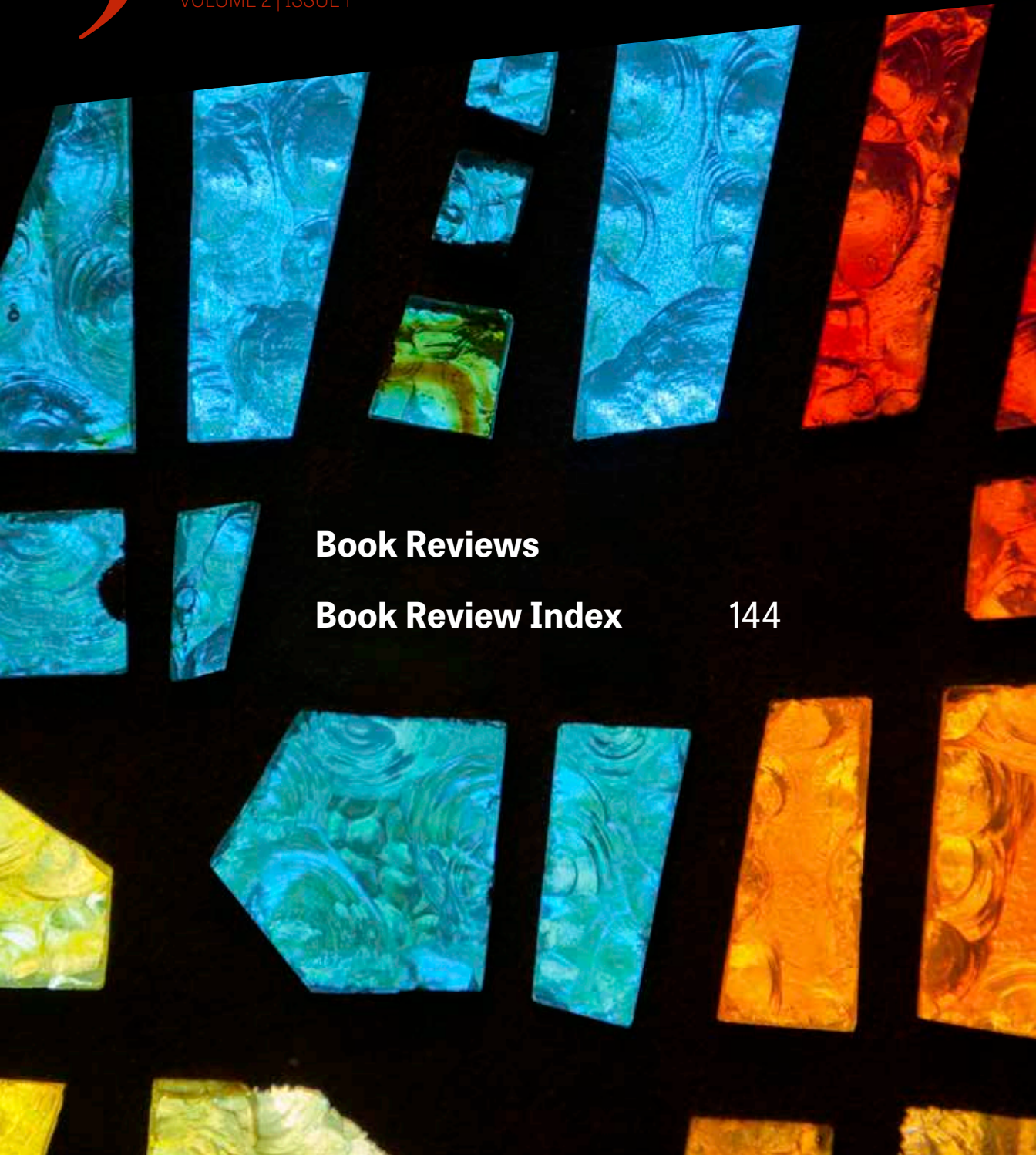


JBTS

VOLUME 2 | ISSUE 1

JOURNAL OF
BIBLICAL AND
THEOLOGICAL
STUDIES



Book Reviews

Book Review Index 144

Book Reviews

Ferguson, Sinclair B. *The Whole Christ: Legalism, Antinomianism, and Gospel Assurance – Why the Marrow Controversy Still Matters*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2016, pp. 256, \$24.99, hardcover.

In an age characterized by both self-indulgence and anxiety, Sinclair Ferguson addresses in *The Whole Christ* the always pressing issues of legalism, antinomianism and assurance of salvation. Ferguson served as senior minister of First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina and is professor of systematic theology at Redeemer Seminary in Dallas, Texas and author of a number of books, including *The Holy Spirit* and *In Christ Alone: Living the Gospel-Centered Life*.

Here Ferguson looks back to an instructive moment in Protestant church history – the “Marrow controversy” in early eighteenth-century Scotland – in order to glean insights for handling the relationship between God’s grace and God’s call for obedience in the believer’s life. The introduction and first chapter shed light on the background and significance of the Marrow controversy, which centered on a book entitled *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* that was deemed antinomian by some Scottish Presbyterians but was and is believed by traditional Reformed and Presbyterian theologians to contain a sound presentation of the relationship between God’s grace and God’s law in the Christian life.

In chapter two, Ferguson draws from the Marrow controversy to emphasize the importance of the free offer of the gospel to all persons. Chapter three explores the harmful effects of “preparationism,” according to which the hearer must exhibit certain fruits of election before hearing the gospel. Ferguson identifies this approach to evangelism as an assault on the goodness and generosity of God.

Chapter four considers the nature of legalism, the root of which is a failure to see and trust in the goodness of God. In chapter five, Ferguson then sketches an *ordo salutis* – a discernible logical ordering of the benefits of salvation in Christ, like justification, sanctification and so on. In God’s economy the “indicative” (what is true of those who are in Christ) precedes the “imperative” (what God calls believers in Christ to do). Chapter six points up various signs to help diagnose legalism in one’s heart and actions.

Chapter seven focuses on antinomianism and maintains the normative function of the Decalogue in the Christian life. The eighth chapter contends that antinomianism ultimately emerges from a legalistic heart and envisions a positive (Pauline) place for the law in the life of faith. Finally, chapters 9-11 deal with the problem of assurance,

examining whether it is included in the essence of faith and explaining how one can possess assurance under the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

A number of helpful features in *The Whole Christ* stand out. First, Ferguson argues that at the foundation of a right view of grace, law and assurance is a right view of the good and loving God of salvation. Many Christians struggle to trust in the goodness of God and will be encouraged by Ferguson's insistence on it. Second, Ferguson's emphasis on union with Christ throughout the book is salutary. Whenever we separate the benefits of Christ (faith, justification, sanctification and the rest) from the Savior himself or from one another, we develop a lopsided and pastorally hazardous understanding of salvation. Third, in chapter ten Ferguson introduces readers to the illuminating distinction between the "direct" and "reflexive" acts of faith. The former refers to the believer's trust in Christ and his saving work, while the latter refers to the believer's confidence that he or she belongs to and is secure in Christ. The former is primary and "contains within it the seed of assurance" (p. 197). The latter is never the instrument of salvation and may be had in greater and lesser degrees throughout the Christian life.

On a minor critical note, I wonder whether the arrangement of the material might have been better if the historical sections on the Marrow controversy were gathered up into one chapter for the sake of clarity and proportion, instead of embedding parts of the historical description in different chapters and sometimes rehashing the events (e.g., pp. 77-8). Also, a few turns of phrase might, if he or she is not careful, leave the contemporary reader confused for a moment. For example: "repentance is not a qualification for coming to Christ" (p. 97). Does this mean that repentance is not in any way included in one's initially coming to Christ (as in Mk. 1:15; Acts 2:38)? To be fair, one need only read on and ascertain that Ferguson is simply emphasizing that there are no pre-requisites for hearing the gospel and initially turning to Christ and that faith in Christ logically precedes repentance (pp. 98ff.).

To locate this book in the broader field of theological study today, a few comments are in order. First, it can be read profitably as a study in soteriology and the Christian life. Its historical, exegetical, and dogmatic reflections will be beneficial for students of Scripture and Christian theology and practitioners in pastoral ministry. Second, it models nicely a decidedly theological (rather than a self-help or pop psychology) approach to understanding discipleship. Too often Christians look to trendy books with "steps" to success or happiness and will find a book of this sort to be a welcome break from such shallowness. Indeed, *The Whole Christ* exhibits well the fact that what may seem like strictly theoretical considerations in fact powerfully bear on one's daily Christian experience and will repay our attention.

Third, *The Whole Christ* illustrates the importance of understanding church history. That there really is nothing new under the sun is borne out in the history of the Christian church, and studying the past gives us access to debates and controversies where ideas, concepts and patterns of thought have run their course and proven to

be either fruitful or spiritually harmful. Rather than reinvent the wheel every time we approach an exegetical or ministerial problem, we do well to know what the generations before us have already learned and passed on to us as wisdom for today. Fourth, Ferguson writes as a Calvinist, and “Calvinism” is a frequently used and sometimes poorly understood term in contemporary Christianity. In this connection, some readers may be pleasantly surprised to learn that mainstream traditional Reformed and Presbyterian theology would so adamantly speak of the goodness and fatherly love of God in saving sinners. Fifth, “grace” also is a frequently used and sometimes poorly understood term, especially when some evangelical leaders have recently reduced sanctification to a matter of simply believing more in justification by grace. Ferguson strikes the balance in instructing us both to rest in Christ alone as the basis of our salvation and in reminding us that those who are in Christ must and will grow in loving obedience to the Father.

Other available resources can help readers explore the issues covered here in more historical and technical detail, including the relevant chapters of Joel Beeke’s and Mark Jones’s *Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life* and volume 4 of Herman Bavinck’s *Reformed Dogmatics*. However, for students and, indeed, for any Christian seeking to grow theologically and spiritually, *The Whole Christ* is a great place to start.

Steven J. Duby
Grand Canyon University
Phoenix, AZ

Johnson, Keith L. *Theology as Discipleship*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2015, pp. 192, \$20, softcover.

Theological dialogue is standard practice among scholars engaged in the halls of academia. These conversations are necessary and helpful, and it benefits the church greatly for scholars to remain steadfast in their specific academic pursuits; however, the church is not served fully if theology is restricted to the solitary confines of scholarly engagement. Theology must be applicable to the whole of life, and the church needs scholars to speak in this important conversational space as well. Keith Johnson (Ph.D., Princeton Theological Seminary), associate professor of theology at Wheaton College, addresses the need for theology to be recognized as far more than an academic discipline. Johnson helpfully shows that theology is central to discipleship for believers. *Theology as Discipleship* is an excellent work that will help thoughtful students beginning theological studies.

Johnson’s book was born out of questions and conversations Johnson encountered from students in his introductory theology courses at Wheaton College. His students

questioned the relevance of theology to daily Christian living, and they also expressed legitimate concerns that theology might stifle one's daily walk with Christ due to the tendency of quarrels and divisions that all too often arise out of theological inquiry. Johnson rightly notes that these questions are common as students grapple with the various nuances of theological reflection. These questions are a direct consequence of the theological ignorance which exists in the church. Johnson notes that "It is possible for a Christian to participate in the church for years and never engage in disciplined theological thinking about core Christian doctrines or the history of the church's debates about them. It is also possible for academic theologians to devote their entire careers to the discipline and never be asked to translate or apply the content of their scholarship to the concrete realities that shape the daily life of the church" (p. 12). These possibilities reveal an unnecessary bifurcation between theology and life. Thus, Johnson's approach in this volume is to offer a corrective solution.

Johnson's thesis is clear: "Theological learning is pursued rightly when it occurs within the context of a life of discipleship, because the practices of discipleship enable and enrich our pursuit of theological knowledge" (p. 26). The negative press that is all too often associated with theology occurs when theology is approached as a discipline and not a form of discipleship. When viewed rightly, Christians will view discipleship as a natural extension of theology, and theology as a godly manifestation of discipleship. The relationship between discipleship and theology cannot be overstated, according to Johnson. He argues, "The act of learning how to think and speak rightly about God is an act of faith and obedience that involves our participation in the mind of Christ and our partnership with Christ by the power of his Spirit. In this sense, the practice of theology takes place as an act of discipleship to Christ" (p. 37). Throughout the rest of the book, Johnson builds a case for the close relationship between theology and discipleship. The book consists of seven chapters: Recovering Theology, Being in Christ, Partnership with Christ, The Word of God, Hearing the Word of God, The Mind of Christ, and Theology in Christ. The chapters are organized so that they stand alone. One could read a chapter of this volume independently and not be hindered by the lack of knowledge of the rest of the book. In each chapter, Johnson introduces the subject, engages various theologians, and provides substantive interaction with relevant biblical texts.

This book has a number of positive features. First, Johnson knows his subject matter well, and readers will benefit greatly from his interactions with other noteworthy theologians. Johnson interacts heavily with Calvin, Barth, and Bonhoeffer, and readers will also benefit from interactions with other theologians old and new: Gregory of Nazianzus, Aquinas, Augustine, Basil the Great, Nicholas Wolterstorff, Robert Jenson, Herman Bavinck, J. Todd Billings, N.T. Wright, and John Webster to name a few. For the intended audience, these conversations are helpful in modeling how Christians can approach a text and/or issue and engage the issues with precision and charity to others. Second, Johnson engages theological

Book Reviews

arguments biblically. Readers are often taken to Scripture to wrestle with the text and its implications. Students will benefit greatly from this approach because it forces students to build theology out of the Bible. Third, *Theology as Discipleship* reminds readers of all theological levels of the necessity of theology's application to walking by faith in daily union with Christ. Johnson helpfully illustrates the dangers of theology in the abstract which tends to have little effect on human emotion and ethics. Fourth, Johnson helps to recover a healthy and more robust understanding of discipleship. Too often in contemporary settings, discipleship is reduced to superficial anecdotes, which lack any corresponding biblical foundation. Fifth, Johnson's final chapter should be required reading for students pursuing ministry. In this chapter, Johnson describes nine characteristics of what theology as discipleship entails. For example, the ninth and final characteristic is "We practice theology as disciples when we pursue our theological work with joy" (p. 187). This joy is part ecclesial because it emerges from our desire to use theology as a means for the church to know and love Christ more. These positive features are just a few of the reasons why Johnson's book should be required reading for students pursuing ministry.

There are a few valid criticisms that emerge. First, at times, Johnson seems to assume that his readers have a working knowledge of the theologians with whom he interacts. It is in these sections that Johnson's audience appears to be much broader than students new to theology. Johnson seeks to engage academic theologians to reorient their view of theology as an aspect of discipleship. In these instances, beginners may get lost in the verbiage and not grasp Johnson's purpose. Second, Johnson seems to grant most of his effort rehearsing and teaching theology more than working out its implications for discipleship. To be fair, Johnson's final chapter addresses these issues, but there is not consistent development throughout the book.

In addition to this book, I recommend students to read Alister McGrath's short volume (256 pages) *Theology: The Basics* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), or his larger volume (536 pages) *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2010). Additionally, students will benefit by reading Johnson's colleague at Wheaton, Beth Felker Jones, who recently published *Practicing Christian Doctrine: An Introduction to Thinking and Living Theologically* (Baker, 2014). Each of these volumes are well suited for undergraduate and seminary students beginning theological studies. Johnson's work admirably connects theology to discipleship, and for this reason, students should read this helpful work.

Justin L. McLendon
Grand Canyon University
Phoenix, AZ

Yarnell III, Malcolm B. *God the Trinity: Biblical Portraits*. Nashville, TN: B & H Academic, 2016, pp. xi + 260, \$29.99, hardback.

God the Trinity: Biblical Portraits presents a nuanced exegetical case that “the pattern of the Trinity is woven into” (p. 5) the fabric of the various Old and New Testament literature. Throughout the work, author Malcolm Yarnell (D. Phil., Oxford), Research Professor of Systematic Theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, balances close theological exegesis with a desire to help the community of believers understand life in the Trinity.

The opening chapter serves to introduce the case made in the sequel, appropriately beginning with Yarnell’s hermeneutic. Eschewing “propositionalism” (the insistence, bequeathed by the Enlightenment, that doctrinal claims must be propositional claims), Yarnell instead utilizes the historical critical method—although not indiscriminately (decrying its occasionally “acidic” use [p. 79], as well as its tendency to blunt our reading of the fathers [p. 98]). Each chapter (save chapter four) centers on the unpacking of a selected biblical passage, each yielding a complementary portrait of God (the fitting metaphor of portraiture is used throughout). Chapter one rounds out with a consideration of Matthew 28:16-20, highlighting the portrayal of the divine persons as in a unity that suggests coordinate relations amongst them (p. 21).

