Thessalonians.

The Church has long neglected the importance of the Petrine literature. This may be in part due to the doubt cast on the authenticity of both epistles that bear the apostle's name. History also attests that they have suffered benign neglect as the Church emphasized the Pauline letters to the exclusion of other NT literature. For years evangelicals have had to reach back to the standard English works by F. W. Beare and E. G. Selwyn, both written in the 1940s.

Michaels has produced a solid, useful commentary within the familiar framework of the WBC. The treatment of each passage begins with a translation and form/structure/setting. The exegesis in the comment section is judicious and fresh. In contrast to other volumes in the series, Michaels keeps the explanation section short and to the point, which allows the casual reader to peruse his conclusions without becoming bogged down.

Beare and Selwyn had come to mutually contradictory conclusions about the date and authorship of 1 Peter. Beare said that it was a pseudonymous production from the time of Trajan and dependent on Pauline literature. Selwyn (followed by Stibbs) rallied to the traditional viewpoint that Peter and Silvanus co-wrote the epistle. He also theorized that it was composed in Rome for the paschal celebrations of A.D. 64. In both cases, date and authorship rise and fall together according to conventional wisdom: A late date points to non-Petrine origin.

Michaels has attempted to break the deadlock by reviving a theory of W. Ramsay in *The Church in the Roman Empire* (1893): Peter did not die in the Neronian persecution but survived and lived to write 1 Peter in A.D. 70-80. He further proposes that 1 Peter, like 1 *Clement*, was composed jointly by Peter and the church at Rome.

While Michaels' approach is a welcome addition to the debate, the problems that the post-A.D.-70 Petrine authorship creates are greater than those it solves. While he wishes to restore credibility to Petrine authorship, Michaels must throw out a mound of tradition and historical data that points to Peter's martyrdom under Nero. He discredits that evidence on the basis of a handful of theoretical reconstructions of the Christian Church in the mid-60s as opposed to the 70s. In trying to satisfy those from both camps, he may justly be charged with wanting to have his cake and eat it too.

Setting critical issues to one side, it must be said that Michaels' commentary should stand for some time as the standard evangelical English work on 1 Peter. He understands the letter as an "apocalyptic diaspora epistle" written to Gentile Christians to instruct them how to live holy lives in a hostile world. One of Peter's teachings is that the Christian must live within conventional social mores, represented by the *Haustafel* in 2:13-3:7. Michaels has interacted nicely with patristic

literature as well as with other modern works, notably Goppelt's commentary based on sociological theory. He signals a cautious approach to Goppelt's work in his warning that the author may not have had a clear understanding of the social setting of the churches in Asia Minor.

The commentary is especially helpful on the problem passages of 1 Peter. For example, he takes the "spirits" in 3:19 to be "spirits in refuge"—that is, evil angels to whom Christ's rule will extend. He has an even-handed section on baptism and regeneration in 3:21, and he argues *contra* Reicke that the proclamation of the gospel to "the dead" points to the OT saints now dead and to their awareness of God's grace.

Readers will appreciate Michaels' lack of equivocation and his clear delineation of his views in simple sentences.

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Knowing the Truth about Creation. By Norman Geisler. Ann Arbor: Servant, 162 pp., \$8.95 paper.

The general editors of the *Knowing the Truth* series, J. I. Packer and P. Kreeft, describe its purpose as focusing on fundamental truths that Christians (Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox) hold in common. They describe these truths as "no vague, weak 'lowest common denominator,' but a solid wide-ranging spread of belief and practice that has been at the heart of every mainstream Christian body from apostolic times" (p. ix).

In the first part of the book under review, Geisler describes a Biblical view of spiritual and material creation. Part 2 deals with philosophical and scientific aspects of creation. In the third part the author presents moral and spiritual implications of creation. As a biologist I am more used to dealing with the scientific aspects of creation, and therefore I personally found the treatment by a Christian philosopher to be both informative and interesting.

Geisler supports a view of microevolution (variation within created forms) but not macroevolution. Physical similarities are described as evidence for a common Creator rather than common ancestry. In this framework, natural selection accounts for the survival of variations, not the source of variations. Interesting references are provided that cite C. Darwin and A. Wallace as referring to natural selection as an intelligent, powerful deity. A wealth of other references is provided that documents the assumptions of various views of the origin of biological life. The book would be valuable for this reason alone.

Geisler pulls together much material from his earlier writings. The strength of his message lies in the application of God as the primary cause of the understanding of Scriptural teachings on marriage, authority in the church, authority in the home, human government, ecology, original sin and salvation, the resurrection of Christ and believers, and the second coming of Christ. Geisler does not, however, treat exegetical issues that have to be dealt with in handling such matters as the length of the days of creation, young or old earth and universe, and local or universal flood. The handling of these more controversial topics raises the issue of how Scripture is to be exegeted, whether literally or figuratively. This critical issue is an increasingly vexed one today. The nature of the truth that is taught by those who

are in positions that command authority is too often based on their method of exegesis. This needs to be addressed so as not to lose the authority of Scripture in today's teaching ministries.

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Who Made You? By Alfred H. Howell. New York: Praeger, 1989, xxiv + 174 pp., \$14.95 paper.

This work is one volume in the Convergence series founded, planned and edited by R. N. Anshen. The series is concerned with the unity and interdependence of all nature and consequently has a transdisciplinary focus.

Howell is interested in answering several questions, among them the cause of human existence, whether this cause is responsible for both man's gentleness and savagery, and what orientation man is to take for the future benefit of mankind.

Modern science, for Howell, is a better source of answers than the myths of creation, for the latter are conditioned by prejudices and context while the former consists of a group of verifiable data. Any notion of absolute, divine revelation as a basis for a cosmology, Howell believes, is childish and must be replaced by the maturity of the scientific era.

The big-bang theory, Darwin's theory of evolution, and the physiology of the human brain lead Howell to argue a twofold position. First, the cosmos exists by the random movement and change of eternal, impersonal, all-pervading energy, which he calls "Deus Universalis." Therefore a personal, designing God is not a valid postulation. Second, everything termed religious experience or revelation is explained as a function of the brain and therefore is a human phenomenon. The phenomenon of religious perception, man's spiritual nature, is universal but diverse. Howell calls it "Deus Sapiens," and from it emerges the compassionate human concern to operate for the immediate well-being of mankind. The phenomenon of revelation is simply mental projection and conscious reception of human ideas deemed relevant to a particular cause or situation. These may be proper or improper and must be evaluated by how they benefit mankind.

Because all being finds its source in "Deus Universalis," Howell concludes that man's gentleness and savagery both have the same cause. Because revelation is human and not authoritative or sacred, mankind has no inerrant guide for his survival. "Deus Sapiens," when oriented to man's good, functions in Howell's understanding only with a short-term perspective. Man's religious nature is concerned only with today. The concern for tomorrow, a forward-looking perspective, must be found in another aspect of the brain outside the function responsible for religious perceptions. Thus humanity's current comfort and long-range survival depend on a union of the brain's spiritual compartment with the compartment responsible for a future, global orientation.

Howell's work suffers in places from the mistake of presenting as fact what remains as scientific hypothesis. He is influenced by enlightenment thought and demonstrates a misunderstanding of Biblical theology (e.g. Holy Spirit and *Logos* are not interchangeable concepts) and uncritically accepts critical Biblical scholarship. The evangelical classroom could best profit from the book by using it as an example of contemporary fusing of modern scientific theory with humanistic philosophy and

as a challenge to have both short- and long-range goals in its planning for involvement in society.

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Inerrant Wisdom: Science and Inerrancy in Biblical Perspective. By Paul H. Seely. Portland: Evangelical Reform, 1989, 216 pp., \$11.95 paper.

This recent attempt to redefine inerrancy is presented by a former advocate of full inerrancy. His thesis is that "factual inerrancy" is not sustained by Scripture. Rather, it teaches "sapiential inerrancy, an Inerrant Wisdom" (preface), which allows God to communicate with man as a father to a child with "certain niceties of fact being temporarily set aside" (preface).

Foundational to Seely's proposal is the claim that there is a dichotomy of knowledge. Salvation knowledge is supernatural, both in origination and validation, whereas scientific truth originates and is validated naturally. Spiritual truth is preserved from error, but scientific knowledge is tied to advances in the scientific mandate (cultural mandate). He understands this dominion mandate to be expressed via acquisition of scientific data to enhance such domination. Thus antiquated scientific methodologies and historiographies may account for factual inconsistencies in the Biblical text.

Seely maintains that Jesus himself was subject to the scientific mandate, growing in natural knowledge so that he was not omniscient and was probably guilty of factual errors (p. 25). Further, Jesus did not teach in Matt 5:18; John 10:35b that the Bible is inerrant in its scientific statement but "had an ultimate commitment to the saving purposes of God, and hence preferred to subordinate absolute truth to these purposes (Matthew 3:13-17)" (p. 57). Jesus interpreted Hos 6:6; 1 Sam 21:1-6 in a way contradicting Exod 16:4 ff.; 35:2; Num 15:32-36. His divorce teaching (Matt 19:8; Mark 10:5) showed that according to Deut 24:1-4 God accommodates Scripture not only to errant science but also to man's sinfulness.

Likewise Paul did not teach inerrancy as commonly understood but argued for infallibility of purpose (p. 161). Due to his Christocentric convictions he surrendered the factual inerrancy view that was in vogue among his Jewish contemporaries (p. 159). Accordingly, in 2 Tim 3:16 Paul taught that the Scriptures were inspired regarding faith and morals (p. 146).

Certain problems undermine Seely's attempt to overturn the doctrine of full inerrancy. First, the dichotomy between scientific knowledge and salvific or spiritual knowledge based upon the scientific mandate is not convincing. There is little attempt to justify that the so-called "scientific mandate" is to be equated with the cultural mandate of Gen 1:28. This represents an unwarranted extrapolation because there is nothing in the text that links the acquisition of scientific knowledge to domination.

Second, a major argument marshaled against full inerrancy is accommodation. Accommodation certainly is required in God's communication with man, but not accommodation to error. Accommodation to the finiteness of man may involve less technical precision, but imprecision must not be confused with error. Inerrantists do not require scientific precision in order for a statement to be true.

Third, utilizing article 5 of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy statement, Seely tries to force the full inerrantists into a corner, not allowing for pro-

gressive revelation. While it is true, as he indicates, that article 5 argues that later revelation may not correct or contradict earlier revelation, it is not to be understood in an absolute sense but is qualified to apply to fulfillment: "We deny that later revelation, *which may fulfill earlier revelation*, ever corrects or contradicts it." A revelation that has been fulfilled may no longer be binding. In addition, the revelation may be time-limited in scope. The full inerrancy paradigm allows for progressive revelation.

Other problems with Seely's model include (1) the idea that Paul understood a canon within a canon, (2) the exegesis of major passages, including his understanding of *plerōō* in Matt 5:18 as "to fill full" rather than the more commonly accepted "to fulfill" nuance, (3) his mistaken notion that inerrancy is based on deductive reasoning, and (4) the postulation that the full inerrancy hermeneutic demands a creation date of 4000 B.C. (p. 67).

Finally, Seely's understanding of Christ is contrary to the testimony of Scripture. There is never a hint that Jesus might have erred as a boy (p. 25). Jesus Christ was the God-man. It is not possible to separate his humanity from his deity. Jesus must err only if humanity includes sinfulness as one of its constituent parts. But because sinfulness is not part of the necessary constitution of man, this view of Jesus can be rejected.

In summary, apart from operating on the basis of the legitimacy of the scientific mandate, these arguments against inerrancy follow the same general approach of D. Fuller and others in the limited inerrancy camp, who argue for infallibility in matters of faith and practice. Nevertheless, because this book challenges the standard interpretation of Biblical texts that support inerrancy, it is worthy of study.

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Christianity and the Nature of Science. By J. P. Moreland. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989, 263 pp., \$14.95 paper.

Among the defenders of "creation science" one seldom encounters a genuinely proficient philosopher of science. This is why Moreland's contribution stands apart from the ubiquitous mediocrity of creationist literature. Moreland has developed the chapter on "Science and Christianity" from his previous book, *Scaling the Secular City*, into a vigorous study that challenges the autonomy of secular modern science while inviting the reader to think hard about the ways science and Christianity should interact.

This book leads the reader through a perspicuous, albeit incomplete, survey of the philosophy of science. Rather than providing a thoroughgoing integration of Christianity with particular scientific disciplines, the volume represents the effort of a Christian philosopher to explore the nature of science. As such the book is a tremendous success, not because its analysis delivers compelling solutions to every question but because it succeeds in leading the reader through a thoughtful consideration of the nature of science. Moreland's investigation is driven by the dual conviction that science holds no monopoly on the rational pursuit of truth and that creation science deserves admission to the ranks of mainstream science.