Focusing on 2 Corinthians 13:14, Yarnell presents in chapter two “a basic economic Trinitarianism” revealed in “how God works and how we are commanded to respond to him in worship” (p. 36). Taking each of the text’s four parts in turn, Yarnell considers the theme of each in relation to God’s work, naturally raising questions about the persons themselves. Regarding Jesus, for example, Yarnell traces Paul’s use of “Lord” to the Old Testament covenantal names “Yahweh” and “Adonai,” as well as “Messiah,” establishing Jesus as the bringer of the grace that originates in the Father and is perfected in the world by the Holy Spirit. Yarnell is careful at each turn (rightly) to emphasize the unity of God’s operations.

Having established Scripture’s presentation of God as three in one, chapter three looks to “the roots of Christian monotheism and its earliest development in a Trinitarian direction” (p. 57). How, exactly, do Christians speak of God as three in one? Turning to Deuteronomy 6:4-7, Yarnell presents the passage’s context (the Law, especially as God’s blessing) as the segue to the only, personal God’s invitation to Israel to enter into a unique relationship with himself. An early challenge for the Christian community, of course, was assimilating strict monotheism and the worship of more than one person as divine. Following Gerald Bray, Yarnell finds the crux of this issue in one’s understanding of “the place of the Messiah in relation to God” (p. 77), ultimately maintaining the divine title of the Shema is ascribed to Jesus (p. 79).

Returning to the topic of hermeneutics, the fourth (and shortest) chapter tracks “the progress of exegesis since the Reformation period, paying special attention to the problems introduced in modernity” (p. 88). This presentation of Yarnell’s reading

of certain historical influences (e.g., Kant) on exegesis is interesting, although certain readers will feel it somewhat potted. Finding in this survey the roots of “problems in theological language,” Yarnell concludes, “we may state that God has an essence, but we cannot speak of what his essence is” (p. 105).

Chapter five looks to the Gospels, especially John’s, to ask, “What exactly the Father and the Son possess in common” and what their possessing it in common means (p. 107)? Yarnell methodically assesses Jesus’s actions to answer such questions. The remainder of the chapter unpacks the “threefold form” of John’s Gospel, presenting in turn “the only begotten God,” “the divine monarch,” and “the proceeding God.” One appreciates Yarnell’s sensitivity to the intra-trinitarian relations in Scripture, which he finds to be “eternal” and indeed “necessary” (p. 123), although certain readers will wish more were said toward specifying just what the relations familiarly known as “begottenness,” “generation,” and “procession” consist in.

Continuing in John’s Gospel, chapter six opens with “the metaphorical nature” of Jesus’s words in John 17, which tell us something of what God is like. Again noting the inadequacy of “human language” to describe God, Yarnell walks the reader through the “fivefold reflection upon the Johannine patterning of God” (p. 140) he finds embedded in the text. To this point in the book readers will have noticed that such terms as “essence” and “person” find but sparse usage (cf. pp. 116-117), and this is because such terms are “postbiblical” (p. 154), which Yarnell shies away from although without fully rejecting.

While timely in its release amidst rekindling trinitarian debates (particularly amongst Evangelicals), *God the Trinity* is little concerned explicitly to enter that fray. Nevertheless, Yarnell makes two claims that will be of particular interest to those involved. Regarding the issue of the Son’s equality with the Father, Yarnell writes: “In a move that has drawn many evangelicals...away from the Cappadocian doctrine of the eternal processions of the Son and the Holy Spirit, Calvinist theologians have deemed such language inappropriate” (p. 147). It is doubtful many Calvinists will appreciate this, particularly those who emphatically affirm the ontological equality of the divine persons. Second, Yarnell addresses a “Calvinist rule” which he explains is a “hermeneutical rule distinguishing between the ontological equality and the functional subordination of the Son” (pp. 147-148). Both Calvinist and other readers who draw such a distinction will be surprised that Yarnell “is convinced neither that” the rule “is biblical, nor that it is helpful” theologically. Given his repeated affirmations that the divine persons are fully and equally divine, along with such acknowledgements as “the Son may be said to be ‘subordinate’ to the Father without endangering the Son’s equal possession of the Father’s self” (p. 151) and that in Revelation John indicates “Jesus’s equality with, yet subordination to, the Father...(in) the eternal throne of God” (p. 211), it is not entirely clear what Yarnell is rejecting. Perhaps he is attempting (quite understandably) to move beyond potentially unclear “subordination” language, but if that is so then the claim that “there is eternal subordination in John’s portrayal

of the three.... There is no hint here that the subordination of the Lamb and the Spirit is...merely functional” (p. 217) are left somewhat unclear. Perhaps he assumes that “functional subordination” cannot be eternal.

Chapters seven and eight look to Paul’s portrait of the Trinity *via* the divine economy, especially in Ephesians, and John’s in Revelation, respectively. Yarnell is truly at his best in expounding the theology of the Trinity in these chapters, highlighting not only the intra-trinitarian relations but God’s unity and various works (redemption, judgment, renewal, etc.), as well. Having followed the avenue of economy, however, Yarnell is emphatic that “economy is dependent on ontology and not vice versa” (p. 194). Following chapter eight is a short epilogue containing ten theses offered as theological takeaways of the trinitarian portraits developed throughout the work, as well as new translations of the Apostles’, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds forming an appendix. Those using *God the Trinity* as a textbook will find these useful.

There is much to appreciate in *God the Trinity*, especially Yarnell’s insistence that theology be grounded in exegesis. The book is generously footnoted, and while proficiency in the biblical languages will be helpful it is not required for a beneficial reading. Various readers will find quibbles here and there—attributing to Justin Martyr the conception “of Christ as an extension of the divine mind” (p. 123) or referring to an “evangelical correspondence theory of truth” (p. 176), for example. Throughout the book one detects a subtle deprecation of philosophy, which certain readers will find discouraging. Although the role of philosophy vis-à-vis theology is never addressed overtly, one finds the former routinely portrayed as (only) contributing to the latter’s undoing. Christian philosophical theologians have made valuable contributions to trinitarianism, and certain readers will detect in Yarnell’s project points at which such contributions could play a helpful role. Nonetheless, *God the Trinity* is a welcome addition to the trinitarian literature, preserving focus on the biblical texts while making a solid theological case that the Trinity is, indeed, woven into the full canon of Scripture.

R. Keith Loftin
College at Southwestern, and
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Wright, Christopher J. H. *How to Preach and Teach the Old Testament for All Its Worth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016, pp. 288, \$18.99, paperback.

Christopher J. H. Wright is the International Ministries Director of the Langham Partnership and was also chair of the Lausanne Theology Working Group which presented The Cape Town Commitment to the Third Lausanne Congress in 2010.

He has written numerous books including *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God*, *The Mission of God*, and *Knowing Jesus through the Old Testament*, among others. He attends All Souls Church, Langham Place in London where he preaches occasionally.

Written as part of Zondervan's *All Its Worth* series, Wright focuses on the Old Testament in this volume, working beyond interpretation to aid preachers and teachers as they study and prepare the material for proclamation. Wright divides his book into two main sections, focusing on *why* one should preach and teach from the Old Testament in the first section and *how* one does so in the second. Every chapter ends with questions and exercises to help the reader digest the material, and the "How" section includes preparation checklists and sermon outline examples for each major Old Testament genre.

As for the "Why," Wright notes that many sermons tend to come from the New Testament or occasionally a Psalm (p. 17). Why then should a person be encouraged to preach or teach from the OT? In the first chapter, he gives his three primary reasons: 1) the OT is given to us by God, 2) the OT lays the foundation for our faith, and 3) the OT was the Bible of Jesus. The remainder of Part One explains that the OT tells a detailed story that has Jesus as its destination *and* its fulfillment (p. 38). Much of his discussion about Jesus centers around the nature of preaching and teaching about Christ in the OT, including its uses and abuses.

Part Two is the more practical section of the book, explaining each major section of the OT and providing several tools for preparation and teaching of the material. He emphasizes the importance of recognizing the big story of the entire Bible (p. 87), the larger stories encompassing God's various covenants (p. 89), and the numerous smaller stories contained in those (p. 90). Keeping these various levels of "story" in mind keeps one on firm ground when teaching the OT, particularly when moving into non-narrative sections. Wright then covers each of the major genres of the OT, explaining the methods, pitfalls, and important points to stress in each. He includes numerous pedagogical tools including checklists for interpretation and preparation of various texts, sample outlines from specific passages, and examples from each genre to show how to apply OT texts for a Christian audience, with Christ as the hinge point for this application.

One of the best features of Christopher Wright's writing is his ability to make Scripture immensely practical and beautiful, and this book is no different. His *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* helped give practical shape to the Torah as *Christian* Scripture, and he brings a wealth of insights from that book into this one. Thus, *How to Preach and Teach* is a great tool to understand the purpose of OT Law, one of the most difficult problems when preaching from those books. Moreover, he teaches one to preach OT law through a series of checklists and examples, providing a framework to apply to the gamut of laws (pp. 175-80). He applies this method to the other genres he covers as well (narrative, prophecy, poetry, and wisdom). Thus,

a significant strength of this book is that it gives a succinct theological and practical introduction to many primary themes in OT interpretation.

How to Preach and Teach also addresses the issue of Christ/Jesus in the OT, certainly a popular, albeit debatable topic of interest. Wright navigates through the conversation, supporting the practice of Christ-centered preaching, but he rightly insists that the practice is the proper result of good OT (and NT) interpretation, not the other way around (pp. 46, 51). Rather than leaving the topic vague for teachers, Wright uses chapter four to lay out the pitfalls and chapter five to give methods for preaching Jesus. Because of the “buzz” surrounding Christ-centered preaching, I suspect that many preachers will find chapters 3-5 to be the most pertinent part of the book.

Initially, the three chapters regarding Jesus and the OT seemed out of place in the “why” section of this book. The first two chapters properly covered the need for preachers to teach from the OT, but the next three appeared to be an excursus on Christ-centered preaching. However, I think it is fair to note that Wright places Jesus and the Gospel at the center of Christian preaching, and thus clear thinking about this method is warranted (p. 63). For proper OT preaching, one must show how the text points to Christ and calls for a Christian response (p. 79). As such, it bridges the gap between the “why” and “how” of preaching the OT.

Lastly, the “how-to” tools Wright includes, such as questions, checklists, or examples, will probably be most helpful in the classroom context where students must utilize them to produce sermon outlines or manuscripts. For the busy pastor, I can imagine the content of the book will be helpful, but without the accountability of the classroom environment, there is often little extra time to use the tools during a work week. These tools are quite good though and should serve the individual well who will take the time to use them. The “Questions and Exercises” and “Sample Outlines” are set off from the main text in shaded boxes, making them easy to find. However, the “Checklists,” perhaps one of the most helpful tools, are regularly buried within the text and may be harder to locate and thus utilize in regular sermon preparation.

Wright’s work will appeal primarily to those preparing for or already engaged in ministry or teaching. His book not only provides the *information* explaining the OT and a method for preaching/teaching it, but he also *models* teaching the OT as he informs. As such, this book will be at home in the Bible college or seminary classroom as well as in the library of the minister. Finally, Wright’s love for the OT and his perspective of its overarching message and purpose for Christians is refreshing, and thus this book might also provide for the seasoned scholar the opportunity to step back and see the beauty and practicality of the OT in a concise form.

Ryan C. Hanley
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Louisville, KY

Kibbe, Michael. *From Topic to Thesis: A Guide to Theological Research*. Downer's Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016, pp. 152, \$12, paperback.

As I have taught classes at both the undergraduate and graduate/seminary level one of the things that I have noticed that students struggle with most is academic writing. The struggle in writing is nearly universal among students. Kibbe's *From Topic to Thesis* is a very helpful tool that will help students through the beginning stages of the writing process, stages that are often ignored by students and under taught by faculty.

Kibbe starts his guide for students with an introduction. He starts the introduction with a discussion of process by noting that students should move from topic to thesis and not from topic to paper, which students often do. Kibbe also briefly outlines the history of theological research and gives a discussion of how theological research is similar and distinct from other areas of research. He ends the introduction with a discussion of key terms and a discussion of bibliography.

Chapter one is focused on finding direction. In this chapter Kibbe brings out a number of important points when writing. Kibbe starts this chapter with a discussion of four keys that students need to know: 1) students should not already have decided what their paper is going to argue at the outset; 2) research takes time; 3) at the beginning of research students should not use secondary sources; 4) that while they are a student is the only time when students will depend upon tertiary or secondary sources. In this chapter Kibbe has several questions that should be asked of primary and tertiary sources as well as different ways to find direction. There is a section in each chapter where he discusses questions to ask of the topic at hand. Kibbe also gives examples of finding direction in two research areas, which he repeats in later chapters. At the end of this chapter, and other chapters, he supplies a short list of main points that students should focus on that were discussed within the chapter.

In chapter two Kibbe discusses gathering sources. He has helpful discussion throughout this chapter on keys to gathering sources and on questions to ask, but one of the more helpful points that he makes, that I often find myself reiterating to students is that it "is rarely a good idea to cite an online source" (p. 61).

Chapter three focuses on understanding issues. This chapter hits on several important concepts like an excurses on common research mistakes where he notes things like the importance of using too many quotes.

The fourth chapter focuses on entering into the discussion. Here the focus is on the student beginning to speak into the issue/topic that they are engaged in researching. Important points like when to enter into the discussion happen and the importance of being able to articulate how one's thesis fits into the overall discussion of a topic.

The final chapter of the book discusses establishing a position. Here he notes that the thesis statement is the heart of the paper and that students should not being the writing process too soon.

After the final chapter Kibbe provides six appendices on the following topics: 1) things a student should never do in theological research; 2) helpful theological research tools like the *SBL Handbook of Style* and others; 3) scholarly resources for theological research with a focus on primary sources and a list of commonly used tertiary sources including things like major publishers and commentary series; 4) how to navigate ATLA, a scholarly database found in most theological online libraries; 5) an introduction and guide through Zotero bibliography software; 6) a suggested timeline for research papers.

Kibbe makes some very helpful points throughout his work. In fact, almost everything he writes within his work should prove helpful to students in either the undergraduate or graduate space within theological education. One of the more helpful things that he writes to students is that when they research students need to understand that they are not going to produce new knowledge or original research, but that the goal of a student's research should be new knowledge to them (p. 24). His appendix on things that should never be done by students within papers will certainly have everyone who has ever had to read student papers smiling and nodding with knowing approval of how egregious these things are.

I only have two minor critiques of this work. First, I fear that his interaction with tertiary sources and his discussion of Zotero, might become too quickly dated (because updates inevitably happen) and require a revision, which is not necessarily a bad thing, but something to be observed. Second, his timeline assumes a traditional semester and many students find themselves in accelerated courses that fall in an eight-week format, especially in the online format. It would be helpful to have an adjusted timeline for those students, but I supposed it could just be cut in half with the assumption that the student is not taking as heavy of a load and can commit more time in a shorter amount of time.

I would also add a few suggestions to Kibbe's helpful work, some of which Kibbe discusses briefly in his work but are worth rearticulating here. First, students should know what their professor expects from them with their writing. Every professor is slightly different and will expect slightly different things from students when it comes to writing. Most professors are quite transparent as to what they are looking for in this regard. Second, the way that students learn to write in an English composition class is helpful, but biblical and theological research argues in a different way than in an English class. Third, read Kibbe's appendix on things to avoid doing in writing and realize that this is only the beginning of writing taboos. For instance, I find it exceptionally difficult to read papers where students overuse first person (especially first person plural) and where students use second person. Some faculty do not mind the use of first and second person as much as I do, but many do, especially in regards to the use of second person. Fourth, take plagiarism very seriously because professors do.

I would also add a couple suggestions to any professors that might be reading. First, none of us enjoy reading poor theology papers. I have found that a bit of work up front makes students writing significantly better. One thing that I always do is give a one hour lecture to every class that I teach about how to write a paper and how to research. We only scratch the surface, but it is a good start and students then feel free to ask me questions. In this lecture I also discuss plagiarism. I have found that student writing is vastly improved, their research is more solid, and plagiarism is almost completely eliminated after this lecture. Second, it is easy to blame poor writing on other departments or on poor college-level training (from a seminary perspective) or poor high school training (from an undergraduate perspective), but this is only part of the story. It is our job to help them write while they are in our classes. Instead of blaming others it is important for us to be faithful.

Kibbe's book will make a welcome addition to any and every student's library and would be a helpful required book at the beginning of both undergraduate and graduate theological degree programs.

Daniel S. Diffey
Grand Canyon University
Phoenix, AZ

Cortez, Mark. *Christological Anthropology in Historical Perspective: Ancient and Contemporary Approaches to Theological Anthropology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016, pp. 272, \$27.99, paperback.

Marc Cortez is currently associate professor of theology at Wheaton College. His prior works include *Theological Anthropology: A Guide for the Perplexed* (T&T Clark, 2010) and *Embodied Souls, Ensouled Bodies: An Exercise in Christological Anthropology and Its Significance for the Mind/Body Debate* (T&T Clark, 2008). As the title of these previous monographs indicate, Cortez has an interest in theological anthropology. The recently published *Christological Anthropology in Historical Perspective: Ancient and Contemporary Approaches to Theological Anthropology* represents his third full length contribution to this field.

What makes us human? This is a question upon which much ink has been spilled. Most studies attempting to answer this question have tended focus on one of several topics: 1) human origins, 2) ethics, and 3) the *imago dei*. What Cortez brings to this already oversaturated field is a rethinking of the methodology upon which so many of these studies are founded. Cortez's approach to theological anthropology is strictly Christological. Although this book is not primarily a constructive proposal but a study of historical Christological anthropologies, Cortez reveals his constructive method which will be taken up in a future study.

Cortez begins by defining Christological anthropology. He defines this approach as “one in which (1) Christology warrants important claims about what it means to be human and the scope of those claims goes beyond issues like the image of God and ethics” (p. 22). In order to make a case for what this approach looks like, he devotes seven of the eight chapters to exploring the Christological anthropology of five historic authors and two contemporary authors. Cortez begins by showing how Gregory of Nyssa’s Christological anthropology “requires that we bracket out biological sexuality as a nonessential feature of historical humanity” (p. 55). He then turns his attention to Julian of Norwich’s cruciform anthropology in which the cross reveals that to be human is to be a creature united to Christ and sheltered in God’s love. The chapter on Julian is followed by a chapter on Martin Luther’s understanding of how justification informs what it means to be human. Here Cortez argues that Luther’s theology of justification reveals not only the current fallenness of humanity but the eschatological telos of humanity in which God intends to bring about true humanity by redeeming it rather than replacing it (p. 95). The chapter on Luther is followed by a chapter on the reformed theologian, Schleiermacher, who in general is not well received by many conservative Christians. Cortez recognizes that including a chapter on Schleiermacher might seem unusual to some, and he attempts to defend his decision to devote a chapter to him. He argues that Schleiermacher’s anthropology is truly Christological. The subsequent chapter treats the theological anthropology of Karl Barth (a subject about which Cortez has previously written a full-length monograph). This chapter primarily focuses on Barth’s method and the difference it makes for the mind/body debate. The final two chapters address the work of two contemporary theologians: John Zizioulas and James Cone. Both chapters emphasize the communal nature of human beings. Zizioulas’s theology emphasizes the communal nature through his Trinitarian definition of personhood, and Cone emphasizes this by understanding humanity in light of liberation of the oppressed. All in all, these chapters serve as fitting introductions to the theological anthropology of the chosen figures. The chapters are concise and charitable, and the theological novice will quickly learn the prominent themes in the works of these theologians.

Despite the usefulness of Cortez’s case studies in Christological anthropology, the most interesting aspect of this book comes in his introduction and conclusion, since it is here that we see Cortez’s method on full display. First, we see that Cortez’s method expands discussions of theological anthropology beyond the overplayed themes of human origins, ethics, and the *imago dei*. His definition of a minimally Christological anthropology necessarily expands it beyond these themes. This ought to be welcomed in theological anthropology, which has so often been bogged down by these three issues. Second, his method captures and articulates an intuition that many Christians share but are unable to articulate well, namely, that Jesus’s humanity should make a difference when thinking about our own humanity. If in Christ we are presented not only with the fullness of Godhead but also with the fullness of humanity

(p. 13), i.e. true humanity, then we would think that theological anthropology should turn to Christ in order to explain what it means to be human. In short, Christ is the epistemological key to theological anthropology.

Although Cortez argues for the epistemological priority of Christology for anthropology, he does not provide a normative method for making the move from Christ to what it means to be human. Some readers may see this as a fault in this book, but this is to misunderstand the purpose of the book, namely, to define Christological anthropology and provide some case studies in this method. Finally, his method provides ample logical space within which variations of this method may develop. He allows for a “minimally Christological anthropology” in which Christology warrants *important* claims about what it means to be human and “comprehensively Christological anthropology” in which Christology warrants *ultimate* claims about true humanity (p. 225). Creating space within which variations can exist ensures the usefulness and applicability of Christological anthropology across a wide range of theological traditions.

Though this reader has found much to appreciate in Cortez’s volume, this does not mean it is without shortcomings. First, it should be noted that Cortez does not critically engage with the theologians in his case studies. These case studies are primarily summaries of a given theologian’s anthropology. Readers would have benefited if Cortez had given at least a few reasons for not accepting a given theologian’s claims. Second, Cortez fails to address, in any substantive way, potential critiques of Christological anthropology. As someone who finds affinity with Cortez’s methodology, I would have liked to see Cortez respond to some objections to this method. Given the lack of engagement with possible objections, one gets the impression that his method is simply the best way to do theological anthropology, but Cortez does not do enough to motivate this conclusion.

Despite these flaws, Cortez has provided his readers with an excellent introduction to the topic along with some interesting and varied case studies. This book will be valuable to upper division undergraduate and seminary students who are wrestling with various methodological approaches to anthropology. It will also serve those who are interested in anthropological issues beyond human origins and the *imago dei*. Perhaps some of those students will continue to build upon the solid foundation that Cortez has laid in this book.

Christopher Woznicki
Fuller Theological Seminary
Pasadena, CA

Frame, John. *A History of Western Philosophy and Theology*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2015, pp. xi + 875, \$59.99, hardback.

John Frame holds the J. D. Trimble Chair of Systematic Theology and Philosophy at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, Florida. Frame's *A History of Western Philosophy and Theology* is just one book among many that he has authored—books that span a wide range of subjects, including theology, apologetics, ethics, worship, and philosophy. *A History of Western Philosophy and Theology* is a culmination of sorts of Frame's labor in expounding upon Reformed Christianity's doctrines and applications. Frame's latest work is a helpful account of not only the history of Western philosophy, but also of the sometimes contentious, sometimes harmonious, relationship between theology and philosophy.

Frame seeks to tell a “philosophical” story in his *History*—one in which he attempts to “analyze and evaluate” the history of Western philosophy “from a Christian point of view” (p. xxvi). In a day when histories of philosophy have ignored theology's contribution to philosophical thought (or, at the very least, relegated such contribution as irrelevant to the scope of philosophy), Frame sees little difference between the two disciplines (p. xxv). More importantly, the Bible speaks to and has authority over philosophical thinking. Thus, the main emphasis of Frame's *History* is to demonstrate what the Bible says regarding philosophy and philosophical topics.

Frame focuses on those thinkers “who have either made substantial contributions to the general history of philosophy or developed distinctive philosophical ideas that have influenced the theology of the church” (p. xxvi). Though Frame employs the consensus interpretations of these various thinkers, he diverges from other histories of philosophy by assessing the impact that each thinker has had on the consensus and evaluating the thinkers' philosophies (evaluations that, Frame claims, may be found “unconventional”) (p. xxvi). Finally, Frame's *History* differs from others in four distinct ways:

1. Its Christian worldview is obvious throughout.
2. It is an “extended apologetic” that suggests that both non-Christian and Christian systems eventually descend into “the bankruptcies of rationalism and irrationalism.”
3. It interacts with both philosophy and theology as interdependent disciplines.
4. It focuses on the present period more than other histories (pp. xxvi-xxvii).

There are three features that I want to highlight—features that help Frame's *History* to stand out among the others. First, Frame's presentation of the material appeals to a variety of reading audiences. His writing style is accessible. Too often reading audiences find history texts to be dry and stuffy. Using a first-person perspective, Frame writes as if he is speaking to the reader, avoiding technical language without watering down the content. Related to Frame's writing style is the “aesthetics”

of the text. Each page consists of one column of text and wide side margins. The margins contain helpful information, such as images of various thinkers and asides that expound upon an idea in the text. Furthermore, each even page of the book has the current chapter's outline, with the current topic highlighted. The outline allows the reader to know where they are in the chapter and to easily detect Frame's flow of thought. Finally, the layout of the content makes it easy for readers to make their own notes as they interact with the text.

The second feature relates to the extras that Frame provides in *History*. Each chapter ends with various elements that aid in retention and further study. In regard to retention, each chapter ends with the particular chapter's key terms. The key terms are then followed by study questions that draw out the significant topics covered. In regard to further study, each chapter offers an extensive bibliography related to the chapter topic. Frame includes both print material and online material (with full URL) in the bibliography. Following each bibliography is a "Read for Yourself" section that provides a list of suggested readings, a section that provides suggested audio lessons on particular topics or thinkers discussed in the chapter (lectures provided on iTunes from the Reformed Theological Seminary), and finally, a section that provides helpful quotes from thinkers discussed in the chapter as well as URLs to sites devoted to quotes from a particular thinker. These extras help Frame's *A History of Western Philosophy and Theology* to be a valuable resource for any Christian interested in the history of ideas.

The final feature that I want to point out relates to Frame's intentional focus on modern thinkers. History of philosophy texts tend to focus their attention on thinkers of ancient past and near past, with only a few texts nodding to living philosophers. Frame's substantive attention to modern Christian thinkers helps to connect the past with the present, giving credence to the idea that the ideas of yesterday impact and shape the ideas of today.

It is challenging to find anything of substance to critique about *A History of Western Philosophy and Theology*. Frame is honest in laying forth his intentions and purpose, and he substantively deals with each of his subjects. However, if there is anything with which one may disagree, it would be Frame's Reformed lens through which he views and interprets the history of Western philosophy and theology. As stated earlier, Frame unashamedly lays all of his cards on the table: his analysis and evaluation of the history of philosophy and theology is done through his distinctly Christian worldview. Frame's perspective is also more specific than a Christian worldview; that is, he operates from a Van Tillian Reformed perspective. According to Frame, all of his writings have been "deeply influenced" by Van Til, so much so that Frame "explicitly" dedicated *History* to him. Frame also seeks to "reflect some particular emphases of Van Til's teachings" (p. xxvii).

There is certainly nothing wrong with Frame interpreting the history of Western philosophy and theology through Van Tillian lenses. Though I personally do not

identify with Van Til's approach to philosophy and theology, there is much that I appreciate within his work. However, many who do not identify with Van Tillian Reformed tradition will disagree with Frame's conclusions from his analysis and evaluation of philosophical and theological thought. What drives Van Til's thought is a dichotomy between the reason of a lost person (in rebellion to divine authority) and the reason of a Christian (under divine authority). Undergirding this dichotomy is the idea that human reason is rational only when under the authority of divine revelation. When human reason is not under God's authority, it is autonomous and therefore irrational. Thus, reasoning with the lost is essentially fruitless, for any appeal to reason on the part of the believer is to meet the lost on their shaky ground. Such an approach, in Van Til's mind, inevitably leads the believer to irrationality. One must, then, first begin with the issue of God's Word and his authority, for this is the only starting point from which one can come to God.

The problem with the Van Tillian dichotomy is that it virtually makes it pointless for one to reason with the lost. The Van Tillian must first convince the lost that they (the lost person) are operating under false presuppositions, which inform their wrong view of autonomy from God, which then inform their false view of Scripture. In doing so, the Van Tillian presumes what the unbeliever *actually* believes and seeks to convince them otherwise. In short, the Van Tillian and the unbeliever become like two ships passing in the night, unable to meet on grounds from which the lost can be led to understand the Gospel message and their state before God. In other words, for the Van Tillian, there is a fractured view of human reason that makes communication between the lost and the saved essentially impossible.

I would rather say that the issue is not with human reason first, but with the human will. It is first the will that is in rebellion against God; the will chooses what it desires, and reason follows. If this approach is correct (which I think it is), then human reason is not radically fractured in the Van Tillian sense; rather, one is able to meet unbelievers on their own grounds, for human reason is given by God and part of our very nature.

Nevertheless, John Frame's *A History of Western Philosophy and Theology* is an excellent resource for one's personal library. Whether one is a Van Tillian or not, Frame's *History* places itself among the most important histories of Western thought in the English language. Frame's boldness to write from a distinctly Christian perspective is a breath of fresh air in a day when many believe that philosophy means laying aside Christian beliefs. Further, Frame rightly fits theology into the discussion of philosophy, for the two disciplines have been intimately intertwined since the days of Thales. To write a history of Western philosophy without reference to theology is to present an anemic account of the history of ideas. Another helpful history of Western philosophy is Frederick Copleston's classic nine volume series titled *A History of Philosophy* (Image Books). Copleston's series is an excellent one to have on hand as a resource, as Copleston displays an amazing depth of knowledge of a wide array of

thinkers spread over two thousand years. Another excellent history of philosophy is IVP Academic's three-volume set titled *Christianity and Western Thought: A History of Philosophers, Ideas and Movements*. It provides a Christian view of the history of Western philosophy from a non-Van Tillian, evangelical perspective.

J. Daniel McDonald
Boyce College
Liberty University Online

Day, J. Daniel. *Seeking the Face of God: Evangelical Worship Reconceived*. Macon, GA: Nurturing Faith, 2013, pp. 287, \$16, paperback.

J. Daniel Day is the former Senior Professor of Christian Preaching and Worship at Campbell University Divinity School in North Carolina, and he is the Pastor Emeritus of First Baptist Church in Raleigh, NC. As a pastor, he also served congregations in Texas, Louisiana, Missouri, and Oklahoma. His publications and articles appear in *Ministry Matters*, *Review & Expositor*, *Baptists Today*, and the *Abingdon Preaching Annual*. Day is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University and earned both MDiv and PhD degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

In the preface, Day clearly states his aim in writing: worship is about God. In his view, evangelical worship has been shaped by models other than “seeking God’s face”—the understanding that God is the object and subject of Christian worship. Instead, most contemporary evangelical worship falls within one of three categories: the “evangelism model” which makes worship synonymous with an evangelistic meeting, designed to facilitate the conversion of the worshiper; the “inspiration model” designed to entertain and attract worshipers with only positive words, images, and songs; and the “experiential model,” rooted in classical Pentecostalism and the charismatic renewal of the 1960s, and designed to elicit a strong emotional response from the worshiper. All three have a continuing influence on the worship life of the average evangelical congregation, and each leaves both a positive and negative legacy on Evangelicalism.

As a remedy to the prevailing contemporary models, Day proposes a constructive retrieval of the past, particularly the first three hundred years of Christian worship. Acknowledging the limitations of space, and the inability to provide a comprehensive treatment of the history of Christian worship, Day uses the classic description of Sunday worship from Justin Martyr in the mid-second century as a springboard for the future, and encourages recovery of its dialogical, Trinitarian, and social nature. From there, he surveys the longer heritage of the Church’s worship, distilling it into seven “landmarks”—navigational aids for thinking theologically about worship—and

finally ending with a Gospel-centered model based on images from Jesus' life and ministry as a way of planning worship that "seeks God's face."

Of the three prevailing models, Day saves his strongest critique for "Praise and Worship" (P&W), a form of the "experiential model," descending from the neo-charismatic churches of the late twentieth century, reaching its fullest expression in Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) and the bifurcation of evangelical church services into "traditional" and "contemporary." "Music is unquestioningly the signature of the P&W tradition," writes Day (p. 74), so much so that the P&W tradition effectively relegates the entirety of worship to music. The tradition also creates a threefold service order of *worship time* (music, usually the first part of the service), *teaching time* (the sermon, usually the second part of the service), and *ministry time* (a time of prayer for individual needs) with little connection between them. Consequently, the P&W tradition is the origin for the idea of the musician as "worship leader."

The issues with the "experiential model" in general, and the P&W tradition in particular, are both terminological and foundational, according to Day. By restricting the understanding of worship to only the musical element, P&W creates a form of worship that bears no resemblance to historic patterns, one that "can be sustained only by a strained interpretation of select scriptures" (p. 76), such as Psalm 22:3, a key text in the P&W tradition. Because P&W is wholly dependent on music, the proclamation of the Word is effectively severed from worship and has nothing to do with the more "expressive dimension" of music. As Day points out, P&W is not the first time that music has been the source of contention in the history of Christian worship, but "when music becomes the driver of an entire tradition's worship, legitimate caution signs are appropriate" (p. 78).