His viewpoints motivate his defense of three primary theses: (1) There exists neither a definition of science nor an accepted scientific method that can serve to demarcate science from nonscience. Accordingly, philosophical and theological concepts

are properly included in scientific discourse. It follows that "scientific creationism" is not an oxymoron. (2) The various limitations of science render scientism false and undermine any epistemic hegemony that science might seek to exercise over philosophy or theology. (3) Efforts to integrate theology and science should not presume scientific realism, the position that science obtains true theories about the "real world." Rather, the integration of science and theology is best facilitated by the adoption of an "eclectic model of science" that employs either a realist or an antirealist view on a case-by-case basis.

Because Moreland does not succeed in uncovering "a generally agreed on set of necessary and sufficient conditions for something to count as science," he concludes in his first chapter ("The Definition of Science") that science defies definition. He insists, however, that no explicit definition is required in order to recognize an example of science when confronted with it. The convenience of this strategy for one endeavoring to establish the scientific status of creationism is obvious. What is not so clear is that Moreland has demonstrated that all one can say, after an attempt to define science, is "I know it when I see it."

Moreland arrives at this conclusion by showing that each of Judge W. Overton's "essential characteristics of science" (testability, falsifiability, tentativeness, recourse to natural law) fails individually to demarcate science from nonscience. He does not, however, build a solid case to explain why these and/or other characteristics of science, if considered collectively, could not serve to stake out the proper domain of the sciences. Neither does he explore the permissibility of an historical/sociological definition that would define science according to parameters set by a scientific community. Moreland is correct that Overton's decision foundered as a venture into the philosophy of science. But Overton's failure does not in itself render the task of defining science insurmountable.

Yet it seems that articulating an acceptable definition of science is one problem that Moreland would prefer to remain unsolved. Rather than setting science apart from other intellectual pursuits, Moreland favors a unified view of knowledge. Such an epistemological outlook places philosophy in the foundational role of undergirding the sciences. It further encourages science to interface with theological concerns.

Although compelling reasons exist for the Christian philosopher to favor such a view of science, it is disappointing for Moreland to dismiss the complementarity view of science and Christianity without thorough consideration. He insists that such a view "reduces to the vanishing point God's primary causal activity." Given such an objection one would expect Moreland to identify ways in which Christianity is foundationally crucial to the pursuit of natural science. But this role is reserved for philosophy. In this case, perhaps a better title for the book would have been *Philosophy and the Nature of Science*.

As an introduction to the philosophy of science Moreland's book does quite well too. Although his chapter on "Scientific Methodology" may be rough going to the uninitiated, his chapters on the "Limits of Science," "Scientific Realism" and "Alternatives to Scientific Realism" serve as first-rate introductions to these areas of the philosophy of science. The book's select bibliography is also a valuable aid. Breaking the entries into nineteen categories is a helpful guide for further reading.

The volume's final chapter on "The Scientific Status of Creationism" makes explicit one of the central objectives of the book. Moreland argues: "Scientific reasons are offered; that is all creation science needs in order to count as science." Fair enough. But perhaps a more worthy question is whether or not creation science is good science. Moreland stays away from this issue, stating that it "is not our present concern." Perhaps in light of recent court decisions the scientific status of

creationism needs articulation. But given Moreland's generally inclusive interpretation of the nature of science, the critical problem rapidly changes to that of sorting out the good science from the not-so-good.

Although Moreland lets his reader know his position on this issue, he does not pretend to defend it: "While I think recent creationist theories are rational to accept, even one who disagrees with them could still consider them rational to pursue." The desire to construct a rational justification for the pursuit of creation science is the underlying motivation for Moreland. His arguments for the consideration of creation science as a legitimate science are as compelling as one will find.

Two of the book's omissions warrant recognition. Given the volume's title and the author's intentions, one may be dismayed by Moreland's precious few references to Scripture. Avoiding recourse to Holy Writ may be justified, however, on the basis that this is the work of a philosopher, not of a theologian. What cannot be excused is the absence of an index. A volume as richly documented and as broad in scope as this book partially hampers itself by such a failure. Despite this weakness, Moreland's trenchant study deserves wide readership by virtue of its capacity to elicit hard thinking on topics of crucial importance.

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Is the Universe Running Down?: Crisis in the Christian Worldview. By Gary North. Tyler: Institute for Christian Economics, 1988, 345 pp., \$19.95.

The main theme of the book is that creation scientists are making a mistake by using the second law of thermodynamics ("Natural processes tend to go to a state of equilibrium") in trying to disprove evolution. Evolution would require a decrease in entropy, at least locally, and therefore would violate the second law. North argues that evolutionists may rightly accuse creation scientists of inconsistency, for the latter believe that God overrode or suspended it at creation and in the working of miracles. Further, the appeal to increasing entropy is useless against macroevolutionists like Gould, who likewise deny that the law always operates.

North does not deny the second law. He merely points out that it is not a uniformitarian constant: God occasionally suspends it. This "law" is actually an empirical observation that cannot be proved. North cites the bush that burned without being consumed (Exod 3:2) as an example. The Lord caused energy to come from somewhere so that the molecules of the bush did not oxidize.

What does North propose as substitute arguments against evolution? The only one I could find is that insufficient time has occurred to allow for changes in species. North's purpose, however, was to declare creation scientists' debates with evolutionists futile, not to give them superior ammunition.

North claims that for Christians to debate evolutionists in the public schools is both a waste of time and a compromise. Espousing Van Tilianism, North declares that the believer and the unbeliever have no epistemological common ground. He urges creation scientists to adopt presuppositionalism and cites their failure to do so as their second weakness.

North also argues for postmillennialism, to which he appeals because it is optimistic. He castigates both premillennialists and amillennialists ("pessimillennialists") for their supposed pessimism. Dubbing dispensationalism "escapist Christianity," North attempts to link it to pietism and gnosticism.

North also argues for theonomy: All nations should use the principles behind the civil and moral portions of the Mosaic law as the basis for their legal codes. He appeals to God's essence as evidence that the Mosaic law is still in effect: "Since His essence cannot change, neither can His law." (All evangelicals agree that God does not change, but nontheonomists hold that the Mosaic law is a reflection of his will, not his essence, and therefore is subject to divine abrogation.)

The book's ideas do not always flow smoothly, and North repeats himself frequently. North, however, is clear to the point of being blunt. Never is there any mistaking what he means. Containing very little Greek or Hebrew, the work appears to be written for laymen. North explains the second law of thermodynamics so well that almost anyone can understand it. At the end of each chapter is a very helpful list of that chapter's main points.

North is quite well read on subjects varying as widely as thermodynamics, physics, and the new-age movement. His sections on historical perspective are tremendous. He is at his best when discussing economics and economic history. His critique of the writings of J. Rifkin, a new ager masquerading in Christian clothing, is superb.

Unfortunately North is sometimes sarcastic. He seems to relish berating fellow Christians, particularly dispensationalists. His unkind spirit will repulse potential allies.

North claims that the flow of covenantal blessings as a result of obedience is a repeal of the second law as a curse, placing them in the category of miracles. Actually such blessings are simply what God does through his normal means of working, which is the providential control of natural laws.

The author's position on common grace leaves much to be desired. He holds that God has no love whatever for the nonelect. North neglects to mention that this is a minority view even among Calvinists.

North's book is stimulating and challenging. Unafraid to fly in the face of the majority, the author is controversial and never boring. He demands that you think.

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Our Father Abraham. By Marvin R. Wilson. Grand Rapids/Dayton: Eerdmans/Center for Judaic-Christian Studies, 1989, 374 pp., \$15.95.

How long has it been since a book written by an evangelical was offered to its members by the Jewish Book Club? Wait no longer, because such a book has appeared. Wilson has achieved a major breakthrough for evangelicals working in the area of Christian-Jewish relations.

He sets about to reeducate Christians regarding their indebtedness to their Jewish roots. Of special interest to readers of *JETS*, he states in the preface that "Christian seminaries, colleges, and other educational institutions have been largely responsible for this lack [of an understanding of the Hebrew heritage of the Church]" (p. xv). His perception is the driving force behind the book.

One major point that Wilson wishes to make concerns the degree to which western Christians have lost the essentially Hebraic nature of Scripture. He argues persuasively that western Christians read the Bible through the lenses of western civilization. Thus the task at hand is to recover the Hebraic roots of our foundational documents and thereby to grow in appreciation for those who continue the Hebraic

tradition under the diverse umbrella of Judaism. We can learn from them and recapture a vital aspect of our Christian faith, one that the earliest Christians experienced.

In order to accomplish this undertaking, Wilson divides his book into five main sections. The first section, consisting of two chapters, argues for the connectedness of Christianity and Judaism. A key Scriptural passage in this regard is Paul's analogy of the olive tree (Romans 11). Arguing that the root of the olive tree represents the patriarchs, Wilson shows that Gentile Christians must rediscover their roots in Judaism rather than in pagan Hellenism and its subsequent developments.

Part 2 is historical in nature and traces in five chapters the beginnings of the Christian movement from Jesus' ministry to the present. We learn how Christianity, the child of Judaism, separated from and eventually persecuted its spiritual mother. Wilson makes a significant contribution by his careful discussion of the theological issues that arose out of Jesus' message and mission as well as a fresh assessment of the evidence in the final break between Church and synagogue. The break is dated about the middle of the second century C.E., shortly after the Bar Kochba revolt.

The break with Judaism unfortunately led to anti-Judaism in the Church. Chapter 7 briefly surveys the growth of this cancer. Students reading this are always shocked by the litany of un-Christian attitudes and actions against Jews through the centuries. As Wilson observes: "In today's church, the often sordid and self-indicting story of animosity, enmity, and strife directed by Christians toward Jews remains generally untold" (p. 91).

Part 3 examines in more detail the nature of Hebraic thought and the conceptual world that informs it. Here the modes of thought and frames of reference of the Hebrew Bible are isolated and illustrated. Wilson observes that the Hebrew Bible is characterized by action. He notes further that in place of doctrinal formulation one finds the idea of relationship to be of utmost importance. This existential dimension is rooted in a visceral or emotional outlook on life.

Wilson's book also has helpful guidelines on understanding Hebrew poetry and the word-picture artistry of the Hebrew poets. The importance of storytelling in the theology of the Hebrew Scriptures and a comparison of Greek and Hebrew logic make this a lively and, at times, controversial discussion. Paradox, antinomy, polarity and dialectic characterize Hebraic thought. This often results in the "loose ends" that Greek thought tends to abhor. Wilson's perspective on all this is worth quoting: "It is our conclusion that the Church's propensity for categorizing or methodologically organizing great theological systems of thought is at best a risky business. Rather, one must discover inductively interrelatedness within Scripture, while at the same time giving free play to the loose ends and paradoxical language found therein" (p. 153).

Part 3 concludes with a chapter that seeks to identify some areas where the Church has parted from her roots. It also deals with the unfortunate consequences of this departure. Dualism, otherworldliness and rugged individualism have spawned a number of un-Biblical attitudes and responses. Asceticism and monasticism, with their denial of the good gifts of God, have had an unhealthy influence on Christian spirituality. Wilson's observations about the failure of contemporary Christians to focus on the communal dimension of faith and to become "Lone Ranger" Christians is also right on target.

Part 4 displays the most original contribution of Wilson's book. He shows how a recovery of a Jewish outlook can enrich a Christian's life. Two examples include marriage and family along with the Jewish love of learning. Readers of *JETS* will especially appreciate his remarks on learning and teaching.

The contribution of Passover to a fuller understanding of the last supper and the bond between the Jewish people and the land of Israel also figure in the discussion. The latter issue is accompanied by an effort to provide a balanced view of the Middle East conflict. Each of these chapters would provide an excellent basis for small-group discussion in churches.

Part 5 outlines some practical steps that Christians can take to help heal the rift now existing between Church and synagogue. The suggestions are excellent and deserve wholehearted attention.

This is an important, ground-breaking book. It deserves wide circulation in churches and Christian schools. Some readers may feel that Wilson goes too far in his attempt to recover the Jewish roots of Christianity. My sympathies are with Wilson. If he does overemphasize the Jewishness of Christianity, it is sorely needed after centuries of sustained anti-Judaism in the Church. Negative reaction against Wilson's thesis may well reveal more about our own ignorance or our anti-Judaic, even anti-Semitic, attitudes than we are willing to admit.

Here is a book for both the Jewish Book Club and the Evangelical Book Club.

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The Literal Exposition on Job: A Scriptural Commentary Concerning Providence. By Thomas Aquinas. Translated by Anthony Damico. Atlanta: Scholars, 1989, 496 pp., \$39.95 paper.

Anyone who is familiar with the works of Thomas Aquinas realizes that he was anything but a dumb ox. His famous "Five Proofs for the Existence of God" have become a foundational *modus operandi* for evangelical evidentialists, typically referred to as neo-Thomistic apologists.

The American Academy of Religion Classics in Religious Studies series and translator Damico have produced a work that reveals the skill Thomas possessed for handling the text. Absent from this commentary is the kind of metaphysical genre otherwise found in the *Summa Theologiae* and *Summa Contra Gentiles*. Nevertheless the influence of Aristotle on Thomas' thinking is clearly evident. Interestingly Thomas refers to Aristotle as "The Philosopher"—an indication, no less, of the respect he had for the great sage, not to mention the compatibility of his philosophic method for the study of Job.