In addition, Day asks if the P&W tradition's "praise priority" is fully justified. While emphasizing the experiential element in worship, P&W does so to the exclusion of certain emotions. Following the Psalms, does P&W have any place for lament, for example? In any case, "A baseline for Christian worship is: Are our feelings, our emotions to be our primary means of acknowledging our relationship with, knowledge of, and love for God? The history of Christian thought gives a resounding 'No' to this question" (p. 82). On the role of music in historical patterns of worship, especially in the Church's first three hundred years, Day writes, "It is also a sobering reminder that the explosive years of the Church's growth were not what might today be called musically rich—and certainly not performance oriented. Something other than the power of its music made [Christian] worship compelling" (p. 130).

Day seems less certain when writing about the role of *charismata* in Christian worship, especially glossolalia. While valued in certain quarters of P&W, Day claims that the *charismata* disappeared by the middle of the fourth century. His source for the claim, however, is an older monograph. More recent scholarship, particularly from Catholic liturgical theologians Kilian McDonnell and George Montague, shows

otherwise (see esp. *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the First Eight Centuries*, Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier, 1991).

Seeking to recover the depth of early Christian worship for the modern era, Day provides seven “landmarks” for churches to pursue as a corrective to the prevailing evangelical models above. Here, Day moves from the historical to a synthesis of theology and praxis. His seventh landmark is particularly relevant to P&W-styled churches: “Christian worship will be holistic, giving legitimacy to mental, physical, and emotional responses to God’s revelation in Christ” (p. 181). Borrowing on the work of Swiss theologian J.J. von Allmen, Day outlines an order of worship shaped by the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ life. Recast in biblical language as *Bethlehem, Galilee, Jerusalem, and Olivet Moments*, students of liturgical studies will recognize the paradigm as the classic fourfold order of Gathering, Word, Table, Sending. “The biblical narrative,” writes Day, “is placed in a primary, shaping role for the Church’s worship...and places a theological frame about each moment of worship...the greatest gain...is that this order asks worship planners to work theologically rather than psychologically or pragmatically” (p. 196).

Seeking the Face of God is both academic and pastoral. Written in part as a text for seminary-level worship classes, it is equally valuable as a resource for musicians, pastors, and others involved in regular worship planning, as well as anyone interested in the biblical, historical, and theological models undergirding worship across evangelical churches. Students of biblical and theological studies, as well as pastoral ministry, will find in Day’s book a foundational text and robust survey on the state of evangelical worship at-large (and a treasure trove of footnotes for further exploration). Each chapter ends with discussion questions suitable for continuing reflection, a writing assignment, or study group.

Brian Turnbow
Institute for Worship Studies
Jacksonville, FL

Fuhr Jr., Richard Alan and Gary E. Yates. *The Message of the Twelve: Hearing the Voice of the Minor Prophets*. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2016, pp. 378, \$25, paperback.

The Message of the Twelve is a careful and thorough introduction to the Minor Prophets and their possible relationship to one another. Authors Richard Fuhr (PhD, Southeastern), program director of Biblical Studies and assistant professor of religion at Liberty University in Virginia, and Gary Yates (PhD, Dallas), professor of Old Testament at Liberty University, collaborate to present the historical, geographical, and theological core of the Minor Prophets. *The Message of the Twelve*

is an excellent introductory work that will offer students a trove of information on Minor Prophets studies.

Fuhr and Yates' wrote *The Message of the Twelve* as an overview for "students, pastors, and all who seek to understand this neglected segment of God's Word" (p. xiv). The first four chapters seek to explain the historical background of the Twelve, the prophetic role of the Twelve, the literary elements of the Twelve, and then the canonical unity of the Twelve. The remainder of the work is a book by book commentary on each the prophets. These chapters feature an introduction focused on connection to the modern world, an evaluation of the literary structure of the book, a sectional exposition of the text, and then a reflection on the significance and application of the book. The authors close their work with a call for the Church to read and apply the Twelve to daily living.

Fuhr and Yates' work excels at balancing the competing demands of scholastic quality and general accessibility. This is most notably accomplished through interaction with, and abundant reference to, other works in the field of Minor Prophet studies. Fuhr and Yates maintain an undergraduate to graduate level of reading requirement in their book, but point readers toward deeper levels of scholarship available on the subject. Readers are made aware of issues concerning the unity of the Twelve and other debates concerning these books. Students are pointed towards further works for consideration in these areas. The authors masterfully work in maps, graphs, iconography, and visual representation of select concepts to heighten the accessibility of their work. These additions, such as the chiasmic structure of Amos 5:1-17 (p. 131), are frequent enough to be helpful, but not so present as to distract from the text of the book.

Another excellent aspect of the work is the author's ability to make the Minor Prophets relatable for the modern Church. Although woven throughout the commentary section of each book, Fuhr and Yates best make their point that these books are applicable and necessary for Church life in their closing chapter. The words of the prophets not only resonate in the past, but also for today as the Twelve "challenges the church with its ethical call for the people of God 'to act justly, to love faithfulness, and to walk humbly' with God" (p. 322). The authors close on the thought that the Book of the Twelve should also call the Church to look to the future with hope for God's glorious consummation of His kingdom on earth. Making the Prophets accessible and relatable to modern life is no small feat, and doing such with the Minor Prophets is even more praise worthy. Fuhr and Yates are to be commended for their quality on the matter.

Critically, the book fails in some measure to live up to its title. Outside of the introductory four chapters on the Twelve, Fuhr and Yates do not often reflect on how an individual book is adding to or shaping the message of the Twelve. Each individual book is examined within its own context, but there is little to no expansion of how passages might work in light of the greater literary unity. It

seems that there would be a place for Fuhr and Yates to include a final closing section in each book's chapter on how that book contributes to the overall whole. Such an addition would further the argument and utility of the work. Lacking that, the reader is left wanting on this matter. Such a weakness is understandable in an introductory work, and does not ultimately remove much utility from the book, but it does remain an area for possible improvement.

Throughout *The Message of the Twelve* students are brought into conversation with the various Minor Prophets. More than a casual commentary, Fuhr and Yates investigate the Book of the Twelve and attempt to introduce the historical, lexical, and contextual aspects at play with each book. Their work serves as an excellent introduction to each of the books, and includes numerous references and citations of other works for students to continue on with. Biblical and theological students will be engaged by the clear and understandable writing, and challenged to broaden their understanding and appreciation of this oft neglected corner of the Old Testament. Fuhr and Yates fulfill their desire excellently in showing that "the prophets restore a vision of God's immensity and challenge us to worship and revere him above all else" (p. xiv).

The Message of the Twelve seeks to introduce readers to the unity of the Twelve and the content therein. Students should not rely though on this work as their only source for more academically focused work. Speaking to the unity of the Twelve, students should wrestle with their acceptance of such a theory. For the dissenting view noted by Fuhr and Yates, see Ben Zvi "Twelve Prophetic Books of 'The Twelve'" in *Forming Prophetic Literature* (Sheffield, 1996). For a positive view see either House's *The Unity of the Twelve* (Sheffield, 1990) or Rendtorff's "How To Read the Book of the Twelve as a Theological Unity" in *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve* (SBL, 2000). For a substantive listing of current works on the Twelve, either in part or whole, students should consult the bibliography of *The Message of the Twelve* as it lists applicable commentaries and monographs.

Brian Koning
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Piper, John. *A Peculiar Glory: How the Christian Scriptures Reveal Their Complete Truthfulness*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016, pp. 304, \$24.99, hardcover.

John Piper (DTheol, University of Munich) served for 33 years as pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, MN. He is the founder of desiringGod.org and chancellor of Bethlehem College & Seminary. Over the years, Piper has written over 50 books, each dedicated to connecting man's joy and satisfaction with the glory of God.

A Peculiar Glory is no exception. In this most recent book, Piper connects certainty of mind in the truthfulness of the word of God with the direct revelation of God's glory through the Christian scriptures. His argument is that the truthfulness of the Word of God is self-attesting as God's glory shines through with a peculiar light, enlightening the mind and satisfying the soul.

In summary, Piper's argument is a defense of verbal-plenary inerrancy. He argues for the complete truthfulness of the Old and New Testaments in all they claim. However, the distinctiveness of Piper's project is to provide a warrant for the believer's certainty and trust in this claim. How can one come to know (with certainty) the truthfulness of the Word of God? The warrant he offers is that "In and through the Scriptures, we see the glory of God" (p. 13). As the apostles saw God's glory in Christ face-to-face (cf. 1 John 1:3), so "we can see through their words" (p. 13). Faith is not a leap in the dark but an act of warranted trust grounded in our having seen directly the glory of God revealed through the word of God illuminated by the Holy Spirit. This glory is an objective and self-attesting reality. As he argues in the final part of this book, this glory is of a peculiar nature. The warrant of well-grounded faith is in the "utterly unique glory of Jesus Christ" (p. 17). This glory is the paradox of transcendence and meekness found in Christ, which matches the template of humankind's innate knowledge of God (c.f. Romans 1:19-21). When the Holy Spirit enlightens our eyes to this glory through the Word of God, we can have certainty in the knowledge of God.

The book breaks down into five parts. Part I begins with Piper's personal story. Beginning with the premise that "everyone is standing somewhere" theologically. That is, everyone stands in relationship to God and the Scriptures whether in ignorance, skepticism, doubt, or belief. Piper clarifies the "somewhere" from which he writes this book by relaying the story of his life raised in a Bible-believing home up through to his formal education and graduate work in Germany. Along the way, he experienced objections to his view of the Scriptures. He describes an experience, not of holding onto his view of the Bible, but of his view of the Bible holding onto him (p. 25). This is where he defines his view. The place where he stands and the starting point for the argument of his book is a solidly conservative belief in the inerrancy of Scriptures and their "final authority in testing all claims about what is true and what is right" (p. 35).

Parts II (Chs 2-4) and III (Chs 5-7) offer a somewhat typically evangelical defense of canon of the Old and New Testaments. In Part II, he defines the canon as the Old and New Testaments as well as providing a textual critical case that the OT and NT are the words of the biblical authors. Part III (Chs 5-7) treats the internal claims of the Scriptures for the Scriptures. This argument begins with the OT authors as "actors on the stage of the Old Testament" (p. 90). That is, they are conscious that God is speaking to them and through them, but are not consciously commenting on Scripture as such. Rather, God was speaking to people through people using human language. Building on the examples of Moses and the Prophets, Piper then argues that God "intends for there to be a written form of this divine revelation" (pp. 94-96), and as the Hebrew

Canon is the collection of such writings, it comes with the implicit claim of complete truthfulness. The remainder of his argument for the New Testament is Christocentric as Jesus is “the Old Testament-fulfilling, divinely sent Messiah” (p. 124) and who confers his authority upon his apostles and anoints them with his Spirit.

Parts IV (Chs 8-11) and V (Chs 12-17) constitute the heart and distinctiveness of this book. Having defended the claim that the Old and New Testaments are the authoritative and true word of God, Piper turns to build his case for well-grounded certainty in their truthfulness. His concern is to liberate them from the burden of historical reasoning. That is, he sees modern historical scholarship as insufficient for establishing the truthfulness of the Scriptures. He is at pains to clarify that this is not because there are no good historical reasons to believe in the scriptural claims, or that there is no value or benefit in historical scholarship, but that most people in the world do not possess the training, resources, or time to ground their faith in such arguments. “And yet,” he says, “the Bible assumes that those who hear the gospel may know the truth of it and may stake their lives on it” (p. 130). Moreover, historical arguments only “produce probable results...but faith needs certainty” (p. 131).

Here he—in classic Piper fashion—turns to Jonathan Edwards, Blaise Pascal, and John Calvin. He uses Edwards’ exposition of 2 Corinthians 4:3-6 to show that the ‘just ground’ for saving faith is the ability “to see the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” Spiritual sight (granted by God) provides the warrant of well-grounded faith. It is not inference from historical reasoning, but direct experience or vision of the glory of God. Piper uses Pascal’s Wager to illustrate that faith is not a guess made in ignorance, but rather a point of decision one makes based on well-grounded trust. Finally, he uses Calvin to answer the question of how the average person might attain such well-grounded certainty in the Word of God. The answer is the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures will bring about a saving knowledge of God when the Holy Spirit persuades. As Piper concludes, “The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ is visible in the word of God only to those into whose hearts the creator of the universe says, ‘Let there be light’” (p. 191).

The final part (V) concludes by describing the peculiar glory of God revealed in the Scriptures. Here Piper focuses on the distinctive character revealed in Christ. The certainty of mind comes because the distinctive character of this revelation matches or rings true with the innate and intuitive knowledge of God every human possesses (Romans 1:19-21).

There are many strengths to this book overall. First, Piper wrestles with an important question trying to ground a certainty of belief for those whom the fruits of historical research are not available. Moreover, he wrestles with problem of submitting the Scriptures to the validation of historical criticism, which is a burden of verbal-plenary inerrancy. Here Piper attempts to ground the truthfulness of the Scriptures in an encounter with the glory of God. The Scriptures are a place of encounter. They are

the place where we meet God. This emphasis does help to explain how the Scriptures can be accessible for the average person and not only the historian. It helps to correct the modern tendency to dissect the Bible as a book of history to handle with the tools of modern science and historiography. Rather, they are the place to grow in the knowledge of God with all its resulting faith and joy.

There are at least three critiques to offer. First, there are few footnotes in this book later than the 1990's. In cases where contemporary scholars are cited, they are mostly as a kind of "if you're interested in this question, see these other books" manner. By cutting himself off from contemporary scholarship and refusing to engage any of the contemporary debates, the book is limited in its helpfulness for the contemporary Christian wrestling with contemporary linguistics, theories of truth, trajectory hermeneutics, or concepts like incarnational views of the Scripture. The argument for verbal plenary inerrancy is really a restatement of Evangelical arguments from the 20th Century.

Second, the theses from Parts IV and V may not adequately provide ground for the claims in the first three. That is, his argument that the truthfulness of the Bible is self-attesting as one encounters the peculiar Glory of God, seems to be quite at home with non-inerrantist views of Scripture. By using experiential and consequentialist language to describe the certainty of trust in the Bible, it would seem infallible, incarnational, neo-orthodox, or reader-response views of the Bible may fit quite comfortably, leaving an argument for inerrancy weakened or unnecessary.

Finally, one remains without resource when it comes to counter claims about the nature of Scripture. For example, if the Christian grounds the truthfulness and authority of Scripture in their personal sight or vision of the glory of God, what do they do when they encounter the Mormon's claim to have encountered God in their expanded canon? How does one counter the atheist's experience reading the Scriptures when they see in their pages a capricious God who appears to be acting like other tribal deities? Can we say the Scriptures are self-attesting in this way, or must we engage other paths to certainty?

This book is pastoral in nature. It will serve the Church as so many books of its purpose have done in the past. It improves upon them as an encouragement to pursue the knowledge and the glory of God through the Scriptures actively and with faithfulness. It is a word of caution against a relationally detached reading of Scripture, and is an exhortation to know and delight in the glory of God through it. However, it suffers in its failure to engage with many of the contemporary questions faced by a generation that has tended to move beyond the inerrancy debate.

Brett A. Berger
Grand Canyon University
Phoenix, AZ

Radner, Ephraim. *A Time to Keep: Theology, Mortality, and the Shape of Human Life*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016, pp. 304, \$49.95, hardback.

The significance and meaning of the *anthropos* has and continues to capture the imagination of ancient and contemporary reflections. Several recent reflections highlight human constitution, the afterlife, sexuality, and race, among others. Ephraim Radner's *A Time to Keep* touches on these important topics, but his approach is unique. Radner claims that an understanding of humanity must take into account the theological nature of time. Radner makes an important contribution that advances a rich vision of humanity situated in the scriptural story, guided by various theological authorities, and informed by the social sciences.

Radner advances the argument that humans are relational (i.e., filiated) beings shaped and molded by God's design of creation, redemption, and death. On that basis, he exhorts us to count our days. Our days are numbered as creatures. Between birth and death, we have a vocation and purpose. Life, death, toil and generative relationship shapes and forms the patterns of human living (p. 16). Radner sees this reality in the "figural" portrayal of redemption in "tunics of skins" or clothes, which is a metaphor for the shape of life, reflecting what God did at creation when giving humans skin. After the Fall of Adam and Eve, God made clothes as a way to protect humanity in the world, prefiguring what God does in Christ (see especially 2 Corinthians 5:1-10). It signifies the frailty and humility of human life, yet it also signifies God's actions toward humans as the means by which we live, and how we understand humanity. For Radner, the temporal frame in which we live is given by God not as an *ad-hoc* aspect to life, but as the way in which God reveals himself to his human creation.