Thomas understands the book of Job to be proof of the divine providence of God, who is the ultimate governor of the events (good or evil) in the lives of people. The question of the relationship between revelation and reason is also present throughout this work. From Thomas' perspective there is an obvious relationship between the two, which is especially demonstrated in the debates Job carried on with his three friends and with God, clearly constituting an example of the rationality of the divine.

The structure of this commentary is centered around a "literal" interpretation of Job. In his accompanying essay M. D. Yaffe describes Thomas' literal approach as comparable to the approach of an "architect or builder" of a "Gothic cathedral, whose massive earthbound structure points heavenward" (p. 12). This interpretation corresponds to Thomas' philosophic understanding of order and governance.

Thomas begins his analysis by pointing out the literal historicity of the person of Job. The fact that the text refers to Job as being from the land of Uz and that it refers to him "by the name Job" is, in Thomas' opinion, ample testimony to this book's literalness and historicity. It is not a mere parable (p. 71). Job was a man who with-

drew from doing evil. He was free from sinful behavior. Thomas argues that man sins in three different ways—namely, against his neighbor, against God and against himself. Job was a man who kept himself from sin whether against God or self.

A refreshing aspect of Thomas' interpretation of Job is his understanding that Job's cursing of the day of his birth should not be falsely misunderstood to be sin (3:1–19). Rather, it is to be seen as Job's account of the evils that befell him in that day. This also upholds the rationality of the divine by demonstrating God's permission for Job to respond this way.

Regarding Job's friends, Thomas perceives that they grossly lack the wisdom of God and an understanding of doctrine. They also lack the ability to reflect critically and reason about the providence of God. The Aristotelian influence is clearly at work in this portion of the commentary as Thomas meticulously scrutinizes the arguments of Job's three friends with the skill of a surgeon.

The sudden appearance of Elihu (a fourth friend) does not seem to be a concern for Thomas in the same way it has been for many contemporary Biblical scholars. Thomas believes that God found fault with Elihu's false opinions and ignorant speeches. He further explains that all this is indicative of disorder, which ultimately points to a defect in reason.

The last portion of the commentary (Job 38–42) summarizes the issue of the providence of God. For all his references to divine rationality, Thomas clearly determined that no man, by his own wisdom, can comprehend God's divine providence. How often the scholastic master is accused of leaving no room for faith!

The commentary attempts to answer questions about man's relationship to God, God's divine providence in suffering, and the relationship between revelation and reason. Thomas applies Aristotelian scientific analysis to the study of the earth as a uniquely crafted work of God and the cause-and-effect relationships therein.

The first responsibility one has when reading an historic work such as the one here under review is to place its conclusions in their historical context. It would be easy to criticize Thomas for not understanding the text the way we evangelicals do in twentieth-century America. But that would be no more fair or helpful than finding fault with the Wright brothers for not understanding jet propulsion, or with Plato for not having a grasp of linguistic analysis.

Commentaries such as this are fascinating to read, especially for comparative purposes in order to see how our present-day interpretations differ from those of the past. Often we find that our interpretations are not as contemporary or original as we would like to think.

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Probing Heaven: Key Questions on the Hereafter. By John Gilmore. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989, 466 pp., \$14.95 paper.

Heaven can wait? Although it is not one of the twenty-one questions Gilmore raises, if it were, the answer after reading his volume would be a resounding no. Many of his readers will be stimulated to look forward more avidly to heaven. Here is no sentimental, fantasy-laden, mystical, or morbid treatment. While the "probing" is astronomical and telescopic, it is also microscopic in its attention to Scripture, to extra-Biblical data, and to our thought and experience. Throughout there is an earthing of the ethereal.

The space-probe image is reflected in the tripartite division of the book—ignition stage (situational), booster stage (expositional), midcourse corrections (inferential)—but it is not developed in detail. Rounding out the metaphor would require empirical data of an observer's landing in "eternal space" or of a "reentry." Such treatment would require a posthumous author, however.

The work evidences thorough scholarship drawing on thoughts about heaven from pre-Christian philosophers through the patristic, medieval, Reformation and Puritan writers down to process theologians and new-age proponents. The author's careful research gives him confidence to tackle formidable antagonists and to take issue with embedded theological convictions. The opponents he encounters are not straw men. He revels in meeting head-on those with whom he disagrees but gives a fair representation of the unacceptable target. He bravely enters the fray of interpreting the book of Revelation, using the dual instrument of "apocalyptic genre" and "reduplication." He emerges as an unrelenting amillennialist. He is unafraid of discussing controversial aspects of the subject of heaven: existence, origin, location, nature, residence, relation to time. It is worth reading his tight argument before leaping to the more juicy questions of his third part as to whether or not heaven will have sex, humor, equality, growth, ownership, memory and recognition.

This latter set of questions is not haphazard. Each follows on the previous one in natural progression. As one reads, one wonders if such and such a matter will be raised, and there—in a few pages, around the corner—it appears. Although it does not claim to be exhaustive, the work deals with most salient factors.

The treatment is eminently contemporary, as witnessed by his extended discussion of new-age philosophy. He confronts Shirley MacLaine, its spokesperson, unyieldingly if not unmercifully. He demonstrates her inconsistencies, her misuse of Scripture, her dependence on eastern religions, theosophy and cultic phenomena, and above all her self-deification. A prime new-age preoccupation is with the un-Biblical belief in reincarnation.

One of the author's cardinal concerns is to show that self-salvation is impossible whether a person lives one or a thousand lives. God alone is the author and giver of salvation, which is in Christ alone. He writes: "Heaven reaches us before we reach heaven. Our search is initiated by God. . . . It is never that we penetrate heaven but that heaven first penetrates us. . . . Not only are we promoting heaven's filling when Christ is heard, but in the overflow of heaven's power, we are drawn into orbit. Heaven probes us more thoroughly than we probe heaven. . . . The Christian life is as much an expression of heaven as a pursuit of heaven" (p. 28).

The book not only displays erudition but also does so in an engaging style. While some readers may find the author's wordplay periodically puerile, most will smile or even chuckle at the generous smattering of humor throughout the book. Its aphoristic witticisms and alliterations may derive from the author's Welsh genes (note the dedication to the memory of his Welsh parents: "both believers, both Baptists, both beloved, both alive, both at home"). He writes: "The harp is the traditional musical instrument of Wales. . . . Stationary harps are becoming in short supply. Switching to hand-held harps may cause some disappointment to Welsh harp players who arrive in heaven fully practiced with the traditional stand-up models" (p. 166).

The subject matter is intrinsically worthy and the book worthwhile. It invites our approbation.

The Beast of Revelation. By Kenneth L. Gentry. Tyler: Institute for Christian Economics, 1989, 188 pp., \$8.95.

The volume under review is a condensation of Gentry's doctoral dissertation, in which he attempted to prove that the Apocalypse was written prior to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. This view is held by a minority of scholars, and the majority opinion among both conservatives and radicals is that the Apocalypse was written after A.D. 90. Along with the date comes Gentry's preterist interpretation: The events in the book were fulfilled during Titus' conquest of the holy city.

Noting correctly that to identify the beast of Revelation 13 is to estimate the latest date for the book, the author attempted this ascertainment in chaps. 1-7. They cover such subjects as the identity, relevance, character, worship and revival of the beast. Gentry presented five interpretive principles and argued that they must govern one's understanding of Revelation. The fourth principle is that the beast must be a contemporary of John, which the author deduced from Rev 1:4, 11; 13:18. The fifth is that the book must be relevant to its recipients, which a prophecy describing events 1900 years in the future can hardly be. Gentry cited 1:1; 3:19; 22:6 as evidence that the events described in the Apocalypse would soon come to pass. (He interpreted Christ's words "this generation" in Matt 24:34 similarly.) To accept these theses is to embrace preterism.

Gentry concluded that the beast was Nero. He explained the deadly wound that was healed in Rev 13:3 by noting that the empire almost collapsed after Nero died, but it revived under Vespasian. Consequently the beast has a generic identity (the Roman empire) and a specific one (Nero). This emperor was worshipped, and the numerical value of the letters in his name in Hebrew total 666.

Chapters 8-16 attempt to date the Apocalypse and cover political, architectural, ecclesiastical and historical evidence relevant to it. Gentry built his case primarily using internal evidence. He argued that the first seven Roman emperors, of whom Nero was the sixth, were predicted by Rev 17:9-10. He understood the temple mentioned in 11:1-2 as being the one constructed by Herod, not a future one. He also attempted to explain away the stronger evidence for the late date.

The key question in dealing with external evidence concerning the date of Revelation: Which Church father was right? Gentry demonstrated that the fathers are hardly united in their testimony as to when the book was written. Most early-date scholars cite Irenaeus *Against Heresies* 5.30.3 as the strongest evidence for their view, but Irenaeus' words are ambiguous in the original. Gentry noted that it is possible that they can be translated: "It [the book] [or "he"—John] was seen no very long time since, but almost in our day, towards the end of Domitian's reign." The author also dismissed other late-date evidence, claiming that testimonies of Clement of Alexandria and Origen are ambiguous and that Eusebius' is internally contradictory.

Although not so today, the early date of the Apocalypse was widely held in previous centuries. It was particularly prominent in amillennial interpretation. Gentry named 117 past and present scholars who espoused the early date, some of whom were quite radical.

Gentry's book seems to have been written for pastors and laymen. Containing little Greek or Hebrew, it is neither very technical nor difficult reading. Its flow of thought is logical and orderly.

The volume has obvious importance for eschatology. It purports that the "last days" had to do with pre-diaspora Israel. If most of Revelation has been fulfilled, then it does not predict a removal of the Church or a tribulation period when God once again deals with the Jews as his primary people. (This does not, however,

disprove that these events might still happen.) The early date is compatible with all eschatologies except dispensational premillennialism.

Gentry built a good case for his position. Nero could well have been the beast, and a view that once held the minds of many Bible-believing scholars deserves more consideration than it has received in recent years. The argument that the Apocalypse should have significance to the Church of its day is particularly strong. Gentry's book is highly recommended. Read it with an open Bible and an open mind.

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The Gospel and the American Dream. By Bruce L. Shelley. Portland: Multnomah, 1989, 192 pp., \$8.95 paper.

Evangelicals have been struggling to determine the proper relationship between Church and state for some time now, but they remain far from any consensus. Post-millennial reconstructionists, premillennial dispensationalists, amillennialists, and a host of others have opposing viewpoints on this question. Nearly all can agree, however, that American culture is in dire need of a heart transplant and that the gospel message has the power to effect such a change.

Despite their optimistic view that Christ can change the world, Christians often find themselves in the seat of the social critic, bemoaning the fact that the world is only getting worse. Many believers are often overcome by despair. They think that it is futile to try to change the situation. Therefore they pray: "Come quickly, Lord Jesus!"

Such is not the perspective of historian Shelley. He makes clear that the gospel can hold its own against the overwhelming shift in today's culture and that it can effect changes in the social fiber of America (p. 187). Throughout his book Shelley continually attempts to bring the reader back to the question of what the role of religion ought to be in American culture. According to Shelley, American culture is a distinct combination of four important variables. The first is the "Biblical tradition" that developed from the influence of the Puritans and their covenantal view of life and role in the new world as God's chosen people. The second is the "Republican tradition" that gave definition to the political landscape of the new nation. The combination of these two traditions in the nineteenth century helped to create a new image of a "traditional America." Third, the growth of industry and commerce in the late nineteenth century redefined America within the "Economic tradition" lasting well into the first half of the twentieth century. Fourth, the years following World War II witnessed the popularization of the "Therapeutic tradition" that remolded the American mindset to believe that personal happiness and fulfillment is a prize to be gained by right. From this vantage point Shelley builds his case regarding the current situation in which American culture finds itself. He repeatedly asks the rhetorical question: "What in the world has happened to America?" This question Shelley surrounds with several examples of how far American culture has degenerated. At one time religion was a major contender in the American marketplace of ideas. Lately, however, it has become increasingly exempt from almost every aspect of society.

The heart of Shelley's analysis is a juxtaposition of the current interpretation of the American dream and the challenging message of the Christian gospel. The American dream today encompasses an obsession with material gain and status, not

to mention the narcissistic preoccupation with self. Shamefully enough, many Christians have adapted their lifestyles to the values of the American dream. "The gospel," by contrast, "is an invitation to submit to the rule of God in all spheres of life, including public life" (p. 25). The American dream has become a cultural nightmare, but the gospel has the power to transform it.

At the heart of American culture are the public institutions that Americans cherish: religious expression, political freedom, public education. In these three arenas, concedes Shelley, Christians are all but forgotten. How is it that Christian views have slowly disappeared from public debate? Based on the widening gap between Church and state, America's faith has become increasingly personal and therefore privatized. Privatized faith, according to Shelley, not only lends itself to pluralism but is continually justified by the fact that religion is viewed as a matter of personal choice.

The present popular understanding of freedom is also out of line with the Biblical concept of freedom. Americans tend to view the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as guarantees that such will be the outcome. These rights have become for many Americans the rationale for freedom without moral constraints. Shelley points out that such a view of freedom is anarchy and "was not what the Founding Fathers had in mind" (p. 91). They believed that the survival of democracy was contingent upon the presence of "religious and moral people."