With all of Radner's focus on mortality and the immanent realm, it is tempting to think that he has no place for the afterlife and the transcendent realm. Such a conclusion would not fill out a complete picture. In line with Charles Taylor's recent research, for example, Radner rejects the modern tendency to link the immanent of meaning to the denial of the afterlife. The immanent is suffuse with meaning, instead. As a divine gift, human vocation is not purely immanent but transcendent. Radner states it well: "This is in part what I will be arguing when it comes to the areas of maturation, family, and work: their character as aspects of survival is, for the creature, precisely what makes them transcendent, and not purely immanent, goods" (p. 34). Participation in the framework God establishes, then, provides the means by which to develop transcendent meaning—value and character. He illustrates the dual nature quite well in his discussion of the Eucharist (i.e., the Lord's Supper; the anti-type for all meals as signs of life) where we partake of divinity through the flesh (pp. 213-18). The discussion is rich with symbolic and sacramental meaning, but he does not venture far enough in parsing out a sacramental ontology of participation. T h e r e is some room for suggesting that Radner could say a bit more about participation

and activity in other-worldly reality. For example, much of what Radner advances is quite compatible with platonic leaning views of the world in which all of reality is connected in a hierarchy of being leading to God with its attending emphases on the immaterial or heavenly realities. The talk of souls and access to another world (e.g., heaven) is not completely out of place in Radner's discussion (pp. 225-27), but he is generally weary of separating the two as he finds in theologians like René Descartes. Some might find his emphasis on the immanent a bit too strong; they might prefer to highlight the rich reality of the mental life as signifying and pointing to a higher reality that grounds and sustains the present material reality. While Radner might characterize substantial dualism as inhabiting a separation, many like myself would disagree, highlighting the integrative functional nature of both soul and body—which is, arguably, capable of accounting for both the “filial” and heavenly nature of Christian anthropology.

Radner discusses several other worthwhile, albeit, surprising and fruitful topics. He offers the reader careful discussions of bodily fluids and how it fits in the bodily nature of humanity (pp. 97-99). He also puts forward a thoughtful argument against homosexuality in the context of the scriptural pattern of generative life. He argues from a common theological reading of Genesis 2:24 that the one flesh union not only accounts for the two (male and female) that unite sexually, but that the union generates a third party. According to Radner, to go against such filial patterns would miss the shape of our sexual lives in the context of God's design.

As far as constructive theology goes, Radner's *A Time To Keep* is one the most significant pieces I have read in several years. The strength of his discussion rests in his expounding on the embodied life of the human. While there are other elements worth developing, his study helpfully keeps in perspective our life as creatures. Although not an introductory text, his book is an excellent complement to other works in theological anthropology and Christian ethics, given its emphasis on the frail bodily life of humans. It could serve as a useful text in biblical or theological anthropology at the upper-undergraduate level and at the graduate level. Finally, evangelical Christians will find much that is worth their attention as they develop their theologies of the body, death, and Christian living.

Joshua Farris
Houston Baptist University
Houston, TX.

Fujimura, Makoto. *Silence and Beauty: Hidden Faith Born of Suffering*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2016, pp. 261, \$26, hardback.

Makoto Fujimura is a distinguished contemporary visual artist, specializing in a traditional Japanese style of painting known as *nihonga*. As the founder of the International Arts Movement and the director of the Brehm Center for Worship, Theology, and the Arts at Fuller Theological Seminary, Fujimura is a prominent voice in the field of theology and the arts. He has written multiple books in this field, including *Refractions: A Journey of Faith, Art and Culture* (NavPress, 2009) and *Culture Care* (Fujimura Institute and International Arts Movement, 2014). In *Silence and Beauty*, Fujimura interacts with Shusaku Endo's acclaimed twentieth-century novel, *Silence*, to explore the nature of faith and grace in the midst of failure—and to engage with philosophical issues such as the problem of evil and the hiddenness of God in times of suffering (pp. 27-28).

For Fujimura, Endo's novel grants insight into the nature of Japanese culture, aesthetics, and Christianity. The novel chronicles the apostasy of seventeenth-century Christian missionaries to Japan who publicly renounced Christ by stomping on *fumi-e*, which are "relief bronze sculptures [of Jesus and Mary]" (p. 23). Those who did not step on these images were often killed or tortured (p. 30). This blot on Japanese history has resulted in what Fujimura calls a "*fumi-e* culture" in Japan—that is, "a culture of groupthink guided by invisible strands of codes of honor" (p. 24). Fujimura elaborated that "through visible and invisible forms this [culture] can cause many forms of . . . bullying [and] has excluded those who do not fit in" (p. 24). As such, hiddenness and ambiguity are cultural values in Japan, for if one openly refuses to conform to the surrounding culture, he/she risks being cut off from that culture (p. 72). Hence, though they experience an underlying shame for their ancestors' apostasy, Christians in Japan feel pressure to conform publicly to cultural expectations while keeping their faith hidden (pp. 40, 44). Fujimura points to Christ, the Suffering Servant, as the only solution to this *fumi-e* culture (p. 90), arguing that "the Christian gospel . . . can liberate us all from the grip of fear, trauma and death" (p. 69).

Part theology/philosophy, part literary criticism, and part personal memoir, Fujimura's *Silence and Beauty* is a fascinating read, providing "flesh and bone" to concepts that might otherwise be highly intellectual and abstract—such as the problem of evil and the freedom of the will. His work is particularly refreshing because of the high value that Fujimura places on art in the life of a believer. For example, Fujimura's own Christian conversion came after reading William Blake's epic poem *Jerusalem* (p. 100). Fujimura's personal story at this point is reminiscent of C. S. Lewis's testimony of the power of literature to reveal the longing in one's heart to be restored to Christ.

Fujimura is also helpful in his admonition for artists to deal with the dark side of reality (p. 192). This admonition is a good one for contemporary Christians to hear.

Christian music and storytelling tend to focus on “family friendly” and “uplifting” subject matters and in so doing, can possibly miss out on the glory of the gospel itself. Until one recognizes the brokenness of the world around him and of his own soul, he cannot truly experience the beauty of God’s grace.

Nevertheless, a few sections of the book give one pause, particularly with respect to Fujimura’s treatment of apostasy. Fujimura offers an excellent exposition of the fallout of a *fumi-e* culture, showing the trauma that results for those who apostatize or otherwise violate their conscience (p. 103). Especially haunting is Fujimura’s explanation that many Japanese Christians ultimately decided to renounce their faith publicly not to save their own lives, but rather to save the lives of others (p. 122). But Fujimura’s discussion becomes problematic when he seemingly suggests that Father Rodrigues, the main character of Endo’s *Silence*, is an example of faith because Father Rodrigues tramples on the *fumi-e* to spare others from suffering (p. 147). Fujimura even calls Father Rodrigues’s action “beautiful,” as it accompanies “the most powerful expression of the voice of Christ in Japanese literature” (p. 150). Moreover, according to Fujimura, through this experience, Father Rodrigues would “learn [the Japanese] art of hiding [one’s] faith” (p. 151; see also p. 207).

Now, certainly, God’s grace is great enough even to restore those who have denied Christ—the Apostle Peter is the perfect example. And admittedly, the Western reader cannot even begin to imagine the complicated choices believers in a persecuted context must face on a daily basis. But Fujimura goes so far as to suggest that one could be a “crypto-Christian” and continue to “step on the *fumi-e* every New Year’s Day” (p. 185). This mentality appears to run counter to the gravity of apostasy as revealed in Scripture. Jesus stated, “Whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father” (Matt 10:33; see also Mark 8:38, 2 Tim 2:12). Moreover, Hebrews 6:4-6 speaks of the terrifying fate of those who apostatize. Fujimura’s sympathy for human weakness and his desire for all to know the grace of God are to be commended, but to suggest that one could repeatedly and publicly deny Christ in order to escape death and yet continue to follow Christ privately is a clear violation of the teaching of the New Testament. Though in the context of the novel, Father Rodrigues acts as a Christ figure by laying down his own well-being for the lives of others, a greater picture of love would have been for him to hold fast in the midst of persecution, demonstrating to his followers that their hope is not in this present life but rather in the life to come.

Nonetheless, *Silence and Beauty* is a worthy read, benefiting artists and theologians alike. So many books speak of the need for theological engagement with the arts, but Fujimura is actually doing it, demonstrating how the arts can play an important role in a believer’s life and spiritual development. For further insight into the relationship between theology and the arts, one may also want to read Leland Ryken’s *The Liberated Imagination: Thinking Christianly about the Arts* (Wipf & Stock, 1989), Steven R. Guthrie’s *Creator Spirit: The Holy Spirit and the Art of*

Becoming Human (Baker Academic, 2011), and Gene Edward Veith, Jr.'s *State of the Arts: From Bezalel to Mapplethorpe* (Crossway, 1991).

Richard H. Stark, III
Berea First Baptist Church
Greenville, SC

Crisp, Oliver D. and Fred Sanders. *Locating Atonement: Explorations in Constructive Dogmatics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015, pp. 256, \$26.99, paperback.

Locating Atonement is an edited volume drawing together several highly respected theologians and philosophers for the sake of determining where a theory of atonement might conceptually intersect with other prominent theological topics (e.g. the Eucharist, an account of the ascension, or a doctrine of divine wrath). The editors, Oliver Crisp (*Fuller Theological Seminary*) and Fred Sanders (*Biola University*), are both accomplished systematic theologians in their own right and conversant with the movement of analytic theology represented by several of the articles contained in this volume. In what follows, I will focus on the contributions of Benjamin Myers (*Charles Sturt University*) and Eleonore Stump (*Saint Louis University*), whose articles represent well the scholarly rigor of the volume as a whole.

In “The Patristic Atonement Model,” Myers attempts to develop a model of the atonement, which expounds the views of the patristics and serves as an alternative to the *Christus Victor* model advanced by Gustaf Aulén. Myers offers this alternative to Aulén’s model because the latter model has recently come under criticism by several scholars who claim that Aulén has *not* really offered a model, but rather, a mere restatement of the doctrine of atonement. *Models* of atonement, Aulén’s critics claim, ought to *explain* atonement. And as a result, the success of Myers’s alternative model depends on its ability to illuminate the *mechanism* by which atonement is achieved. That is, it depends on how well the model he advances *explains* the mechanics of atonement.

As Myers presents the patristic model, there are four metaphysical theses (p. 73) which the fathers endorsed: (i) *realism* concerning human nature, (ii) a construal of death as a *privation* of being, (iii) assent to divine *impassibility*, and (iv) the claim that the mechanics of the hypostatic union are *unknowable*. The mechanism by which atonement is achieved is then identified as the pouring out of divine life into the universal human nature such that “the privation is filled, i.e., cancelled out” (p. 73). Although there is much more by way of nuance to Myers’s account of the patristic model, the metaphysical theses and mechanism above provide enough for brief comment.

First, it is worth noting that the appeal to mystery concerning the hypostatic union presents a considerable obstacle for the success of this model, for surely some understanding of the relationship between the divine and human natures of Christ is necessary for understanding how Christ's divine life might be communicated to all humanity through the medium of an abstract universal human nature. Moreover, depending on the details of the participation relation, which holds between each particular human and the universal Humanity, this model may succumb to the same shortcoming as Aulén's model; namely, that the putative model merely re-describes, rather than illuminates, how atonement was achieved. Second, the mechanism itself remains fairly enigmatic. Myers does offer an analogy to help us understand the mechanism: as light dispels darkness so does the immutable divine life dispel death (pp. 79-80). However, more needs to be said concerning the relations between light and darkness and how this example is supposed to clarify the defeat of death. Myers also describes the atoning action of Christ as involving a *pouring out* of divine life to *fill* the privation of being that is death, but this, as far as I can tell, is merely a restatement of the atonement using spatial terms to describe a non-spatial reality. As a result, Myers has, in my view, fallen short of his goal of offering a robust model of patristic thought on the atonement. However, if we view his contribution as programmatic, then insightful close readings of several historical texts and a penetrating analysis of Aulén's original model make this article well-worth the read.

Stump's ecumenical "Atonement and Eucharist" details how the effects of the atonement might carry over into the practice of taking the Eucharist. To help us see this, Stump suggests that we consider the Eucharist as a replay of the story of the atonement. Stories or narratives, on her account, provide access to a sort of second-person knowledge, which enables a reader to develop a degree of closeness with the characters in the story. When a story involves historical events, a reader can then develop personal closeness with *actual* historical characters, and when the historical characters also exist in the present, a more meaningful personal closeness with that actual person becomes possible through the medium of the story. Stump's account, then, is this: to take the Eucharist is to approach the story of Christ's death, burial and resurrection anew, providing a chance for a deepened relationship with God each time the Eucharist is distributed.

While it is fair to note that on Stump's minimal account, *any medium*, which displays meaningfully a reenactment of the atonement story could in principle produce mutual closeness with God, no other medium was explicitly instituted by Jesus for this purpose. And at the very least, as Stump notes, any Christian tradition endorsing the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist will have reason to claim that no other medium *could* accomplish precisely what the Eucharist accomplishes, contrary to the above sentiment (p. 225).

One minor point that ought to be addressed, I think, concerns the connection between the Eucharist and a doctrine of *perseverance*. Stump claims that receiving

the Eucharist deepens the mutual closeness between a Christian and her God, with the effect that she will be more likely to persevere, that is, not give up on sanctification (p. 224). This much seems relatively uncontroversial. However, she goes on to claim that because two wills are always involved in the sanctification process, each Christian “retains the possibility of returning to her original resistance to God” (p. 219). While I agree with this point, I do not believe Stump has said enough to establish it. Two further worries should be addressed: (i) what kind of possibility does she intend to claim here (e.g. psychological, epistemic, metaphysical, etc.) and (ii) given that perseverance comes after justification (i.e. the point at which a Christian has *given their consent* to join God’s redemptive plan), why should we assume God’s interaction with our wills would remain unchanged under these new conditions? Alternatively, how does the interplay between God’s will and the Christian’s will change the permissibility, or possibility, of certain actions on God’s part which *prior to justification* would have counted as God impermissibly violating the will of the Christian? Clarifying these two things would further tighten an already excellent and thoughtful piece.

As a brief perusal of the literature on atonement would indicate, theories of atonement have come under increasingly critical scrutiny. The contributors of *Locating Atonement* have taken this scrutiny seriously both by responding to objections and broadening the conceptual territory with which one must grapple in order to more firmly grasp the nature and implications of the atonement. As a result, students seeking both sympathetic and dissenting voices concerning a range of atonement views will leave satisfied, and the works therein will ably direct students concerning the most important contributions to the atonement, both those historical and those soon to come.

Jonathan Rutledge
University of St Andrews

Porter, Stanley E., Jeffrey T. Reed, and Matthew Brook O’Donnell. *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010. pp. 466, \$40, hardcover.

When one considers the quantity of elementary and advanced Greek grammars that have been published in the last hundred years, it is no surprise that the teaching of Greek has become such a refined art. No matter where someone goes to learn Biblical Greek, odds are they learned it through a similar methodology. What Porter, Reed, and O’Donnell set out to do in *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek* is continue to refine the advances made over the past hundred years. The very nature of Porter’s grammar is pedagogical. In his introduction he states that:

All beginning grammar books are incomplete in their coverage of the language they introduce. In fact, grammar books often present half-truths (even lies!) about the language that we have seen needed correcting in second-year classes. We trust that this text contains fewer such statements than others. In an effort to minimize incompleteness, we have included fuller and more comprehensive discussions, definitions, and presentation of material than are usually found in other beginning grammars. (p. xii)

Porter then lists the goals he sets out to accomplish such as: introducing morphology, elementary syntax, useful exercises, vocabulary in occurrence order, illustrating and fostering care for the language, and exemplifying good scholarly work in the Greek New Testament (GNT) as beneficial for “greater spiritual maturity and personal piety.” (p. xii) Porter and his fellow authors have executed this goal with excellence. Their sensitivity to the obvious learning curve in studying any language is apparent in each chapter. The vast vocabulary covered (950 words) and the concepts integrated into his grammar make it a *tour de force* of elementary Greek grammars. In my estimation, this grammar is underutilized and overlooked, but the vast quantity of material covered ought to ensure its more universal integration into seminary classes.

The grammar is laid out with great simplicity, and much like any grammar it has a helpful introduction attempting to distinguish it from other grammars already out there. The rest of the book is laid out in 30 chapters in order to fit into a normal 2 semester schedule. In overall structure there is little that is unique about the grammar, the only exception being a parsing guide in the beginning of the book and a “concepts” section in each chapter. The parsing guide is extremely helpful and if students work to put this section to memory, working through the grammar will be much easier. The concepts section defines terminology used within the chapter before the chapter begins, almost like a short glossary at the beginning of the chapter. He also lays out the vocabulary necessary for each chapter in order to integrate the vocabulary into the student’s learning more fluidly.

Observing the layout, the ordering of material within the grammar is very unique. The sequence the material is presented in is one of the most useful features of the grammar – it is what Porter finds most useful to group together. Chapter 1 is obviously the alphabet, but he integrates contract vowel rules and accent rules, two concepts that are typically taught much later in many grammars. In his discussion about prepositions he talks about verbless clauses, seeking a more holistic approach to sentence structure for his students. Porter’s method of teaching the verb is also worth mentioning. This may prove difficult for someone coming with a background in other grammars, but Porter stays true to his convictions and separates the verbs based on the aspectual identity. One of the more helpful aspects of Porter’s work in this grammar is the integration of syntax. This is beneficial for a number of reasons, but most importantly, students will not be blindsided by intermediate/advanced grammars after using this book. One of the most frequent complaints I hear from

students is not seeing the immediate practicality and I believe this is because of all the hidden gems in Greek that are reserved for advanced classes/grammars. This is remedied by Porter in his grammar.

Although the integration of syntax and complex grammatical concepts is helpful to the student of New Testament Greek, the greatest deficiency I have found within Porter's grammar is the amount of knowledge he assumes that the student has. For instance, in every chapter there is excursus information that is blocked off. In these sections the authors explain further syntactical issues, as per Systemic functional linguistics, or further incorporating verbal aspect, so much so that in these areas it gives a more intermediate feel to the grammar. Although, their intention to be more integrative is good, at times, this could be overwhelming for a student who has never learned another language, let alone a dead one. This is a pretty significant issue considering the purpose of the grammar is to make this an accessible and easy-to-use grammar. Many Greek professors bemoan the fact that most students do not know English grammar well enough to dig deep into Greek at the elementary level. If these are fair concerns, then Porter's grammar is in need of simplifying the areas of linguistics and grammar. Even things like verbal aspect take diligent time and effort to integrate into one's understanding. Therefore, greater attention will be necessary to understand where this is applied in his grammatical explanations.

This grammar has been out for a long time now and has been used by many students and scholars. This being said, Dr. Porter's influence in Greek grammar and linguistics cannot be overstated, and this grammar's task cannot go unappreciated. His grammar is one of the best and most comprehensive examinations of Greek grammar and linguistics written from the standpoint of an elementary grammar. Anyone seeking to either learn, relearn, or strengthen their study of Greek will benefit and grow in their study. This grammar will adequately prepare students to go further into the world of Greek, and enable them on their path to read the GNT with fluidity and ease. I would recommend this grammar to anyone seeking to learn Greek.

Andrew Keenan
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
South Hamilton, MA

Nogalski, James D. *Interpreting Prophetic Literature: Historical and Exegetical Tools for Reading the Prophets*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015, pp. xi + 125, \$25, paperback.

James Nogalski (Dr. Theol., University of Zürich) is Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in Religion at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. Nogalski has written extensively on prophetic literature with works such as his two volume

commentary *The Book of the Twelve* (Smyth and Helwys, 2011) and *Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve* (De Gruyter, 1993). Moreover, Nogalski has translated four books into English from German which include *Old Testament Exegesis: A Guide to the Methodology* (Scholars Press, 1998) and *The Theological Witness of Prophetic Books* (Chalice Press, 2000).

In *Interpreting Prophetic Literature* Nogalski sets out to write a primer on prophetic literature which is accessible to a novice student. Nogalski's introduction is unique in that he shifts his focus away from historical backgrounds, which is normally the locus of the prophetic section in introductions, and instead pivots his book in order, "to [supplement] such introductions by focusing upon the art of reading prophetic literature" (p. 2). Nogalski accomplishes this by examining the different formulae of oracles, defining the key places and people, exhibiting contextual analysis, indicating theological themes, and developing a hermeneutical approach for modern day application.

Nogalski wants to correct the two main shortcomings of other exegetical introductions, namely that they assume a working knowledge of Hebrew and focus on the exegetical methodology of narrative literature. Most introductions downplay prophetic speeches, forms, and collections, which results in "[a] struggle to understand the poetry and the rhetorical logic of smaller and larger units within the prophetic writings" (p. 1). Nogalski overcomes this struggle and fills the gap in many ways. In chapter 2 Nogalski familiarizes his reader with the exegetical tools associated with rhetorical analysis in the prophetic texts. By the end of the chapter, the reader is able to delineate textual units based upon the recognition of: a) formulaic markers that begin and end oracles, b) shifts in the speaker and audience of oracles, and c) the four types of literary parallelism (synonymous, antithetical, stair-step, and chiasmic).

Chapter 3 covers the key places, people, and terms found in prophetic literature. This section is the heaviest on historical backgrounds; however, more is done in explaining each concept within their greater associative and theological framework. An example is Nineveh's use as a hyperbolic symbol for all evildoers instead of solely functioning as a geographical location in Jonah.

Chapter 4 contains a list of different oracle and narrative forms that are the most common in prophetic literature. As in the previous sections, Nogalski's brief statements are seen as a gateway into the larger world of prophetic literature studies. His supplemental model for this book allows him to introduce concisely major literary forms and to provide expectations when a student reads more in-depth work on specific prophetic sections.

In chapter 5 Nogalski creates a break in the methodology of studying small units and establishes his analytical method for observing the contextual relationships between the individual units detected from the tools in chapters 1-4. Although categorized a bit differently, the various ruminations on formulae, theological themes, and metaphors observed in the smaller units work in similar ways to the larger

strategy of the prophetic books. The final section is a case study on the composition of Amos, and the interpretive methods used by the final redactor/s to place the four major sections of the book in their present form.

Nogalski's penultimate chapter contains the various nuances in the two major themes found in prophetic literature: judgment and hope. First, the causes for judgment on both the nations of Israel and Judah and on other, foreign nations are categorized under issues in social justice, ethical violations, and covenant breaking. Second, the hope offered after judgment is organized by the themes of physical and political restoration, covenant renewal, and cultic revitalization.

The final chapter is designed to orient the reader toward the important process of hermeneutics. Although concise, Nogalski's section on adapting the prophetic text contains thoughtful pastoral concerns. The author's hermeneutical approach begins with a pastor or teacher properly communicating original context, applicable theology, and contemporary analogies. For Nogalski teaching and applying the prophetic text is risky; however, the greater risk is avoiding the applicable message of the biblical prophets and "losing the ability to speak boldly to issues of importance for both the community of faith and the culture at large" (p. 122).

Interpreting Prophetic Literature distinguishes itself from other exegetical textbooks in that it successfully supplements introductions that focus on historical backgrounds and provides his audience access to the interpretation of the prophetic texts without any knowledge of biblical Hebrew. This book is best used in an upper level undergraduate classroom along with a textbook in historical backgrounds, or at the graduate level along with a technical commentary. Moreover, *Interpreting Prophetic Literature* is so accessible that pastors could use this with their congregations in Sunday school or Bible study settings as an introduction to interpreting prophetic literature.

David M. Smiley
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
South Hamilton, MA

Stanley N. Gundry, series editor for the *Counterpoints Series*, and Amy E. Black, general editor. *Five Views on The Church and Politics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015, pp 240, \$19.99, softcover.

Zondervan's Counterpoints series exists to provide a forum for Christians to discuss and critique different views on important biblical, theological, and cultural issues. This volume on the relationship between the church and politics seeks to navigate this challenging topic with clarity and substantive dialogue. The five views represented are

the Anabaptist (or Separationist), the Lutheran (or Paradoxical), the Black Church (or Prophetic), the Reformed (Transformationist), and the Catholic (or Synthetic).

Amy E. Black (Ph.D., Massachusetts Institute of Technology) serves as the general editor of this volume, and her contribution is especially helpful to students engaging this discussion. Black is Professor of Political Science at Wheaton College and is a prolific author of several noteworthy books and articles. Black's introductory essay succinctly summarizes the wide array of responses centuries of Christians have offered in response to one's allegiance to Christ and the rights and responsibilities that earthly citizenship requires. Black carefully articulates the four major theological traditions (Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran, and Anabaptist) who have a distinctive set of teachings or values corresponding to what may loosely be called a political theology. The addition of the Black Church tradition is warranted because it is specifically rooted within the American experience, and it represents a "distinctive theological perspective, not to mention forms of communal practice, that is too often discussed in isolation or simply ignored" (p. 8). Black's introductory essay then summarizes the organizational structure of the book. Each view is presented and defended by a specific expert, and the other participants dialogue with responses and/or rebuttals to each presented position. Additionally, each presenter reacts to a case study on domestic poverty. This assignment further illuminates the similarities and differences these positions have regarding the same scenario.

Thomas W. Heilke (Ph.D., Duke University) presents the Anabaptist view. Heilke is the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Professor of Political Science at the University of British Columbia, Okanagan. In addition to this volume, Heilke is author, co-author, or co-editor of more than forty publications. The Anabaptist view, among those presented in this volume, espouses the most limited view of Christian involvement in politics. Heilke's contribution is a nuanced presentation of the Anabaptist position. The uninformed reader unaware of Anabaptist beginnings will appreciate Heilke's helpful approach to his position. He briefly recounts Anabaptist origins by giving the specific date (January 21, 1525) and the historical significance of their fateful beginning. On that day, the "re-baptism" of George Blaurock, a Roman Catholic priest, by the son of a Zurich patrician, Conrad Blaurock, ignited implications far greater than these participants probably realized (p. 21). According to Heilke, within ten years of this first baptism, "nearly the entire first generation of Anabaptist leaders had been executed" (p. 21). These gruesome beginnings linger throughout the development of Anabaptist thought, including its engagement to political movements and authorities.

Heilke's presentation describes the tenets of Anabaptist identity and its theological distinctives. Rather than having a "single-identifiable individual" leading this movement with a specific reform agenda in mind, the Anabaptist movement was essentially a "lay-led *movement*, p. 25, emphasis in original). This vital distinction provides a rationale as to why the Anabaptist position focuses on personal ethics, not public policy. Heilke's presentation locates the Anabaptist position as one deeply devoted to Jesus' ethical

teachings and the implications for radical living. As a result, many see this position as one that cherishes separation from society. While many Anabaptists have political positions and some identify with tenets of major party politics, the position concerns itself with individual ethics as a means for societal impact.

Robert Benne (Ph.D., University of Chicago) presents the Lutheran view. He is the Jordan Trexler Professor Emeritus of Religion at Roanoke College. He taught full-time at Roanoke for eighteen years prior to transitioning into his Professor Emeritus position. He founded the Roanoke College Center for Religion and continues to be a research associate within the department. He has published widely on the relationship of Christianity and culture. Benne locates the Lutheran view beginning when Luther posted his ninety-five theses to the Castle Church door at Wittenburg. Luther argued for a distinction between the power exhibited by the state and the church. The church possessed the power of the Word, while the state possessed the power of the sword. God's rule and reign was in both realms. He reigned over the state officials enforcing the law and through the gospel in the life of the church. Thus, the Lutheran vision is one with a clear law/gospel distinction.

Benne notes citizenship is crucial to unmasking the Lutheran view of church and politics. The government, and the politics that comprise social policy and law, are a post-fall reality in the Lutheran worldview. The government is to curb evil acts and forces, and Christians are tasked with knowing the difference between the two kingdoms. Benne believes future Lutheran interactions connecting the church to politics or public policy will come from indirect forms. Christians strengthened through the church will live out the implications of their faith in their secular workplaces. Benne notes the checkered past of Lutheran action (or inaction), and he establishes necessary parameters for his position.

Bruce L. Fields (Ph.D., Marquette University) presents the Black Church view. Fields is Associate Professor of Biblical and Systematic Theology and Chair of the Biblical and Systematic Theology Department at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He authored the volume, *Black Theology: 3 Crucial Questions for the Evangelical Church*, and his areas of research focus on the Epistle of Philippians and black/liberation theology. Fields provides an excellent summary which exposes the entrenched struggle of the Black Church experience and its corresponding eschatological hope for transformation. Locating a precise Black Church political theology is difficult, according to Fields. On the one hand, political powers have brought oppression and marginalization to those associated with the Black Church; yet on the other hand, much of the social reform that has taken place in the American Black Church context is a result of government intervention. As a result, there is both a negative sense of realized marginalization and positive action between those in this position and those in political power. Students unaware of the real and painful struggles of those constituting the American Black Church will benefit greatly from this chapter. Fields provides an excellent summary of the major historical, political, and social trends of this position.

Perhaps the most illuminating aspect of Fields's essay is his conclusion. In these remarks he gives a clear picture of the importance of historical grounding for his position. He believes "the presence of Black people in the halls of power is absolutely critical, as their voice serves as a constant reminder of the potential degeneracy of human government" (p. 123). While the Black Church seeks further social and cultural reform, Fields asserts a critical relationship between this position's future goals and its past exists. The echoes of past dehumanization provide fuel to sustain their march toward equality in social and institutional reforms. Fields believes the societal work that needs to be done must be an ecclesial reality. The triumph he desires comes from a "Holy Spirit empowered love ascending through churches to embrace one another regardless of race and ethnicity" (p. 123). Readers will find Fields's view refreshing in that he tethers together cultural transformation and church vibrancy.

James K. A. Smith (Ph.D., Villanova University) presents the Reformed view. Smith is Professor of Philosophy at Calvin College where he holds the Gary & Henrietta Byker Chair in Applied Reformed Theology and Worldview, and he is an accomplished author of scholarly and popular level books and articles. Smith's chapter proves excellent and worth the price of the book alone. Smith admits the impossibility of presenting *the* Reformed view because a single view does not exist. Rather, Smith believes his Reformed position emerges from a post-reformation Kuyperian model. For Smith, "A Reformed understanding of the relationship between the church and politics is bound up with a wider constellation of convictions about the nature of creation, culture, and the common good" (p. 140). This wider conviction is one of transformation, which dispels distinctions between secular and sacred. In this view, the Reformation was not merely about individual salvation; Instead, the Reformation is more broadly to be understood as "a Christian reform movement concerned with the shape of social life" (p. 141).

Understanding Smith's "reformed social vision" is impossible without grasping the relationship between creation and eschatology. God created the world beautifully but left it to be cultivated by his image bearers. Humanity is tasked to work out the possibilities of the cultural goods inherent within the created world. Human government, then, is not to be understood as a divinely given construct. He notes, "Government and the political institutions that shape our lives are not 'divine' in the sense of being handed down from God like the descent of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21-1-2)" (p. 142). Smith believes all cultural institutions are products of human creation. Humanity is given the raw material by God in creation, and they are tasked with ordering their societal constructions with God's design. Sin corrupted humanity, and its corruption seeped into the social structures of human invention as well. Thus, these human constructs need *transformation*.

Christians should seek the transformation of society with the future in mind because "the eschaton functions as a normative vision for contemporary cultural labor" (p. 147). This vision does not seek to bring about the eschatological kingdom on earth,

but to strive for the good laden in the raw materials of the lost Eden. The New Jerusalem is in view because it represents God's desire for his creation. Politics and government are aspects of a good but fallen creation, and "this conviction propels believers into government and politics" (p. 151). The Reformed tradition has a history of political statesmen (Kuyper and Bavinck, for example). Smith believes the government is just one of many organizations Christians must use to bring about societal transformation. The government's role, then, is limited; human flourishing and transformation must take place across a broad spectrum of human relationships and structures.

J. Brian Benestad (Ph.D., Boston College) presents the Catholic view. Benestad is the D'Amour Chair of Catholic Thought at Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts, where he teaches in the Department of Theology. He has many publications focused on the Catholic faith and its integration within the public square, and he has lectured widely on various aspects of Catholic social doctrine. The Catholic position encompasses the broadest interaction between church and state due to its vast array of authoritative teachings (examples include, for example, Papal encyclicals and The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace). Benestad explains that the unified body of teaching known as the Catholic social doctrine not only compels Catholics into the public square, but these teaching prepare them for applying their faith across broad public arenas.

Benestad believes contemporary Catholic social doctrine is impossible to discern without fully considering the influence of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas (p. 203). Augustine's contribution centers on justice within the political and social order. The church's teaching on grace and love demonstrates the dignity of all individuals, and this resident dignity within humanity is the motivation to contribute to human flourishing through the public square. Aquinas's contribution centers upon his systematic treatment of virtue and its correlation to personal witness and social justice. Regarding Aquinas's virtue ethics, Benestad believes Aquinas's "reflections on the law as an instrument to restrain the bad and guide the good are especially needed today" (p. 203). Benestad concludes by nuancing the Catholic social doctrine's role. While it fails to bear the burden of ultimate responsibility of ushering in a just society, it does contribute by informing and training Catholic adherent to participate as engaged citizens within the public square (p. 204).