Christians today are concerned not only with the removal of God from the public schools but also with the breakdown of morals and values. Rather than painting a bleak picture of the situation pertaining to the public schools, Shelley suggests several alternatives for Christians such as exercising their constitutional right "to press for the reform of public schools," building stronger ties within the family unit (which has a direct impact upon the stability of child development), and home or private schooling.

Shelley's final analysis covers four aspects of American private life: success, work, family, and love. Although Christians are no less sheltered from the pressures that exist in each of these areas, what is to be the Christian's response to the American-dream notion of success? What about the way I perform on the job? Does my family life reflect the values of the Lord Jesus, or is it just another casualty of a fast-paced, self-centered society? The gospel calls us to love unselfishly. It calls us to a love that is foreign to a culture that advises us to "look out for number one." Shelley appropriately summarizes how Christians need to live in a culture that values success, money, and self instead of godly virtue.

Shelley attempts to provide positive answers for the situation in which the Church finds itself, especially regarding the value of the American dream. Despite the fact that the Church's image has been tarnished, Shelley argues that the future can be a future of opportunity for the furtherance of the gospel message. To such an end followers of Jesus must be committed if changes are to take place in the cultural landscape.

Although I find little about which to disagree with Shelley, I do not think he has said anything in this work that has not already been said in a number of preceding critiques of American culture. What makes his work different, however, is his positive attitude, which maintains that regardless of how far American culture degenerates, the gospel is able to effect change. He also writes in a style that is free from the kind of subjective axe-grinding typical of many popular Christian authors. Shelley also makes good use of a wide range of material from Dostoyevsky to Bellah, which gives the work a less trivial edge than many other popularly written books.

His analysis, unoriginal though it may be, will challenge Christians to reevaluate their attitudes toward the values of today's culture and, perhaps, help wake them up from the American dream.

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Saved By Grace. By Anthony A. Hoekema. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989, 277 pp., \$22.95.

The volume here reviewed is a lucid, warm and comprehensive treatment of soteriology from the standpoint of the Reformed tradition. It is thorough in covering such vital issues as the order of salvation, the role of the Holy Spirit, the place of repentance and faith, justification and sanctification, and, in the last of its thirteen chapters, the perseverance of true believers.

The writer avoids antinomianism and would probably belong on the side of so-called "Lordship salvation." He endeavors to interpret his theological opponents fairly and is always courteous in discussing opinions with which he disagrees.

In discussing the order of salvation Hoekema rejects the sequential model, which makes perseverance follow sanctification, sanctification follow justification, justification follow conversion, and conversion follow regeneration (a Calvinistic order, not Arminian). Rather, he rightly sees the concomitant relationships of the internal movements of salvation. In this understanding faith and repentance are never without justification, justification is never without sanctification, and sanctification is never without perseverance.

Hoekema is strong and unequivocal in stressing the ministry of the Holy Spirit in bringing out individual salvation, from the birth of the Spirit through progressive sanctification to ultimate glorification. The Spirit baptizes the believer into the body of Christ, witnesses to his sonship, and guides him. In discussing the fruit and gifts of the Spirit, Hoekema insists that gifts become prostituted if not exercised under the control of the fruit of the Spirit. As for the miraculous gifts, Hoekema strongly favors the view that they were not intended to extend beyond the apostolic age. The nonmiraculous gifts, however, are essential throughout the Church age.

Hoekema argues against the Keswick and Wesleyan teachings of distinct crises that are soteriologically definitive. He also protests against the Campus Crusade and *Scofield Bible* concept of the carnal Christian, largely because he understands these views to imply that believers do not submit to the Lordship of Christ until a second crisis and that meanwhile the believer can be "living according to the flesh" (p. 22).

In treating the Wesleyan views of sanctification and perfection Hoekema falls short of accurately portraying authentic Wesleyanism's positions. From Wesley to Wiley and Dunning the leading Wesleyan/Arminian theologians have insisted that sanctification begins with the new birth and that it is progressive throughout life, even though there may be experienced an "entire sanctification" in the sense of Rom 12:1-2; 1 Thess 5:23-24; Jas 4:8.

It seems strange that the author's argument against the Wesleyan concept of perfection should be based on a modern dictionary definition of "faultlessness" rather than the NT usages of the word *teleios*, which suggests not flawlessness (which Wesleyans have never claimed) but completeness and fulfillment. In any case *teleios* and its cognates, as indicative of God's standard for Christians, are

found in the NT too frequently and too significantly to be ignored. Rather than chide those who hold a doctrine of Christian perfection it might be more appropriate to chide those who do not.

A pervasive feature of Hoekema's book is the attempt to affirm human freedom and accountability without surrendering the Calvinistic premises of predestination and monergism in the operations of grace. Hoekema is aware of the tension here but insists that the Bible gives both teachings and that therefore we must accept this as a paradox without straining too hard to resolve it.

On p. 79 in discussing whether "God seriously desires that all who hear the gospel should believe in Christ and be saved" over against the fact that the "same Bible teaches that God has chosen or elected his own people in Christ," Hoekema warns against attempting to solve the mystery by resorting to what he calls "rational solutions." Hyper-Calvinists escape the difficulty by a simple denial of one side of the paradox: "Since the Bible teaches election and reprobation, it simply cannot be true that God desires the salvation of all to whom the gospel comes." But he equally protests against the Arminian solution, which posits a prevenient grace bestowed on all, making possible the turning of all but leaving all equally with the possibility of resisting. Hoekema makes the astonishing comment that "this leaves us with a God who is not sovereign." It does not seem to occur to him that perhaps God permits this freedom as a provision of his sovereignty. Is sovereignty canceled if personal power to resist the Spirit's call is sovereignly bestowed?

If any effect contrary to God's will destroys God's sovereignty, then it cannot be true that God wills the salvation of all men, or else we are compelled to become universalists. And if faith is given by the Holy Spirit in a divine act of regeneration, how can a person justly be held accountable for not exercising a faith that he has not been given?

To affirm a limited atonement in one chapter (pp. 56 ff.) and then in the next to argue for a "well-meant offer of salvation" by God to all (pp. 73 ff.) is simply too much. How seriously can we take the shipbuilder's professed concern for all on board if he has deliberately provided lifeboats for only half? Some doctrines we can force together by sheer dogmatic courage, but they will not weld.

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Faith and Reason: Searching for a Rational Faith. By Ronald H. Nash. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988, 295 pp., \$15.95.

Nash intends the volume under review to serve as an introductory textbook for college and seminary classes in philosophy of religion and apologetics. Yet he is hopeful that reflective readers who are interested in a discussion of these topics will also find the book helpful.

It contains twenty chapters organized in six sections. In the first section Nash maintains that a well-rounded worldview will include beliefs about God, ultimate reality, knowledge, morality and humankind. He gives an outline of the Christian worldview and contrasts it with naturalism, which he considers Christianity's major competitor in the west. This section closes with a helpful chapter on testing and choosing a worldview.

The section on the rationality of religious belief covers evidentialism, foundationalism, and natural theology. The discussion of evidentialism is largely critical,

following the work of A. Plantinga. Nash rejects what he calls narrow foundationalism (which maintains that "only beliefs that are evident to the senses, self-evident, or incorrigible may be properly basic," p. 81) and argues, again with Plantinga, for the proper basicity of belief in God. Natural theology is the attempt to find arguments that will prove or provide support for belief in God without appealing to special revelation. But because Nash regards belief in God as properly basic, it is not necessary for Christian theism to discover and defend these arguments in order for it to be considered rational. Theism does have good arguments, and Nash sets out a number of them in his third section. While the arguments may be valid and provide real support for belief in God, however, they are not coercive, because certain premises in them will be doubtful or unacceptable to certain people. Though they fall short of being deductive proofs, the arguments do provide warrant for belief in the existence of God.

Section 4 introduces the reader to a number of formulations of the problem of evil, and Nash attempts to make an evaluation and response to them. Here again he does quite a bit of summarizing the arguments of such Christian philosophers as Plantinga and M. L. Peterson. The next section examines and responds to a number of attacks, both ancient and modern, on the possibility of miracles. Nash also looks at the relationship between miracles and worldviews, and he presents the evidence for the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus. The concluding section gives a brief treatment of the Christian view of immortality, resurrection and eternal life.

The book is a helpful introductory text in philosophy of religion and can be recommended for several reasons. It addresses the questions that historically have engaged the finest minds in the west. Contrary to the assertions of some Protestant philosophers I think that the next generation of Christians must continue to grapple with these questions. Nash's work addresses these topics in a manner that is scholarly and yet easy to understand. This is quite a strength in my view. Nash is abreast of current developments in the Anglo-American school of philosophy of religion. His footnotes will guide interested students to more advanced treatments on various questions. He also quotes from sources that are not as yet available, such as Plantinga's Gifford lectures. At the same time, the volume contains a number of humorous and down-to-earth illustrations and examples. Nash is adept at summarizing and simplifying the arguments of a number of difficult thinkers (e.g. W. Alston, G. Mavrodes, Plantinga, R. Swinburne). Discussion questions at the end of each chapter and frequent recapitulations serve to enhance the book's value as a teaching tool.

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Literature Through the Eyes of Faith. By Susan V. Gallagher and Roger Lundin. San Francisco: Harper, 1989, xxvii + 193 pp., \$9.95 paper.

Gallagher and Lundin set out to examine the implications of Christian faith for the study of literature. Their specific goals are threefold: "to help students of literature understand more clearly the nature of language and literature, to acquaint them with the tools of literary study, and to introduce them to the rich history of Christian reflection on literature, language, and the reading experience." It was perhaps inevitable that all three goals could not be achieved with equal success in such a small volume. As it is, the book has great strengths but also critical weaknesses as an introductory textbook in the area.

The authors' strongest performance comes in their pursuit of their first aim: an understanding from a Christian perspective of the nature and purpose of literature. Taking their cue from N. Wolterstorff's *Art in Action: Toward a Christian Aesthetic* (Eerdmans, 1980), they argue that the production and enjoyment of literature is not an artificial pursuit removed from the real world but a natural extension of normal activities common to (and distinctive of) all members of the human species. They show that all people tell stories and use metaphors to interpret their experience (even when they use these very means to deny that they are doing so) and that the Christian knows why. "In a universe created and ruled by a sovereign God all things are meaningful," so that "if we are convinced that our world has meaning, then . . . interpretation is not isolated from the rest of life but is at the very heart of our life" (pp. 3-5). The implications of these insights are worked out in generally helpful ways. There is wisdom here. Though a number of Biblical motifs that could enrich a full-scale theology of literature are left relatively undeveloped (e.g. the incarnation, the *Logos* doctrine, some aspects of the *imago Dei*, etc.), the book is only an introduction after all, and what we do have here is essentially sound and healthy, a good place for students to start in their thinking.

The second task—acquainting students with the tools of literary study—is less well executed. Much good advice is given, though the authors at times bend over so far backwards to avoid the idea that literary study can be disinterested that they sometimes veer too far toward a hermeneutic of subjectivity in which meaning is created rather than discovered by the reader. Giving equal time to someone like E. D. Hirsch along with the more reader-centered approaches would have improved balance here. Also problematic is the superficiality of the authors' own reading at times. Those whose methods they reject—from the romantics to the structuralists—are presented in simplified caricatures as straw men easily demolished. Even those whose ideas are approved are not exempt from such treatment: C. S. Lewis' view of myth, for example, is oversimplified beyond recognition (pp. 155-158). And while some of their examples of literary analysis are helpful and insightful (e.g. of Ben Franklin's *Autobiography*), others (e.g. of Robert Frost a couple of times) are so incomplete as to be positively misleading. Here the introductory nature of the text cannot be pled as excuse, for it is precisely beginning students of literature who are most likely to come away with the false impressions that such lapses can generate.

It is as an introduction to the "rich history of Christian reflection" on language and literature that the book is at its weakest. The works missing from the rather extensive bibliography constitute precisely an honor roll of the best that has been written and thought by Christian literature scholars through the years. They include, incredibly, P. Sidney's *Defense of Poesy*, the indispensable starting point for any Christian theory of literature. Almost equally conspicuous by their absence are J. Milton's *Areopagitica*, D. Sayers' *Mind of the Maker*, J. R. R. Tolkien's "Essay on Faerie Stories" with its seminal doctrine of subcreation, and any of C. S. Lewis' writings on literary theory (his fiction appears, but *An Experiment in Criticism*, "Christianity and Literature," "Christianity and Culture," "Lilies that Fester," "On Stories," "De Descriptione Temporum," "De Audiendis Poetis," "On Reading Old Books," etc., are unaccountably absent). T. S. Eliot and F. O'Connor are mentioned in passing but get short shrift. That any book could be written on a Christian view of literature without extensive interaction with the thought of these giants is hard to imagine. That such a book should bill itself as an introduction to the heritage of Christian reflection on such things is almost beyond belief.

So the volume offers a broad coverage of issues and contains much useful discussion but is finally too thin to be reliable as a guide for beginning students. At too

many points superficial treatment creates misleading impressions. In their discussion of literary curricula, for example, the authors stress the arbitrariness of the traditional literary canon and argue (quite rightly) for openness to the importance of genres, media, and national or ethnic literatures, which have not generally been included. But by totally failing to mention the role of staying power as the most important criterion of canonicity they leave the impression that the traditional canon is much more arbitrary than it really is, and they also fail to give sufficient weight to the role of the canon as a preserver and transmitter of the central moral and cultural tradition of the west. With those who do not think such things are worth preserving and transmitting we have no argument, for one cannot argue with barbarians. Gallagher and Lundin are not barbarians, but they have left gaps in their presentation through which the hordes will be glad to swarm. And the "profession" (as English teachers like to call their collective ranks) is full of cultural relativists ready to do the swarming.

This then is a book with great virtues but also great failings. As a textbook for an introductory course in literary theory it would need to be used with great care.

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Life's Ultimate Questions: A Contemporary Philosophy of Religion. By John Newport. Waco: Word, 1989, 644 pages, \$16.95.

Newport is and has long been noted as a man who is concerned with life's ultimate questions. In the preface to this lengthy work he gives something of a chronicle of his own odyssey in the search for real answers. His chronicle includes not only educational locales, such as the universities of Edinburgh, Basel, Harvard, and Columbia, but also some of the leading philosophical and theological personalities of the twentieth century who personally played a major role in helping Newport and, through him, many others to find real answers to life's most basic questions. Newport has written numerous books and articles on these vital topics as well as engaging in an extensive speaking ministry to the many who are groping for truth. This book, as a bringing together of his mature thought on various issues, is Newport's *magnum opus* and the fruit of his own quest.

The work, a self-titled philosophy of religion, is unique as a work within that category. Most philosophy-of-religion volumes seek to be objective or less explicitly committed to a viewpoint. Newport's book is from beginning to end clearly reflective of his Christian perspective, though at the same time remaining appreciative of other relevant views. Further, the volume deals with questions and issues that are only barely touched upon or else ignored completely in most works on philosophy of religion. Again, unlike most texts within this category Newport's book is intended to have (and ought to have) a wide-ranging readership. Written in a semipopular style, it was meant to teach and to minister. It is easily accessible to most relatively educated persons. The usual philosophy of religion topics that are included and dealt with at satisfactory length are as follows: the meaning of religious and Biblical language (God-talk controversy), the question of evil and suffering, the relationship of faith and reason in the knowledge of God (including the question of the classical "proofs" for God's existence). But even as Newport wrestles with the common *topoi* in any treatment of the philosophy of religion he does so in light of his pastoral purpose.

Beyond the usual, though, are major sections on the Biblical worldview, the meaning of history, science and the Biblical worldview (including important and possibly controversial discussion on creation science and evolution), science, the Biblical worldview and the issues of prayer and miracles, the issue of demonic powers (including the question of evil), death and the afterlife, Christianity and other world religions, the problem of human morality, and finally Christian faith and its relation to the arts, to culture and to worship. Such inclusions themselves ought clearly to reflect the singular character and utility of this book.

Methodologically Newport comes to each major issue or question by first spelling out a foundational framework within which thinking and dialogue can take place. In this way he seeks to educate the neophyte in the numerous facets and questions that the particular problem entails. With this preliminary framework Newport tries to set forth both fairly and succinctly the alternative points of view that vie for a hearing. He avoids the unfortunate heavyhandedness of some and tries to maintain an irenic spirit throughout. After wrestling with the basic problems at the root of each ultimate question, and after setting forth the pros and cons of each opposing view, Newport begins to gather the affirmations together and carefully to show how the Biblical/Christian perspective is in fact the superior option. It answers the questions, issues and concerns most effectively. His method is itself hardly new, but Newport's style and concern for communicability in relation to God's truth make his handling generally very effective.

I found Newport's book on the ultimate questions of life on the whole to be quite satisfactory, even sometimes excellent. As such it will prove to be both stimulating and profitable. No one will agree with Newport on all points, but his stance on each major question is truly and committedly Christian and viable to say the least. His conclusions, while possibly controversial for some, are well thought out and should be given careful consideration. At some points he is clearly better versed than he is at others. This is easily discernible not only in his actual discussion but in his end-notes, where he seems to simply string the thoughts of various authors together one after the other. The careful reader may note what seems to be at least a superficial influence of Tillich (Newport and I are members of the Paul Tillich Society) in the title (cf. "ultimate concern") and in Newport's adoption of Tillich's "method of correlation" in handling such questions. Even here one sees Newport's discerning attitude toward various viewpoints (i.e. taking the true and good wherever it may be found). This may in fact be Newport's real message through his emphasis on the Biblical worldview.

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The Word of Life: Systematic Theology, Volume Two. By Thomas Oden. San Francisco: Harper, 1989, xxi + 583 pp., \$32.95.

In 1979 Oden proposed a reformation "in the direction of antiquity" for theology (*Agenda for Theology*). *Word of Life* tackles Christology and is the second volume of a three-part systematic theology that attempts to fill that prescription. The first volume, *The Living God*, covered God, creation and providence and was reviewed in *JETS* 31/2 (June 1988) 209-211, while volume 3, *Life in the Spirit*, will address the Holy Spirit, Church, sacraments and the Christian life.

In order to appreciate Oden, one must accept the two methodological assumptions that ground not only this volume but his whole theology. First, modernity, having been "fully corrupted by its own premises," is dead and gone. "We are now in a postmodern, postcritical situation, wherein the assumptions of modernity are no longer credible apart from tiny, introverted elites" (p. 527). For Christology this means the rejection of typical historical-critical treatments of Jesus, replete with their lack of self-criticism, philosophical predispositions, exaggerated competence, and "selected bits of filtered evidence" that *a priori* discount the miraculous, the theandric union, and so on. But Jesus Christ lived in history, and we must not prematurely barter historicism for fideism. Although not disavowing historical inquiry Oden reminds readers that it "cannot yield saving faith" nor "save one from sin," and in a sense "the reform of Christology cannot proceed without offense to historicism" (pp. 529–530). But how did Oden arrive at this reversal of the hermeneutic of suspicion where the tables are turned and criticism is now criticized? In his "Personal Interlude: A Path Toward Postcritical Consciousness" (pp. 217–220), which in my mind is alone worth the price of the book, he autobiographically outlines his theological trajectory, which began with Bultmann, passed through "stubborn criticisms" even of neo-orthodoxy, and landed in what he calls "consensual orthodoxy." Thus *Word of Life* begins with an initial methodological assumption: the "implausible pretensions of the critical study of Jesus" (pp. 220–228) and more broadly the death of modernity.

Related to this as perhaps the obverse methodological assumption is Oden's affirmation of the abiding value and normative function of the orthodoxy of the first five centuries. The method, then, as Oden observes tongue-in-cheek, is "Vincentian and not Bultmannian." In his *Commonitorium* (A.D. 434) Vincent of Lérins outlined his canon that urged believers to accept as orthodoxy that which the Church has believed everywhere, always and by all, a canon that Oden takes quite literally. *Word of Life* thus rehearses the consensual, orthodox Christology that has been unanimously received by east and west, by Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox believers. "I view my task as an extraordinary privilege—that of unapologetically setting forth in an undistinguished way the apostolic testimony to Christ in its classic consensual form" (p. xi).

Two reminders are helpful at this point. Oden does not envision through rose-colored glasses a golden age in the Church when this consensual orthodoxy was never questioned nor challenged. Quite the opposite: Marcion, Celsus, Valentinus, Praxeus, Lucian and others, and not the nineteenth-century advent of historical criticism, raised most of the crucial questions very early on. By the time of Chalcedon the Church had forged its consensus in the midst of heterodoxy. Second, Oden's love affair with the patristics is not carried out in ignorance of or lack of dialogue with modern Christological studies, and even less is it done with any polemical spirit.

Oden admits that, given these two methodological assumptions, many will find it amusing (although he considers it "a sober, ironic fact") that "this text is an introduction to its annotations" (p. xiv). Indeed, the text contains an avalanche of long quotations of and references to the Biblical and patristic writers. It is not without reason, then, that Oden begins his tome by quoting H. Vaughan's "Retreat": "Oh how I long to travel back / and tread again that ancient track! . . . Some men a forward motion love, / But I by backward steps would move." That sentiment is repeated in the final two sentences of the book: "Some may feel that this argument, if taken seriously, would set theology back a hundred years. I would hope not—I would prefer a thousand or more" (p. 542).

Criticism of Oden thus rests with whether he fulfills his stated purpose and not with what he does not do. As promised, the content of the volume is entirely predictable. Parts 1 and 2 set forth consensual orthodoxy concerning the person of Christ, with successive chapters establishing that he was true God (chaps. 2-3), true man (chaps. 4-5), and one person with two natures (chap. 6). Chapters 7-9 look at the earthly life of Christ and introduce parts 3-4, which turn to the work of Christ. Organizing it around the classic offices of prophet, priest and king, Oden touches all the bases of sacrifice, substitute, ransom, satisfaction, victor, etc. A short epilogue (pp. 535-542) distinguishes the unique task of systematic theology by making four disclaimers that contrast it to exegesis, history, sociology, and praxis. Name, subject and Scripture indices, along with a bibliography, add to the book's usefulness.

Oden provides no help whatever with the necessary task of contextualization, as does D. J. Hall's recent *Thinking the Faith*, and readers will need to go elsewhere for this. Further, Oden is so intent on letting the classics speak for themselves that at times he is long on recitation and short on explanation. Sometimes paragraphs are "nothing more" (quotation marks are required in deference to Oden) than a long quotation from Scripture or a patristic source. Oden admits some will find this boring, but he nevertheless considers it "essential" (p. 112). Some will find it hard to imagine anything approaching consensus regarding Mariology (pp. 155 ff.), but even here Oden is evenhanded. Still, given evangelicalism's tendency to historical dislocation, Oden's three-volume work should receive serious consideration for use in seminary classes. With due consideration (if not agreement) given to modern critical studies, and with a personal passion and candor that is refreshing, he will help some to discover for the first time, and others to appreciate anew, the enduring heritage of our Christian confession: Jesus Christ is Lord.

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Theological Essays. By Eberhard Jüngel. Translated with an introduction by J. B. Webster. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1989, 235 pp., n.p.

Jüngel is a theologian both of the Word and of the word—that is, his is a Christocentric and a linguistic theology. It focuses on Christ and it focuses on language. It is also a theology of massive erudition, one to which Webster's brief introduction to this book forms a suitable and admirable entrance.

But this is not to say that Jüngel is either always correct or always readable. Even in translation, reading Jüngel is a demanding task. His theologizing is densely packed and relentlessly prosaic. He writes tightly argued articles on metaphor that stretch more than fifty pages, articles that themselves are virtually devoid of metaphor, indeed often of rhetorical merit. Like the preacher in E. Dickinson's poem, simplicity sometimes flees from his presence. So also does the Christ of the gospels, around whom Jüngel works so hard to center his theology. That is because Jüngel's mastery of Nietzsche and of Aristotle has not yielded a true understanding of the word of the Word. Erasmus would have been a better guide, especially the Erasmus expounded in M. O. Boyle's *Erasmus on Language and Method in Theology*. So also would C. S. Lewis, O. Barfield and D. L. Sayers. But Jüngel writes as if England (and America too) did not exist. His theology is the example *par excellence* of German parochialism. Both the wisdom and the truth of his theology suffer accordingly. Only rarely does his thought move in circles wider

than the German-speaking world. (When it does, it turns almost exclusively to ancient Greece.) That Germanic cast is both its chief glory and its major fault.

I am not saying that Jüngel's work is without merit. It most certainly is not. I am saying (to allude to Dickinson's preacher again) that Jüngel has written on breadth in such a way that it has "argued him narrow." A mastery of the use of metaphor would have done more to justify Jüngel's views on the subject than his debatable arguments ever could, culled as they are from a tightly constricted pool of sources.

Jüngel's stimulating treatment of anthropomorphism in language shares some of the same defects as his essay on metaphor, though it has more merit. In his twenty-three-page examination of anthropomorphism, Jüngel devotes fully fourteen pages to the ideas of Spinoza, five to the ideas of Xenophanes and Kant, and only three to the implications of God becoming a man in Christ. But those three pages are superb. The upshot of Jüngel's argument is that language itself is anthropomorphic. Language takes the human mind, human perception, human categories, human analogies and human existence as its composite measure of reality (and therefore of truth). The difference between theologically anthropomorphic language and all other language is at most a difference in degree, not in kind. To jettison the reliability of theological language simply because it is anthropomorphic is both to reject all language (for the same reason) and to refute one's own claim, which was conceived, articulated and argued in the very anthropomorphic language it seeks to denigrate. All that we speak or hear we speak or hear according to the canons of human perception, which are inescapably anthropomorphic. The choice facing us is between suitable and unsuitable anthropomorphisms, not between anthropomorphism and something else.