Finally, Amy Black helps readers when she concludes the book by tracing the complex political associations demonstrated by various strands within Christianity. She evaluates presidential election data to reveal the voting tendencies of the groups discussed within the chapters of this book. In addition, Black suggests the five positions have four core principles of agreement: (1) the centrality of the church and its witness to the gospel, (2) the importance of governing institutions, (3) the importance of civil/free associations, and (4) a concern for cultivating virtue in individuals and working toward a more virtuous society (p. 228). Regardless of one's position, these four principles

should cause Christians to engage one another with charity and grace when discussing the church and its relationship to politics.

This book successfully introduces readers to five views commonly expressed by Christians regarding the relationship between the church and politics. There are numerous strengths in this book, but I will mention only three. First, this book achieves its stated goal of presenting various views in succinct, yet illuminating detail. Students unaware of these positions will find this volume to be an excellent first step in uncovering the vast array of Christian positions. It is not easy to communicate the distinctions between various church traditions and their interaction with politics in historical, theological, and practical depth, but the contributors wisely use their words to convey their positions fully and fairly. Second, the layout of these types of books is a great help to students because each contributor responds to every position presented. While there are instances where readers will desire much more dialogue, the contributors were gracious and explanatory in their responses to one another. Some of the responses helped to distinguish critical differences between the contributors. Third, the positions reveal a wide spectrum among Christians, yet it is clear that each position realizes that the church is not called upon to remain silent. The gospel is public truth, and Christians have no business being silent in the public square.

A few weaknesses should be noted, but one must keep in mind the limitations of books organized such as this one. The authors are not exhaustive in their presentation of their views; thus, some readers will desire more depth in certain sections. In addition, because these views hinge upon biblical teachings, one would expect more explicit exegesis of relevant passages germane to this discussion. Often biblical passages are spoken of broadly, even though biblical and theological themes are used as motivations for a position's political ethic. For example, in his presentation of the Black Church position, Fields does not give significant attention to any biblical text, but he does helpfully locate the eschatological hope inherent within this position. This criticism is not reserved for Fields alone; each contributor speaks about the Bible's implications but not much about its exhortations. A second criticism is in the lack of substantive dialogue in the responses. At times, the respondents merely emphasize differences rather than exposing the errors of the perspective under review.

Students should read this book because it is necessary for Christians to wrestle with this subject. The genius of books containing various viewpoints lies within the succinct presentations and the interactions from the contributors. *The Church and Politics* is filled with numerous footnotes that can point eager students to further resources. It is possible that a Christian could read this book and not identify with any of the five positions. The value of this book remains, however, because these positions will resonate with a vast majority of Christians.

Justin L. McLendon
Grand Canyon University
Phoenix, AZ

Aitken, James K. *T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2015, pp. xii + 624, \$176.00, hardcover.

Dr. James Aitken is a Lecturer in Hebrew, Old Testament, and Second Temple Studies at the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge, UK. Dr. Aitken needs no introduction in the field of Septuagint studies; he is one of the most distinguished scholars in the field today. It comes as no surprise then that he serves as the editor of *T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint*, which brings together some of the world's best scholars in Septuagint studies.

Scholarship in The Greek Old Testament has the tendency to be slightly esoteric. Because of this it is a difficult area of study to enter into without introduction. In this volume Aitken has brought together the most valuable introductory material on Septuagint studies. Aitken himself says that he had “long felt the need for a handy summary of features for each of the Septuagint books, for easy consolation by both Septuagint experts and biblical scholars or students more generally” (p. ix). The Companion to the Septuagint fills this need with excellence, making it a necessary tool for anyone remotely interested in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.

The overall structure of the book is easy to use and the information presented is accessible. The glossary found right before the introduction to the book is worthy of attention, highlighting words that are commonly used in the field, but often used differently among specialists. For example, Aitken covers terms like “Old Greek” since there is a necessary distinction between Old Greek and Koine Greek in the Septuagint. Each chapter in the rest of the Companion is then written on a particular biblical book, so having this glossary is a great service to the reader in transitioning into the density of the Greek Old Testament.

In the introduction, Aitken walks the reader through some of the major issues in Septuagint studies. He defines the term Septuagint, highlights the origin, translation, text, manuscripts, and even answers the question of why studying the Septuagint is important. Aitken introduces other issues such as the distinct use of Greek among the different translators. This section provides one with the necessary information to enter into the conversation, therefore, the introduction is essential for a meaningful interaction with the rest of the book. Although it is only a few pages, the force of the introduction cannot be overlooked.

The rest of the Companion contains a chapter devoted to a book of the Septuagint, including the deuterocanonical literature. Although each chapter has a different author, every chapter begins with a list of critical editions of that particular book, and is then divided up into seven sections. The first section is General Characteristics, which distinguishes the books from one another while bringing the reader's attention to each book's unique features. For instance, there were two translators of Jeremiah. The student of the Greek Jeremiah must know this in order to understand the majority of modern scholarship on the book. The second section

is titled Time and Place of Composition. While this section considers historical issues, it is significant in understanding vocabulary and syntax of the biblical text. The third section is Language, where each contributor stresses the importance of distinguishing features that are common to a purely Greek text, those that maintain Greek style with a Hebrew *vorlage*, and some that seek to keep the Hebrew in contact. The fourth section is Translation and Composition, explaining the features that distinguish each book linguistically, which is the heart of Septuagint studies. Many of the main issues in Septuagint studies are related to, or affected by, how one understands translation and composition style. The fifth section is on Key Text-Critical Issues demonstrates the textual complications in the Septuagint. The Septuagint is influential in Old and New Testament textual criticism, but the Septuagint has its own dilemmas as well. Therefore, it is important to know what we mean when we say “the text” of the Septuagint. The sixth section, Ideology and Exegesis, displays how each book was written with theological persuasions and preferences. The Septuagint translators tried to keep the original author’s intent, but sometimes they add, take away, or embellish. Without understanding the theological motivation of these translations, we can’t begin to understand why the text received has these additions, omissions, and alterations. Finally, Reception History rounds out the end of every chapter to provide a functioning knowledge of how these texts have been received and thought about through history. There are also bibliographies at the end of each chapter for those interested in further research. Not every chapter is covered to the same extent or depth; the content is contingent upon the pertinent issues that are specific to each book.

A chapter that particularly stands out is the chapter on Jeremiah, written by Andrew G. Shead. Jeremiah is notoriously difficult, providing little to work with and large gaps to fill in. One example of this problem is the considerably shorter text of the Greek Jeremiah when compared to the Masoretic Text. Textually, structurally, and linguistically, this has created a lot of problems in studying the Greek Jeremiah. However, Shead does not shy away from any of these difficult issues. He states, “The differences between the Septuagint and MT of Jeremiah create different chapter and verse numbering for much of the book. Even the Greek editions are not consistent” (p. 470), illustrating the immense difficulty of Jeremiah. In the rest of the chapter, Shead avoids complicating the issues and gives us the necessary data to make our own critical evaluations. Considering the amount of difficulty involved in Jeremiah, it is impossible to cover all the challenging material, but Shead makes it easier to engage in such issues. Shead then provides a helpful bibliography for further study of the book. This chapter is a key to unlock the wide world of the Greek Jeremiah.

Biblical Studies students will quickly realize that the Septuagint is an extremely important text, and therefore they should have a functioning knowledge of this corpus. The reason being, the Septuagint is often the Bible that the New Testament authors used. It also influenced the vocabulary used in the New Testament and illuminates

the text of the Old Testament theologically and historically. Aitken's Companion serves as a tool that will move someone beyond a basic knowledge of the Septuagint, preparing him or her to continue research. There is still much work to be done on the Greek Old Testament within lexicography, translation theory, and even exegetical influence upon the New Testament. For those who might be interested in Biblical Studies Dr. Aitken has seamlessly put together a group of scholars that provide a valuable resource in Septuagint scholarship with this volume.

Andrew T. Keenan
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
South Hamilton, MA

Anizor, Uche and Hank Voss, *Representing Christ: A Vision for the Priesthood of All Believers*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016, pp. 208, \$20, paperback.

Uche Anizor (PhD, Wheaton College) and Hank Voss (PhD, Wheaton College) come eminently qualified to speak about the priesthood of believers, a term popularized by Martin Luther but a biblical concept rarely understood and practiced over the centuries. Anizor is an associate professor of biblical and theological studies at Talbot School of Theology at Biola University and author of a book on a related topic: *Kings and Priests: Scripture's Theological Account of Its Readers* (Pickwick, 2014). Hank Voss, on the other hand, is a theological practitioner as national church planting director at World Impact and senior national staff with The Urban Ministry Institute of Los Angeles. Both have a passion for the topic and a vested interest in seeing the body of Christ put into practice the biblical doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Their desire is to develop a "theological vision" (p. 21) of the doctrine of the people of God as priests in God's kingdom as part of their "identity in Jesus Christ" (p. 21). They describe their thesis for this "well-rounded theological vision ... one that is constructive rather than reactive ... [and which] develops in four stages—biblical, historical, theological and practical" (p. 21).

First I want to commend this volume's outstanding theological discussion of the topic especially with the authors' implicit Redemptive-Historical narrative perspective in chapter two entitled: "A Royal Priesthood: Scripture's Story." In this section, the authors begin with God's creation of Adam in Garden as the first Priest-King, moves through how God gave this task to the Israelite people in Exodus, and then to the Davidic line using Psalm 110 and the third volume of Isaiah 52-66 (interestingly, the authors fail to bring in the important implications of Psalm 2 for the doctrine of the royal priesthood as it collates with Psalm 110). This then foresees the day when Christ comes and gives the task to his people (see e.g., 1 Pet

2:9-10). The authors then illuminate this through key passages in Hebrews and the Revelation of John. In addition, helpfully, is an explicit approach to the priesthood of believers from the extremely important Trinitarian viewpoint of chapter 4 (“Life in Communion: The Trinity and the Priesthood of All Believers”). Alongside of these two important theological chapters is a superlative overview of the historical development of the doctrine in various traditions including the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and “Luther’s Burden” to reform the priesthood, which in his time was reserved for a tiny minority of males in ecclesial orders. Throughout these chapters the author’s strive for more specific, practical application of the doctrine by expounding “Seven Major Ministries of the Priesthood” (pp. 75-80) and “The Seven Practices of the Royal Priesthood.”

I also greatly appreciate their seeing the missional aspect of their topic because this, in the long run, is the whole purpose of the royal-priesthood as Peter and the Prophets states – to fill the earth with the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the seas and to proclaim the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness into light (Hos 2:14; 1 Pet 2:9, see pp. 48-49). The authors following G. K. Beale among others show that the task of the King’s priest in the Temple-Garden was to “*serve and guard it*” (28, author’s italics). The two functions of “tending the garden and attending to God’s word” both in and over the garden can be unified “as one act of expanding the sanctuary of God. As those created in the image of the divine King, humanity was to spread and reflect his glorious reign by subduing and ruling the entire earth (Gen 1:26-28)” – and I would add, for their King’s glory (p. 29, emphasis original). At this point the authors move directly into Moses’ discussion of Israel’s royal-priesthood while, curiously, skipping the underlying informing theology of the Abrahamic Covenant. This is a surprising lacunae as it would have greatly strengthen their theological case.

On the other hand, there are several aspects of the volume that I would like to critique, especially Anizor and Voss’ understanding of Adam’s ministry of priesthood as a dual office of king and priest. Unfortunately this is a common position taken by many today such as Meredith Kline, John Walton, and Greg Beale. However, I don’t think it is wise to be stamped into that position. Did the Father create Adam to be king of the earth with judging, law-making, and executive-royal functioning to bring deliverance to his children? This is, as Isaiah states, the sole prerogative of Yahweh himself (Isa 33:22)? Or did God create Adam to be a steward- administrator of the divine property? The second is undoubtedly correct. Certainly, the Holy Spirit predicted that the children of Israel would father a king eventually (e.g., Gen 17:6, 16, 35:11, 49:10), and even revealed laws for that king to follow (Deut 17:14-20). However, the account of Samuel’s reluctance to give them a king and the LORD’s clear displeasure at their request to be “like all the [other] nations” (Deut 17:14; 1 Sam 8:5, 10:19) demonstrates that their request was a treasonous and idolatrous rejection of Yahweh as their sole sovereign. God repeats this twice, once directly to Samuel and the second time through Samuel to the people: “They

have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them;” and “But you have today rejected your God, who delivers you from all your calamities and your distresses” (1 Sam 10:19). It is clear this was not the Creator’s moral will but his revealed, decretive will that allowed their request. Hence he gave them the first king, Saul. In other words, this gives evidence that humans were not originally supposed to be royalty but only servant-administrators of their King’s possession. As such, Adam was also to be a human high priest of this extended family, what the Hebrew terms: “Bünê hä’ädām” (i.e., humankind or more literally, “sons of the Adam,” e.g., Gen 11:5). Here Anizor and Voss make an excellent case using the infelicitous term “Priest-King” – only King Jesus is our Priest-King – “Humanity is representational and representative, being like god in the exercise of rule over the earth while receiving delegated authority” (p. 27).

Of course, God used the Israelites rebellious request to bring David and his royal dynasty that ended in the birth of Jesus, the God-man, son of the house of David, as Isaiah 7:14 to 9:7 predicts. In the end, however, God gave an infallible, prophetic interpretation of his abhorrence of human kings in the words of the Prophet Hosea: “I gave you a king in My anger And took him away in My wrath” (Hos 13:11). God foreordained and used the rebel request for a king to bring King Jesus. He did this exactly as he used the murderous anger of Joseph’s brothers to send him to Egypt for the brothers’ ultimate good and as he foreordained the horrible evil of the cross for our greater good. God is much wiser than we are (1 Cor 1-3). The sin of Adam, then, was that he wanted to be king in his Lord’s place, to be able to determine good and evil for himself, and to be wise in his own eyes – a rebellious pattern followed throughout human history by all humanity and especially human monarchs and royal wannabes. Only Jesus is a King-Priest and not Adam, nor the sons of Adam, who as Woody screamed at Buzz Lightyear, needed to be shaken up and told unequivocally “YOU - ARE - A... ‘TOY’! You aren’t the real Buzz Lightyear! You’re a... aw, you’re - you’re an action figure!” In other words, Adam “You are just an administrator,” a toy – so to speak – an instrument to be used by the Creator for his sole glory (Psa 115:1) – not the Savior and King, a title reserved only for Jesus, who granted it to him by the Father (see e.g., Eph 1:19-22).

Biblical-theologically speaking, then, Adam was a type or picture of Christ. In other words, he is in an analogous manner similar to but not in every respect exactly like our Lord (see e.g., Rom 5:14). Christ is absolutely unique. Therefore, human ecclesial-religious government was to be by chosen priestly elders, whom the Levites represented in the days of Israelite “body politick” as the Reformational, British Baptist, Congregationalist, and Presbyterian confessions state. Civil government, as was Israel’s original, is ideally republican (rule by chosen elders , e.g., Deut 1:16-18 without a human king) not monarchical. Yahweh desires to monopolize his singular right to be Mon-arche – the sole ruler of the sons of Adam, and His Son to be the sole High Priest. Aaron was to be only a temporary picture of that office and, as

stated, the Levites were to serve the Aaronic priest, representing the people. So I disagree with Anizor and Voss at this point. However, I do strongly concur with their exposition that the body of Christ “in union with” their Messiah is to share his royal-priestly ministry (see pp. 72-75): “A mature doctrine of the royal priesthood is Christocentric-Trinitarian” (p. 149). The priesthood then moves from Adam to Israel to the Royal-Priest (Jesus) to the assembly of the King, the body of Christ (p. 55). This then implies rightly that “every member ministry is a vital practice of [our present] royal priesthood” (p. 139). Having said that, however, I greatly desired that the author’s had spelled this out in more detail with a chapter on the three types of gifts (ministry, manifestation, and motivation). In this Anizor and Voss could show what every member royal-priestly ministry looks like in practice both within the body and outside of the body as it missionally moves outward into the idolatrous cultures of the world to disciple the peoples and expand the Temple to fill the whole earth.

Furthermore, I also would have desired that Anizor and Voss would have dealt with the implications of the doctrine of the priesthood of believers and Adam’s fall, a surprising oversight. What this implies is that Adam, originally clothed with glory and honor (Psa 8:5), lost that encompassing glory/honor (Rom 3:23) and hence needed to be clothed with the wrapping belonging to another, ultimately Christ (see Rev 3:18). This implies again that Christ’s people are a royal-priesthood only “in Christ” as the authors do notably demonstrate (see chapter 6: “Representing Christ”). This weakness then perhaps leads to an underestimation of the glorious restoration of the whole earth coming from the redemption in Jesus the Christ (the Anointed Priest-King of heaven and earth) through his work operationalized through the hands and feet of his royal-priests on earth who work following the Spirit’s lead.