Beginning as it does with extra-Biblical categories and concerns, Jüngel's treatment (pp. 72 ff.) of anthropomorphism, however, is surprisingly un-Barthian. Equally surprising is the weakness of his case for rejecting the ontological priority of actuality over possibility (chap. 3). Jüngel's introduction of Luther's version of Paulinism as a telling point in this regard is simply gratuitous. Despite his enthusiastic rejection of Aristotle, Luther did not actually succeed in extricating himself from Aristotelian categories of influences. Nor does Luther's version of justification by faith (rather than by works) overturn the primacy of actuality—as if God's forensic justification of sinners involved a divine pronouncement that fell outside the realm of actuality or were contrary to it. Even if Luther's soteriology were successfully anti-Aristotelian, one would have the further task of proving that Luther's view was correct (and Biblical)—something that not even P. Melancthon believed, much less all Roman Catholicism or eastern Orthodoxy, not to mention great portions of the Reformed and anabaptist traditions. Again, such narrowly conceived arguments are indications of Jüngel's pervasive German parochialism.

But constricted vision is only a part of what makes this collection of essays less than fully satisfactory. At times Jüngel's impenetrable prose defies comprehension: "To put the point more sharply, in actuality that which is passing into the past is active. As such it has a certain value and its own necessity. But in the distinction between the possible and the impossible, being is distinguished from nothingness. Such a distinction comes out of the future. For nothingness has as little past as does the creative distinction of being from nothingness. When the possible is distinguished from the impossible in such a way that the possible becomes possible and the impossible becomes impossible, then there occurs something like an origin—whether it be an origin in the beginning or at the end: in both cases it is God's freedom as *love* which makes the possible to be possible. In the very concept of creation

it is essential to set God's love over against his omnipotence. God's omnipotence concerns actuality, God's love concerns possibility. God's love concerns the being which is in becoming" (p. 116). Diction like this is the theologian's unforgivable sin. Whatever else it may be, obfuscation is not a theological virtue.

Jüngel more successfully, and at times brilliantly, negotiates theological anthropology. His treatment of this subject is both more compelling and more lucid. He insists that we cannot come to a proper understanding of human nature until we understand the eschatologically new man. That man now has been made known to us in Christ's incarnation. Christ is the hermeneutical key to the most difficult of all questions: "What is God like?" and "What is a human being?" According to Jüngel, "everything here depends upon the fact that for the Christian faith the meaning of 'God' and 'humanity' are defined by reference to the person of Jesus Christ. For the category of 'the image of God' is identical with the historical name Jesus Christ. The person called by that name is humanity in correspondence to God" (p. 132).

Concerning the fundamental concept of *imago Dei* (pp. 135 ff.) one can only say that, despite its Platonism, Jüngel's work is wonderfully insightful. So also is his brief analysis of the unfinished and posthumously published final fragments of Barth's *Dogmatics*. Jüngel's response to K. Rahner's profound concept of anonymous Christians, however, is (to me, at any rate) a somewhat disappointing misfire.

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Theology Today. By Jürgen Moltmann. Philadelphia/London: Trinity International/SCM, 1988, 99 pp., \$7.95 paper. *Creating a Just Future*. By Jürgen Moltmann. Philadelphia/London: Trinity International/SCM, 1989, 104 pp., \$7.95 paper. *Love: The Foundation of Hope. The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann and Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel*. Edited by Frederic B. Burnham, Charles S. McCoy and M. Douglas Meeks. San Francisco: Harper, 1988, 160 pp., \$16.95 paper.

Theology Today is comprised of two long articles Moltmann wrote for the Italian *Enciclopedia del Novecento*. In "Theology in the Twentieth Century" Moltmann welcomes the secularization of the Church as an opportunity to be open to the world, because "there is hardly any development of the modern spirit which did not initially come up against the resistance of the churches and theology" (p. 5). Christian faith is contingent upon the sociopolitical and cultural-spiritual situation. This contextual method has been communicated in hermeneutical theology, the theology of secularization, and the theology of liberation. While Moltmann agrees with Bultmann that the worldview of the NT is mythical, he seeks to expand the "bourgeois private existence" of existential interpretation to include a political hermeneutic that reflects struggles for power. The secular bent of D. Bonhoeffer has theological implications for man come of age in an open history wherein praxis takes precedence over knowledge. This emphasis on praxis has infused the theology of liberation, which "for all its ideological borrowing" is still theology because it is "concerned with the 'human emancipation of human being'" (p. 22). For theology to get the better of atheism, Moltmann contends, it must overcome theism in a theology of freedom.

In "Mediating Theology Today" Moltmann examines four great attempts at mediating the Christian tradition to modern culture: Bultmann's existential theology, K. Rahner's transcendental theology, P. Tillich's cultural theology, and political theology. The translation (not reduction) of the Christian message inherent in Bultmann's

program has been taken up and expanded by political theology. The subjectivity of truth involved in Rahner's "anthropo-theology," wherein alone "Christian theology can become credible" (p. 69), entails an anonymous Christology in human self-transcendence and the incarnation of God as the climax of evolution. Political theology sees those whom Rahner calls "anonymous Christians" in the sick and oppressed. Tillich's existential mediation, founded in the depth dimension and ultimate concern, is successful but private. Political theology therefore is the sublation and expansion of earlier mediating theologies. *Theology Today* is a helpful primer to political theology.

Although *Creating a Just Future* is called a "companion volume" to *Theology Today*, it actually constitutes further reflection on Moltmann's previous work in "messianic dogmatics," *God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God* (San Francisco: Harper, 1985). "I see the greatest task of the church of Christ today as being the ecological reformation of the 'religion of modernity'" (p. 15). Moltmann describes the shift from M. L. King's dream of peace and freedom to the apathetic anxiety inherent in H. Lindsey's "pop apocalyptic" and its envisioned "nuclear Armageddon," resulting in the "dull brooding," "nuclear numbing," and "absolute despair" that aptly characterizes much evangelical thought on the prospects of transforming this world. "People are prepared to accept many negative things before the collapse of the world that they fear: they put up with injustice and violence against which they would otherwise have offered outraged opposition" (p. 19). Apocalyptic anxiety has encouraged the escalation of the arms race, says Moltmann, thereby jeopardizing creation and God himself, who suffers in historical relations. Moltmann advocates a politics based on the sermon on the mount and nonviolence in his call for reconciliation with nature via human community (not dominion) as the image of God. His acquaintance with the Taoist view of harmony with nature buttresses his view.

Love: The Foundation of Hope is a collection of essays celebrating the work of Moltmann and his wife, E. Moltmann-Wendel. In his essay "Love, Death, Eternal Life: Theology of Hope—the Personal Side," Moltmann seeks to mediate individual and universal eschatology by making God and his kingdom (not the soul or the world) the focus. Arguing against the immortality of the soul as Greek and "inconceivable today" (p. 12), Moltmann says that the resurrection in Christ provides closeness with the dead. That the dead have their "own possibilities" in "time," in "the same situation before God" with the living (p. 18), indicates a phenomenological and political use of "resurrection."

Moltmann-Wendel's "Self-Love and Self-Acceptance" argues that the self-hate she finds common among Christian women can be rectified by wisdom theology, which knows no punishments or threats, and the doctrine of justification, whereby one is accepted unconditionally. Although she says her dictum "I do good because I am good" does not imply moral quality (p. 29), her confession that one "must become somewhat Pelagian in order to do justice to the experience of women" (p. 30), sin being a fallout of self-love into the negation of the self, smacks of self-justification, against which the gospel regularly inveighs. This judgment also holds for J. M. Bonino, who ("Love and Social Transformation in Liberation Theology," p. 64) speaks of salvation as "self-acceptance and self-love," and S. Thistlethwaite in her essay on the literature of black women.

Meeks' "Love and the Hope for a Just Society" builds on the word *oikonomia* to draw a stimulating connection between the household of God and economics. The church as home involves communal sharing and acceptance and work for the elimination of all domination.

L. M. Russell's "Authority and Hope in Feminist Theology" describes feminism as advocating "full human dignity" for all women, regardless of race, class, or sexual

orientation, based on the authority rooted in the experience of Jesus, who rejected patriarchalism. This idea of love, however, seems to entail a derogation of all parameters to the dissolution of law and repentance.

C. S. McCoy's "God's Faithfulness: Federalism and the Future of Theology" explores the ecumenical import of the covenant. Moltmann's federalism is undermined, however, by his nonontological "event" view of God.

S. W. Sykes' "The Dialectic of Community and Structure" notes this nonauthoritarian "event" view of God without critique. He does well, however, to criticize Moltmann's assumed alliance of monotheism and monarchy.

C. Morse's "God's Promise as Presence" accords ultimate status to the word-event of promise in violation of an ontological basis for promise, which God cannot be.

These essays provide a provocative survey of current liberation concerns. Such Biblical themes as justice, liberation and community require our attention.

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Christian Doctrine and Modern Culture (Since 1700). By Jaroslav Pelikan. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1989, 361 pp., \$29.95.

In his fifth volume of *The Christian Tradition*, Pelikan draws his massive history of doctrine to a close. The work began in 1971 with the publication of *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition*.

Pelikan begins this final volume with some methodological housecleaning. As the overall title of the work suggests, his intent was to produce a history of the development of Christian doctrine, what the Church "believed, taught, and confessed," rather than a general history of Christian thought. Yet, Pelikan admits, there were times when the Church and its doctrine were overshadowed by the thought of great theologians. "The soloists have frequently been in danger of drowning out the chorus." While this fifth volume is as committed to the development of Church doctrine as the preceding four, the methodology of the history of Christian thought does manage to intrude itself upon the material from time to time. Pelikan, however, does a good job of not allowing the trendy to crowd out the traditional.

Pelikan's interpretation of the development of doctrine since 1700 is concerned not only with the doctrinal positions taken by the churches but also with the very notion of doctrine since the enlightenment. Post-enlightenment Church history is noted not only for its questioning of doctrines that were formerly assumed to be true but also for its understanding of the very nature of religion. As the modern period progressed, Church theologians found that they often "confessed" more than they 'believed,' perhaps more than they 'taught.'" The Church's doctrine came under increasing fire in the post-enlightenment years. But so did its worldview and understanding of authority, which together armed the fortress of its doctrinal apologetic.

The first two chapters address the eighteenth-century anxiety about religious authority, whether located in Scripture, the Church, or religious tradition. Such stalwart doctrines as the idea of revealed religion, the uniqueness and divinity of Christ, the authority of Scripture, the expectation of life after death, and even the existence of a transcendent God came into question. Over against the heteronomous authority of Church and dogma the enlightenment thinker erected the edifice of a natural religion that made all doctrinal particulars either absurd or merely inconsequential.

The centerpiece of the book is chap. 3, "The Theology of the Heart." The attacks upon individual doctrines and the relativization of doctrinal particulars gave rise to a subjective apologetic for the faith. The essence of the faith was reinterpreted in terms of the subjective and the ethical and moved away from the public and political religion of the historic confessions and creeds. The acts of God increasingly began to be located in the inner experience of the believer in both the liberal and the conservative wings of the Church. Feeling, the experience of the soul, inner life, illumination, individualism, and conversionism were the watchwords in the nineteenth-century shift to the identification of the eternal within the believer, a shift that reduced all religion to anthropology.

Chapter 4 deals with the modern deconstruction of crucial elements of the Christian worldview: the doctrine of creation, original sin, the transcendence of God, and the image of God. The moral law within replaced the starry heavens above. The fifth chapter takes up the issue of the shifting notions of doctrine and authority in the modern period. What is perhaps the most loosely constructed section of the book is the final chapter, "The Sobornost of the Church," in which Pelikan addresses the issues of ecumenism and social religion.

This final volume in *The Christian Tradition* is often provocative and always informative, thought-provoking, and well researched—perhaps too well researched. Those who are familiar with the other four volumes know that the series employs marginal references rather than a system of footnotes or endnotes. The average number of references per page runs between six and eight, but many pages have far more references. I counted some twenty-four references on but one page. While this method is good for the researcher, it is somewhat less than optimum for the reader. The run-on sentences that result from multiple quotations, dependent clauses, and semicolons make the writing appear tortuous and ponderous. There is no reason why academic writing must be cumbersome. As an example of the ungainly style that is typical of this volume I offer these three sentences: "Pantheism had a natural affinity with rationalism and, as the outcome to which 'the so-called demonstrations of a God' led, was 'the natural resource of reflective minds.' When a Christian preacher could assert that nothing in the doctrines of the church 'teaches us more fervent prayer or higher thoughts and aspirations than the temple of the stars, with its flaming letters,' it was evident that within the conventional belief of 'Christendom,' too, 'the qualitative difference between God and man is pantheistically abolished, first in a highbrow way through speculation, then in a low-brow way in the highways and byways.' In the form of 'the religion that is of beauty, imagination, and philosophy, without constraint moral or intellectual, a religion speculative and self-indulgent,' the pantheistic spirit was spreading and would, so it was feared, become 'the great deceit which awaits the age to come'" (p. 200).

Pelikan's writing is usually extremely lucid. One can only guess that this particular volume was not edited for clarity of expression, or that Pelikan let the heavy documentation, afforded him by the use of marginal references, dictate a rather awkward style to an otherwise fitting conclusion to his magnificent history of doctrine.

The work is also less than forgiving when it comes to introductions. People, movements, philosophical and theological schools of thought, and events are introduced without definition or clarification. The book is clearly intended for the use of professional historians and theologians. Those seeking introductory treatments of the development of doctrine since 1700 are advised to look elsewhere.

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Christianity in a Secularized World. By Wolfhart Pannenberg. London: SCM, 1989, 62 pp., £4.95 paper. *The Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg: Twelve American Critiques, with an Autobiographical Essay and Response.* Edited by Carl E. Braaten and Philip Clayton. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988, 352 pp., \$29.95. *On the Way to God: An Exploration into the Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg.* By David P. Polk. Lanham: University Press of America, 1989, 333 pp., n.p. *Reason for Hope: The Systematic Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg.* By Stanley J. Grenz. New York: Oxford, 1990, 279 pp., n.p.

The roots of modern secularization, according to Pannenberg, lie (at least in part) in the Reformation distinction between secular and spiritual government. This distinction, he argues, restricted the Church to a purely spiritual task while leaving vast areas of human interest and activity outside the pale of ecclesiastical and/or Christian purview.

The process of secularization unwittingly begun in the Reformation was greatly advanced in the subsequent period of European confessional wars, wars that vainly attempted to impose a unity of faith but succeeded only in confirming the widespread realization "that religious passion destroys peace" (p. 12). As a result, the previously dominant view that religious unity was the only adequate foundation for social and political unity was overturned. Religion consequently (and intentionally) became even more marginalized.

The shifting theoretical basis for international law served to marginalize Christianity and Christian thought even further. Like the nationalistic movement in political thought before it, legal theory tended toward secularization. Even Christian thinkers like H. Grotius and Herbert of Cherbury began to reason on the basis of natural law rather than on special revelation or ecclesiastical decree.

The academic study and formulation of the humanities also took a secular turn and began to do business on the basis of human nature. Consequently, even though human beings seemed inescapably religious, anthropocentrism superseded theocentrism. God himself was eclipsed and marginalized.

The emergence later of a respectable atheism then brought the process of secularization to its fullest point, Pannenberg argues. Religion was no longer considered an essential ingredient in political or academic life. To many it became merely an unnecessary and easily avoidable element of human nature. But this extreme view, Pannenberg affirms, was actually the beginning of the eventual contraction of secularization, a contraction that is underway even today. Because a religionless culture (or even worldview) is incapable of providing the cohesive framework and significant existence that human beings require, secularists are doomed to the unsatisfactory emptiness and futility of a world without God, hope, or meaning. If capitalized upon in the right way, Pannenberg believes, that fact can be the key to the desecularization of the west. But, he warns, "corrections to the secularization of modern Western culture and society cannot and should not start from the churches. Any attempt in this direction would immediately be interpreted as producing the danger of a desire for clerical control. . . . [This] would end up confirming prejudices which played a part in the early phases of the formation of secular culture." The answer, Pannenberg writes, "must be weighed up and (if the occasion arises) carried through by those involved in politics, and from a political perspective" (p. 43).

The theologian's role in this great reversal is (stated negatively) to avoid any undue assimilation of secular culture, such as an excessive attachment to demythologization, to feminism and to liberationism, all of which imbibe too heavily from the fountains of secularization. They are dangerous reductions of Christian theology that expose it to destruction along with the secular world they ape. Instead (stated positively) Christian

theologians must work to expand secularism's truncated and restricted view of human life into "the greater breadth of reason" that Christianity affords, with its emphasis on the transcendence of God and on the historical salvation God offers. Theologians must broaden the narrowed human horizon that secularists have imposed upon our culture. As one example of a modern Christian thinker who has accomplished that task masterfully, Pannenberg points to K. Rahner (p. 57).

That Pannenberg himself has expertly engaged the cultural forces around him, and that his own contribution to modern academic life is significant even outside his native Europe, is the fundamental conviction of *Twelve American Critiques*, written by American theologians whose contributions constitute one of the best full-length treatments of Pannenberg's thought in English. To them Pannenberg is "without doubt the most comprehensive theologian at work today."

Of special interest in this volume are Pannenberg's own contributions. The first is his introductory autobiographical sketch, which takes him from his birthplace in Stetten, Germany (now Poland), to his current professoriate in Munich. The second is his appreciative and carefully articulated response to his American theological friends and their observations concerning his theology, which follows the essays to which it responds. Thus this volume suitably ends where it began, with Pannenberg himself.

In between those chapters are a dozen articles on Pannenberg's theology, some of which are truly first-rate. To mention but one or two, while unfair to many of the solid essays that comprise this text, is perhaps all that can be done within the confines of one review. S. Grenz's survey, for example, is clearly one of the best brief introductions to the vast body of literature surrounding Pannenberg's theology to date. One can easily see why it was given pride of place as the first American entry in the volume. But while Grenz's survey is a good entrance to Pannenberg studies, one must not read it as an introduction to Pannenberg himself. It is not. It is a survey of the critical reception accorded Pannenberg's work. Furthermore, because it centers on the controversy surrounding Pannenberg's work, to read it as something other than what it is would give one the very mistaken impression that few thinkers find Pannenberg at all convincing. Count me as one who does.

But count me also as one who deplores the sort of verbal ineptitude that renders some portions of this book impenetrable obfuscation and vexation of spirit. Let one example suffice: "While it is true that only the earlier can affect the later, it need not be true that the future must always be conceived as later than the present. This is certainly true for beings, for what will be first occurs when it becomes present, and this is always later than that which had then been present. It is not true for becoming, however, for this concerns (processes of) determination, not the succession of determinate events. What is least determinate is earliest in the process of determination; what is most determinate is latest. Yet the most determinate is that which is fully concrete, like the concreteness of the past, while the least determinate is most like future possibility. For a process of becoming, the future can affect us because in that order the future is earlier, not later" (p. 83). Prose of this sort is the theologian's unforgivable sin.

By far, however, most of the chapters in this book are genuinely valuable contributions to our understanding of Pannenberg's thought and of his formidable achievements. L. Dupré's essay, which identifies Pannenberg's theology as a critique of the various philosophies of the modern age, is just such a contribution. Dupré places Pannenberg in the tradition of earlier twentieth-century integralists like Barth, Bultmann and Tillich, who strove (without success, it seems to me) to reunite theology and culture. Dupré does this under the medieval rubric of nature and

grace. His essay is both fascinating and enlightening, especially as regards his exposition of the historical precedents established for Pannenberg's efforts by such diverse Christian thinkers as Michelangelo, the Italian Renaissance Catholic, and W. Law, the eighteenth-century English dissenter.

Among this volume's many other virtues is P. Clayton's excellent bibliography of works both by and about Pannenberg, which will aid and encourage more American theologians to engage in the energetic dialogue that Pannenberg's work has fostered. Yet, praise this book as I might, I must also insist that a book this good and this important ought to have an index.

While D. Polk shares the enthusiasm for Pannenberg that prompted Braaten and Clayton to bring their volume to light, *On the Way to God* also registers Polk's strong dissent, as for example regarding some aspects of Pannenberg's eschatologically inflected epistemology. To Polk, while Pannenberg has brilliantly articulated and defended the concept of revelation as history he has only inconsistently followed his own theological program (p. 7).

The great virtue of Polk's book is that it is a singleminded and forthright exercise in theological analysis. Polk is always the competent and workmanlike scholar, one who says what he intends to do and then does it. He pays Pannenberg the high tribute of careful and honest appraisal, giving to the great German theologian's work the attention it surely deserves.

This does not mean that Polk's case is always convincing or entirely accurate. Pannenberg himself would deny the massive indebtedness to Hegel that Polk often surmises. Hegel's influence upon him, Pannenberg once told me, was to convince him of the inescapable necessity of intellectual rigor. But other thinkers (such as Dilthey), he said, did far more to shape the actual content of his thought than did Hegel.

Polk is absolutely correct, however, to insist that Pannenberg would answer Tertullian's question—"What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?"—with a resounding "nothing less than everything" (p. 21). Thus Polk properly and succinctly characterizes Pannenberg's view that correct theology is the true philosophy (chap. 2). Polk's brief summary of Pannenberg's "The Nature of a Theological Statement" is especially good in this regard. So also are his criticisms of Pannenberg's thought, which, though insightful and acute, are not ultimately subverting. The same verdict might be rendered as well concerning Polk's summary and analysis of Pannenberg's philosophy of history and his theology of revelation, among others.

Polk's fine effort is thoroughly documented and includes a very useful bibliography of pertinent titles in both German and English. His book is, in short, required reading for all Pannenberg scholars. It handles Pannenberg's thought carefully and with impressive command, and it points the way for further fruitful theological reflection. *On the Way to God* is that most welcome sort of theological text, of which we have too few: a happy combination of academic precision and theological wisdom.

As good as the books here under review are, I have saved the best for last. The product of nearly twenty years of study and reflection, and the fruit of a fourteen-month sabbatical leave to study Pannenberg's thought in Munich under the tutelage of Pannenberg himself, Grenz's *Reason for Hope* is clearly the best effort of its kind. It is comprehensive, judicious, readable and authoritative. Furthermore it bears Pannenberg's own imprimatur: "Concerning the overall synthesis of my theology," he writes, "it provides a correct picture" (p. ix).

Grenz's study aims at three goals: (1) "to present a synopsis of Pannenberg's systematic theology," (2) "to interact with the discussion that Pannenberg's writings have generated over the last three decades," and (3) to do so "in the context of the methodology and emphasis" that Pannenberg himself has carefully enunciated (p. 6).

As indicated in Grenz's title, Pannenberg's thought entails two central thrusts: reason and hope. Because Pannenberg opposes the subjectivization of theological concerns, and because he desires to keep theology a public discipline, "Pannenberg's dogmatism focuses on reason" and seeks "to cohere with all human knowledge" (p. 9). All theological claims therefore need to be subjected to public scrutiny for verification or falsification, whichever they deserve. For this reason Pannenberg's theology is reasonable and rational (though not rationalistic). It is also eschatologically inflected. God's full self-disclosure, which alone is able to raise human knowledge above its present state of provisionality, awaits the *eschaton*. It lies at the end of history, though it is proleptically present in Christ, especially his resurrection, which is accessible to us via the historical record and our reasonable evaluation of it.

In effect Grenz has written an expository commentary on Pannenberg's *Systematische Theologie* (and, interestingly, because Pannenberg's *magnum opus* is yet incomplete, has done so proleptically), a commentary that is carefully and handsomely written, profusely documented and cross-referenced, theologically sophisticated yet understandable, and convincing even to Pannenberg himself.

We long have needed a concise and accessible entrance to Pannenberg's thought. This is it.

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What Christians Believe: A Biblical and Historical Summary. By Alan F. Johnson and Robert E. Webber. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989, 480 pp., \$19.95.

Johnson and Webber have produced a scholarly yet readable introduction to evangelical theology. Their presentation should receive grateful kudos from teachers and students of theology, but I must temper my enthusiasm slightly by offering a few cavils and some more substantive concerns.

Kudos: First in the praise column is the authors' theological method. The major loci of systematic theology are covered in two chapters each. Johnson begins with a survey of the Biblical testimony regarding a particular theme, divided into the following periods: pre-Mosaic, Mosaic, prophetic, intertestamental, teaching of Jesus (parabolic and otherwise), Acts, liturgical materials, early epistles, later epistles. Next Webber covers the development of the doctrine throughout Church history under the following headings: ancient Church (Augustine and other relevant authors), medieval era, Reformation era (Luther and the Lutheran tradition, Calvin and the Reformed tradition, Simons and the anabaptist tradition, the Arminian tradition and Wesley, and sometimes other movements), modern Church (Kant, Schleiermacher, Ritschl, *et al.*), contemporary Church (usually Barth, liberation theology, process theology). The result is a highly satisfying blend of systematic, Biblical and historical theology. In this way theology is shown to be a living, growing enterprise rather than a set of dusty definitions to be memorized. That impression is enhanced by the frequent notices of subjects that call for further study by evangelicals.

My list of kudos also includes several sections, by both authors, that are very well done. The style is concise, the content insightful and refreshing. For example Johnson's discussion of faith ("Salvation: The Biblical Revelation") should be read by all who are following the debate over Lordship salvation. I was also interested in Webber's brief comments on the influence of Platonism and Aristotelianism in the Church's understanding of grace (p. 220). Finally, both chapters on the sacraments

suggest that we must view them as more than bare signs if we are to recover "the sacramental convictions and practices of the pre-Nicene church" (p. 412).

Cavils: There were several typos in the text: "the Council of Constantinople in 331 [381]" (p. 87); "natures might [night]" (p. 297); "forgiveness of your sins" (p. 379); and, the most notorious example, "Christ's vicarious sin [death]" (p. 271). There are also a few places in which the authors appear to contradict themselves or each other. For example, Webber writes that "we feel the need . . . to be more thoughtfully engaged in discussions regarding the feminine side of God" (p. 186), but Johnson asserts: "There is no place for thinking of God as either a masculine or a feminine deity or a combination of both (androgynous)" (p. 191). Such statements may be capable of reconciliation, but that is not attempted.

Concerns: The authors attempt to treat the divisions within evangelicalism with an even hand, and they are often quite successful, as in their discussions of the millennium and the tribulation. At times, however, their practice belies their stated aim. Both authors take clear stands against particular redemption, with no suggestion that such a position is an open option for evangelicals. In addition the whole of seventeenth-century Reformed thought is written off as "dry and arid," while "the tradition of Arminius and John Wesley . . . emphasized once again the necessity of faith in Christ's work" (p. 269). Where is the passion of the Puritans? What about G. Whitefield, the Calvinist who helped to launch Wesley's career as an open-air evangelist? Contrary to Webber, "the universal offer of reconciliation" is not a problem to Calvinists (p. 270), even though universal atonement is.

Other concerns include: a weak statement, under the heading "The Dignity of Human Life," on when human life originates (p. 197); the denial that justification is based on the imputed righteousness of Christ (p. 296); and the assertion that "with the exception of a restriction or two made apparently for the sake of social propriety, women enjoy the same opportunities for service and ministry in the church as men" (p. 342).

As Johnson and Webber note in the introduction, their text will be most useful when it is accompanied by systematic instruction in one evangelical tradition or another. I agree, and in that kind of a setting the few weaknesses of the book could easily be corrected.

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Divine and Human Action. Edited by Thomas V. Morris. Ithaca: Cornell, 1988, 366 pp., n.p. paper.

The study of theology reached its zenith in the late middle ages, some would say, while others see the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as the high point. Of course proponents of so-called "modernity" scoff at such views, looking upon the various debates of bygone days as foolish squabbling over matters that (1) cannot possibly be the subject of human knowledge and (2) are religiously sterile—indeed, most likely damaging. These divergent evaluations are due to alternative estimations of the enlightenment. Those who think that Hume and Kant are fundamentally correct, that human knowledge cannot transcend human experience and that human experience cannot be of an unmediated transcendent reality, can brook no talk of "being," "essence," "Trinity," "persona," "substantia," and all the rest of the philosophical and theological concepts that were the stock in trade of philosopher-theologians during both the age of scholasticism and the age of orthodoxy. The

baneful fruit of this metaphysical agnosticism has been the largely banal history of nineteenth- and twentieth-century theology, a history that I take as a clear *reductio* of these philosophies. So pervasive in theological and religious academe are the philosophical dogmas of the enlightenment, however, that except in historical studies one can scarcely find an intelligent and religiously useful discussion of anything resembling the orthodox doctrines that once fed and nurtured a vibrant and influential Church. Theology has been corrupted by skepticism and degraded by a misguided drive for "relevance." The consequences of the assorted attempts to both mimic and be found acceptable to science has been the coopting of theology by psychology and politics. The liberation of the soul from the bondage of sin has been transmuted into the liberation of the psyche from neuroses and of the body from economic and political oppression. The only discernible distinction between the theologians and other "affirmers of human growth potential and enablers of human actualization" is the academic department in which they reside.

It is therefore with great pleasure that one greets a volume like this. Here one will find penetrating and thought-provoking discussions of providence, divine agency and divine causality. The contributors reflect both Protestant and Catholic perspectives and a variety of philosophical views. The papers are written by contemporary philosophers, and so the style and approach may be unfamiliar to those unaccustomed to the technical precision employed. Their use of modern philosophical tools and their employment of ideas developed by contemporary metaphysics, action theory, and philosophy of science, however, allows them to penetrate these problems with much greater clarity than heretofore. Moreover the employment of contemporary philosophical approaches such as possible-worlds ontology sheds a good deal of light on these issues.

The papers are divided into three categories. Part 1 contains discussions of "Divine Causality and the Natural World." The papers in this section discuss the nature of God's creation and preserving of the universe. In the first, "Divine Conservation and the Persistence of the World," J. L. Kvanvig and H. J. McCann argue that the continued existence of the world requires not only the original creative act of God but also his continued sustaining, moment by moment, of the world so created. Supporters of the Biblical doctrines of *creatio ex nihilo* and continual divine preservation will find Kvanvig's and McCann's anti-deist arguments quite helpful.

The articles by P. Quinn, "Divine Conservation, Secondary Causes, and Occasionalism," and A. Freddoso, "Medieval Aristotelianism and the Case against Secondary Causation in Nature," present illuminating discussions of causality. Both argue for the reality and efficacy of secondary causes and the compatibility of this reality with the doctrines of creation and conservation. L. Zagzebski's paper, "Individual Essence and the Creation," concludes the first part. She argues for the consistency of the existence of individual essences with an Augustinian exemplarism.

The second part, "Providence and Creaturely Action," contains four essays that deal largely with the problem of human freedom in the context of divine sovereignty. The first, "Two Accounts of Providence" by T. Flint, argues that Thomism and Molinism differ essentially on the issue of compatibilism, Thomism holding a compatibilist view of free will and Molinism a libertarian view. Although his paper deals with this issue in a Catholic theological context, evangelicals interested in the Calvinist-Arminian debate will find Flint's appraisal insightful and provocative. The second essay, "God's Freedom, Human Freedom, and God's Responsibility for Sin" by W. Mann, argues that all three of the major concepts of freedom elaborated and defended in recent philosophy—indifference, spontaneity and rationality—are capable of realization in God, with the possible proviso that his willing and knowing be identical. The essay explores the relationship between God's freedom and human free-

dom and brings out some interesting and important differences. P. van Inwagen's contribution, "The Place of Chance in a World Sustained by God," investigates such topics as providence, law, miracle, and the possibility of chance events in a world governed by an omnipotent God. Finally, J. M. Fischer investigates the relationship between divine foreknowledge and human freedom in "Freedom and Actuality."

The last part of the book, "The Nature of the Divine Agent," contains four articles united by their focus on the analogies between divine and human nature and action. In "Divine and Human Action" W. Alston argues that one can speak of divine action with "partial univocity" even if a functionalist theory of human action is the best we can do. The implication, of course, is that using human action as a model allows us to speak of God's activity without falling prey to the Scylla of agnosticism or the Charybdis of dogmatism. In "Being and Goodness" E. Stump and N. Kretzmann investigate Aquinas' view of the relation between God and morality. They then apply this view to a number of difficulties in philosophy of religion such as God's permission of evil.

The essay by K. Yandell, "Divine Necessity and Divine Goodness," probes the difficulties involved in the doctrine of God's "necessary existence" and argues for what he calls "plain theism"—namely, that "God exists" is a contingent truth—over against "Anselmian theism"—that is, that "God exists" is a necessary truth. Part of his argument for the former consists of an analysis of Jesus' temptation. Yandell argues that plain theism can make sense of the Biblical teaching that Christ was tempted in all ways like us but without sin but that Anselmian theism cannot. Although the argument is long and complex, it is well worth the effort. Finally, in "How Does God Know the Things He Knows" G. Mavrodes speculates upon the nature of God's knowledge, arguing against the traditional view that God knows all that he knows directly and for the alternative thesis—namely, that he knows all he knows by inference. As usual Mavrodes takes an unusual and *prima facie* untenable thesis and shows such an evaluation to be premature.

Such studies may seem far removed from the pastor's office and as of little use to the practicing minister as debates about angels and pinheads. That sort of reaction, however, demonstrates the bankruptcy of our current theological culture. The function of the ministry, among other things, is to proclaim the truth concerning God and his Christ, not merely to enable people to get through life with a minimum of psychic pain. But one cannot proclaim such truth unless one has thought through the competing positions and their implications. The philosophical theology exemplified in this volume is not all the Church needs, but it does display the concern for knowledge and truth that should be of primary interest to every pastor, not to say Christian academic.

The articles are not leisure reading. They require concentration and familiarity with the theology and philosophy of the past and the present. Novices and dilettantes had best go elsewhere. Moreover these essays will not give the busy pastor sermon points or illustrations. They will, however, challenge his mind and force him to think and to think with precision, and that sort of discipline is bound to affect for the better the exegesis he delivers on Sunday. Evangelicals for too long have sold their theological souls for the porridge of pop psychology and thoughtless enthusiasms. It is time that those responsible for proclaiming the faith began thinking about that faith in earnest. Reading the essays of this volume would make a good start.

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Luther: Man Between God and the Devil. By Heiko A. Oberman. New Haven: Yale University, 1989, 380 pp., \$29.95.

The English translation of Oberman's 1982 German biography of Luther is a monumental addition to the vast array of literature on the Saxon Reformer. This is no ordinary chronological account of Luther's life but, rather, a vivid portrait of Luther the man. Oberman takes a topical approach divided into three sections: background that led up to the Reformation, breakthrough of the Reformation, challenges to the Reformation. The first section discusses the political state of the German nation, the state of the late medieval Church, and Luther's own family heritage. The second deals with Luther's education, his study of both humanism and nominalism, his discovery of justification by faith, and his conflicts with the papacy. In the last part of the book, Oberman focuses specifically on Luther's lifelong struggle with the devil as exhibited in his conflicts with the sacramentarians, in his marriage, and in his personal character.

The author's avowed purpose is to encounter a Luther devoid of the excessively prosaic or condemnatory views of Protestant or Catholic or of those who would portray him as an ecumenical figure. Oberman attempts to discover Luther in the context of the most important battle of his life: that with the devil. In crafting such an approach the author portrays Luther as a man in constant tension and turmoil in which his personality is fully displayed in public as well as private life. In Oberman's own words he desires to "grasp the man in his totality—with head and heart, in and out of tune with the temper of his time" (p. ix).

Luther's continuous conflict with the devil lies at the heart of his humanity. Oberman writes: "Without a recognition of Satan's power, belief in Christ is reduced to an idea about Christ—and Luther's faith becomes a confused delusion" (p. 104). In addition Luther's use of earthly language reflects his utter contempt for the devil, especially in his repeated references to defecation, which prompted the psychoanalyst E. Erickson to refer to Luther as suffering from an "anal fixation." Luther's use of such vivid vocabulary was designed to arouse the common man and was directed not only against Satan but also against the pope, whom Luther viewed as the great antichrist.

It is in Luther's conflict with Satan that he reveals his humanness. For example, Luther saw his continual struggles with his health, with extreme bouts of constipation, gout and kidney stones as a direct attack by the devil himself. Luther believed that Satan preys full force upon those suffering from physical illness. Medical remedies were therefore God's weapons for the defense of the believer.

In this context Oberman rejects as artificial the psychoanalytical interpretation of Luther. For example, late in life Luther recollected that he had discovered the doctrine of justification by faith while he was in the "*cloaca*." Oberman admits that this term probably meant that Luther was on the toilet but claims that this place was one of the centers of Satanic conflict because the *cloaca* "is not just a privy, it is the most degrading place for man and the Devil's favorite habitat" (p. 155). The beautiful irony of Luther's discovery of the great Reformation doctrine in this place is that it shows that "no spot is unholy for the Holy Ghost; this is the very place to express contempt for the adversary through trust in Christ crucified" (p. 155).

Luther's sense of Satanic conflict had special relevance to his belief that he was living in the latter days when the judgment of God was close at hand. Such an era demanded drastic measures, as exhibited in Luther's stance against all opposition. This was a source of Luther's strongest moments, such as his defense of the authority of Scripture at the Diet of Worms, and also of his weakest, such as his permission for Phillip of Hesse to commit bigamy.

Luther's position on the Jews is of particular importance on this score. Oberman makes no attempt to excuse Luther's comments in his *Of the Jews and Their Lies* (1543) that their synagogues and houses should be burned. Oberman does not accuse Luther of anti-Semitism as have other contemporary historians, but he notes that, although Luther's position toward the Jews was essentially medieval, it differed from the traditional stance of his day by not blaming them for the crucifixion of Christ. Furthermore Oberman points out that Luther's attitude toward the Jews was intertwined with his sense of the imminency of the last days. The Jews could only be restored in this era by conversion. When they failed to convert *en masse* their judgment was assured.

Luther's sense of living in the latter days and the hope of the millennium was a theme common in the late medieval period. Oberman is quick to point out the differences between Luther's sense of the imminency of the day of judgment and the chilastic approach of the followers of T. Müntzer. Luther's sense of timing was inextricably tied in with his view that the pope was indeed the antichrist. Oberman concludes that for Luther "all he or any Christian can do is to initiate reforms to better the world to such an extent that it can survive until the moment when God will put a final end to our chaos" (p. 80).

Oberman's analysis of the Reformer in the context of his struggle with the devil offers us a fresh look at Luther the man. This is a masterful effort, one that is must reading for anyone interested in Luther. A man who seized the moment, Luther drew "life from the struggle against the Devil" (p. 330). Far from emphasizing seeking the heavenly kingdom, Luther emphasized living this life in light of a sense of the eternal cosmic struggle. As Oberman concludes: "According to the medieval *memento mori*, in the midst of life we are surrounded by death. Luther's faith enabled him to vigorously turn this on its head: 'In the midst of death we are surrounded by life'" (p. 330).

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