Last, in the context of the author’s discussion of Luther on official ministry and the priesthood of all believers, Anizor and Voss correctly emphasize, citing Luther, that “every Christian has the right and duty to teach, instruct, admonish, comfort, and rebuke his neighbor with the Word of God at every opportunity and whenever necessary” (p. 77). Yet there still remains, according to Luther, the public office of preaching. In my view, this is an overreaction to the “radical reformers who denied the validity of the pastoral office.” In other words the official, paid, full-time, public “ministry of the Word . . . for those called by a congregation to perform this ministry on behalf of the congregation” (p. 77) is always necessary. Here Anizor and Voss accept without much critique the Lutheran/Calvinist/Anglican/Baptist protection of the official ministry of the Word and Sacrament/Ordinance, inherited and modified from the Roman Church. This has historically always degenerated into an emphasis upon passive people in the pews listening to a preacher hired to do full-time ministry. It doesn’t matter whether the clergyman was a single pastor with a board of many deacons (congregational and baptistic polity), or three offices of pastor, ruling elder, and minister of word and sacrament in the Presbyterian system, or bishop, rector, and trustees in the Anglican system, the end result is the

same: Passivity of the “laity” and slow conversion growth. This emphasis upon paid clergy and the almost always resulting building fund, while giving more or less lip-service to the priesthood of all believers is one crucial reason why biblical Christianity has been dying in Europe and is destroying the salt and light function of the body of believers in North America, in my opinion.

However, on a more positive note, the authors quickly redeem themselves by agreeing with Luther, who “permits all Christians—particularly in emergency circumstances—to administer baptism” (p. 77) and in similar situations “the Lord’s Supper” (p. 78). I agree wholeheartedly if the people of God are being overseen by their elected representatives (who are not clergyman) while doing their every-member ministry (i.e., Eph 4:12 NIV, NASB, ESV) house to house. The Lord’s Supper was not a magical ceremony with little cups of juice and a tiny sliver of cracker but a bring-and-share meal in the context of homes with real wine and loaves of bread, the staples of the ancient diet. Only by restoring the ecclesial community as many face-to-face assemblies, meeting primarily in homes as the primary gathering place, and overseen by multiple elders can we restore the rapid disciplining of North America back to the top priority of Christ’s community here. Only then can we again become the salt and light of our culture. There can indeed be gatherings of many home ecclesias (communities/assemblies) for celebration, lectures, teaching, and fellowship but this is not the essence of “church” (a very inadequate translation of *ekklesia* – an assembly).

Here again the author’s redeem themselves later, in the section titled: “Three Inadequate Protestant Versions of the Priesthood of all Believers” (p. 103). They are 1) “Clericalism: Monopolizing ministry to the heavenly Father;” 2) Atomistic and collective priesthoods: Misrepresenting our position “in Christ,” and 3) Holy egotism: Missing the Spirit’s prevenient witness.” Concluding this section, the authors add these sage words: “We direct our *worship* and prayer to the Father, through the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit. We direct our *work* of ministry (Eph 4:12) as unto Christ himself, for the glory of the Father, through the power of the Holy Spirit.” Finally, the authors correctly state that “the Holy Spirit directs our witness to Christ, for the glory of the Father” (p. 110).

All in all, this is an excellent and much need redemptive-historical and Trinitarian-theological reflection on the ministry of the people of God. A second edition that adds a chapter on how the three types of gifts could be implemented and modifications as mentioned would add even more to an already quite useful volume. I recommend it for any student seeking to understand every-member ministry in a sound missiology and ecclesiology.

Mark R. Kreitzer
Grand Canyon University
Phoenix, AZ

Holmstedt, Robert D. *Ruth: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*. Baylor University Press: Waco, TX, 2010, pp. 180, \$29.99, paperback.

Ruth: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text is an excellent volume in the Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible Series, providing students and professors with a detailed grammatical discussion of the Hebrew text of the book of Ruth. Robert D. Holmstedt is the Professor of Ancient Hebrew and Northwest Semitic Languages at the University of Toronto. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Hebrew and Semitic Studies. Holmstedt has published an introductory Hebrew grammar entitled *Beginning Biblical Hebrew: A Grammar and Illustrated Reader* (Baker, 2013) in addition to many other publications related to Hebrew grammar and especially the relative clause in ancient Hebrew.

Holmstedt wrote this handbook “with both the intermediate student and the advanced researcher in mind” (p. 2). That being the case, Holmstedt provides a rich and engaging treatment of the Hebrew grammar of Ruth that is accessible to students still mastering basic Hebrew morphology and syntax.

After a brief introduction, Holmstedt spends three sections [corresponding to chapters] discussing his approach to Hebrew grammar, the role of linguistic features in dating the book, and the use of language to add dramatic “color” to characters in the narrative. Section 2 [§2] (pp. 3-16) proves helpful for students and professors who may be familiar with a certain “system” of Hebrew, but who are not familiar with the particular descriptions Holmstedt will use throughout the handbook. In some sense, he provides a short syntactical grammar of the lingo and abbreviations he uses throughout the handbook.

In §3 (pp. 17-39), Holmstedt addresses the linguistic features of the book of Ruth that are often used to provide a relative date for the book. He admits that dating a book based on linguistic features can only provide a *relative* date, but this section serves as a robust catalogue of linguistic features that Ruth scholars use to date the book. Holmstedt concludes that based on these features, Ruth “was written during a period of Aramaic ascendancy but not dominance and thus it may come from the early Persian period” (p. 39).

In §4 (pp. 41-49), Holmstedt discusses how the narrator of Ruth uses seemingly “incorrect” language to add “color” and dramatic effect to the characters. Holmstedt’s section adds to the beloved nature of the book of Ruth by arguing that the narrator intentionally used language that would enhance character development. Since Naomi spent nearly ten years in Moab and Ruth was a Moabitess, Holmstedt argues that what some scholars presume to be mistakes or anachronistic archaisms in the Hebrew Bible are intentional devices to further develop the characters. As such, Holmstedt provides another basis for seeing the narrative beauty of the book of Ruth.

In the remainder of the book, Holmstedt walks through the Hebrew text of the book of Ruth verse-by-verse, phrase-by-phrase. He has broken the book into a

drama, labeling each section as “Act 1,” “Act 2,” “Scene 1,” “Scene 2,” etc. In each section, Holmstedt provides a brief introductory commentary to the section, his own translations based on grammatical and syntactical analysis, and then he proceeds to walk through the Hebrew text phrase-by-phrase.

Holmstedt’s grammatical discussions are thorough and engaging. He provides examples from other literature that are more common to the modern reader to help one understand the Hebrew grammar (e.g., Shakespeare’s ‘to be or not to be’, p. 52). In addition to Holmstedt’s discussion of the syntax, he regularly references standard Hebrew grammars so that students and scholars can follow up with additional background on the topics he discusses. He cites Waltke-O’Connor most often, but also include standards like Gesenius and Joüon-Muraoka. In addition to citing standard grammars, Holmstedt also refers readers to the standard Ruth commentaries for further study.

While Holmstedt’s grammatical discussions are thorough, they are not overly cumbersome. By this, I mean that when the Hebrew text of Ruth inevitably repeats certain features, Holmstedt will reference back to the previous section so that students are not bogged down with repetitive information. Likewise, as the book moves forward, Holmstedt reduces the amount of attention given to certain features that have been discussed already. This aspect of Holmstedt’s book subconsciously allows the reader to begin practicing what he/she has learned earlier in the book. For example, in keeping with his view of character “coloring,” (pp.41-49) Holmstedt comments on the “apparent masculine suffix referring to feminine antecedents” in Ruth 4:11 (p. 202). However, in his comment, he merely refers the reader back to Ruth 1:8. The student can either return to Ruth 1:8 for a full discussion, or, by this point in the narrative, the student will know that the narrator of Ruth often (mis-)uses masculine or feminine suffixes for character development.

Holmstedt’s handbook proves to be a clear and helpful study of the Hebrew grammar of Ruth *if one is familiar with his system of identifying grammar*. Holmstedt helpfully provides a brief discussion of how he communicates grammatical features in his introduction (pp. 3-16), and yet throughout the handbook, he uses abbreviations that may require the reader to return to the introduction to know to what Holmstedt is referring. An example of this would be his use of “NP,” “VP,” and “PP” for “noun phrase,” “verb phrase,” and “prepositional phrase” respectively. While his shorthand is helpful for succinct discussions, some students may need to decipher these simple abbreviations before digesting the material. Holmstedt also uses terminology like “complements” and “adjuncts” that require one to be familiar with his system to describe Hebrew grammar before fully understanding his discussions.

Holmstedt’s view on Hebrew word order proves to be a difficulty of this volume. Holmstedt argues that the typical word order in Hebrew is subject-verb rather than verb-subject (pp. 11-16). He argues that for the verb to appear first in a Hebrew sentence, something must “trigger” the change (pp. 11, 55 and throughout). In a

narrative like Ruth, this explanation of “constituent movement” proves cumbersome. Hebrew narrative word order appears most often as verb-subject, and so Holmstedt must regularly explain away the typical Hebrew word order with his complex notion of “triggered constituent movement.” For those familiar with his entire system to explain Biblical Hebrew, this word order dilemma may not be cumbersome. However, for most readers, no reason exists to explain away the typical Hebrew narrative word order of verb-subject.

Despite some minor difficulties in how Holmstedt explains his system of Hebrew, this volume will prove to be a fine addition to the library of both intermediate Hebrew students and advanced scholars. For the intermediate student, Holmstedt’s vibrant discussions will aid in understanding Hebrew grammar as well as help the student enjoy the text of Ruth. For the advanced scholar, Holmstedt presents an additional “system” of Hebrew grammar that enhances one’s understanding of the Biblical Hebrew. This volume will benefit both students and scholars with an in-depth discussion of Hebrew grammar and syntax as well as some lexicography and etymology of obscure words. Overall, Holmstedt provides students of Biblical Hebrew with a technical, but accessible study of the text of the book of Ruth.

Adam J. Howell
Boyce College
Louisville, KY

Merrill, Eugene. *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Chronicles*. Kregel Exegetical Library. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2015, pp. 637, \$39.99, hardcover.

Eugene Merrill is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Old Testament at Dallas Theological Seminary. He has authored a number of works including major commentaries on Deuteronomy (New American Commentary, B&H, 1994) and Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi (Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary, 1994, Moody; reprinted by CreateSpace, 2014). Merrill is a preeminent evangelical scholar and has provided pastors, students, and scholars alike a commentary that will be their go-to resource on the books of Chronicles. *1 & 2 Chronicles* is the fifth volume in the Kregel Exegetical Library, but is the sixth volume available at the time of this review.

Merrill begins his commentary with a discussion of introductory issues including material on historical and cultural setting, historiography, and theology of the book, as well as other major introductory issues. Merrill holds to commonly held views on issues of setting and authorship within the book while highlighting important aspects of setting like political re-establishment and social reform. He also has a

discussion of religious reform that is quite thorough. One of Merrill's concerns is also how Chronicles relates to Ezra-Nehemiah. Within his discussion historiography he notes that the message of Chronicles "has to redress that despair [of Ezra-Nehemiah] while at the same time tracing the history of the nation from the time of the patriarchs to his present time to demonstrate how God's covenant people time and time again rebelled against his gracious covenant" (p. 52).

The commentary proper is broken into nine sections that follow major sections within the book. The first section focuses on 1 Chronicles 1-9 and gives a discussion of the genealogies. Next Merrill focuses on the rise of David (1 Chron 10-14). The third section focuses on David's exploits (1 Chron 15-21). Fourth, Merrill looks at the preparations for succession (1 Chron 22-29). The fifth section focuses on the reign of Solomon (2 Chron 1-9). The next two sections focus on the the reigns of Rehoboam to Hezekiah (2 Chron 10-28). The last two sections then focus on Hezekiah's reign (2 Chron 29-32) and the last kings to Judah to the decree of Cyrus (2 Chron 33-36). Each section begins with an outline. Then the text is broken into smaller units where there is a translation (from the NIV) provided along with text-critical notes. Each textual unit also contains an exegesis and exposition section. At the end of each of the 9 major sections there is also a section on the application of the theology of that section.

There are too many commendable features in this commentary to list them all so I will just mention two. First, the genealogies section of the commentary is exceptionally helpful. Merrill provides charts on the genealogies in Chronicles. These charts do two things. First, they show the percentage of space given to each tribe within the genealogies. A second chart compares the genealogies in Chronicles with the genealogies in Genesis, Matthew, and Luke. Within the genealogies section Merrill notes that "Without an understanding of the Chronicler's messianic hope and promise, not only are the genealogies without existential meaning but the entire narrative of redemptive history ceases to have significance" (p. 145). Another commendable feature of the commentary is the thoroughness of each section. From the introduction to the commentary proper it is clear that Merrill has given significant thought to each point of comment that he has made.

The only critique that I would make of this commentary is that the application sections could be lengthier or possibly more frequent within the commentary. Sometimes the application section is only about a page in length. The application comments are helpful and insightful, it would just be good for these sections to be a bit longer.

Merrill's commentary continues the early success of this Kregel series. The Kregel Exegetical Library commentaries are quickly becoming some of the best commentaries from an evangelical perspective. The volumes in this series have all been exceptional. Merrill's volume is no exception to this. This commentary will be of help to any student, pastor, or scholar. This commentary combines the best of

technical scholarship with readability. Hopefully this commentary will draw more interest to the text of 1-2 Chronicles by pastors and teachers within churches, as these might be some of the most neglected texts in all of the Bible.

Daniel S. Diffey
Grand Canyon University
Phoenix, AZ

Timpe, Kevin and Daniel Speak, eds. *Free Will and Theism: Connections, Contingencies, and Concerns*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016, pp. 316, \$85.

In this collection of essays, readers will encounter an interesting array of topics related to free will and philosophical theology. For example, essays cover issues related to divine providence, the doctrine of hell, the problem of evil, the doctrine of divine conservation or divine sustaining of the universe, and the compatibility of God's freedom with His essential perfection. Even though these essays cover different topics, there is one major question that runs throughout the entire book: does something about theism entail libertarian or compatibilist accounts of freedom?

One of the most impressive features of this volume for me is the editing of the essays. The contributors are not directly debating one another. It is not the case that one contributor writes an essay, and then another contributor responds to the original essay. However, the reader will often feel like she is reading a debate between dialogue partners. The editors have selected the contributors carefully in this regard. In many of the essays, a contributor has written up a nice summary of arguments that he or she has developed over the years in papers and books. Then the next chapter will include someone responding to the previous contributor's prior work on the topic. So even though the essays are not directly responding to one another, they often feel like a lively debate. Allow me to give some examples.

Over the years, Jerry Walls has developed a series of arguments against compatibilism based on Christian doctrine. One line of reasoning goes as follows. If God determines the actions of sinners, then God is responsible for those sinful actions. Human persons will not bear any blame for their actions since God is the one who has caused those actions to occur. This has several undesirable consequences for Christian belief, one of which is that God will be the author of evil. This is because God is the one solely responsible for evil actions occurring (pp. 94-96). Another undesirable consequence is that God would appear to be a moral monster for punishing people in hell since the damned were determined by God to sin (pp. 83-88). God is the one responsible for their sin, and yet He punishes them anyway! This, says Walls, is not an acceptable position for Christians to affirm. In *Free Will*

and *Theism*, Walls offers an excellent summary of these arguments. In the chapter after Walls, Tamler Sommers offers a critique of Walls' previous versions of these arguments. So even though Sommers is not directly responding to Walls' essay, it still feels like a debate because Sommers is responding to the arguments that Walls has offered. This format is very beneficial to the reader, and makes the volume as a whole interconnected in ways that collections of essays normally are not.

Another example of this comes from the essays by Derk Pereboom and Timothy O'Connor. Pereboom has a long career of arguing for theological determinism, and the theological adequacy of denying human freedom. O'Connor has a long career of arguing for libertarian freedom. Pereboom's essay does a great job at summarizing his position on theological determinism. He offers several justifications for his position as well as several critiques of the libertarian account of freedom that O'Connor defends. Pereboom attempts to show that a theological determinist can maintain that God determines everything, and yet humans are still morally praiseworthy or blameworthy for their actions (pp. 115-119). Further, Pereboom argues that denying libertarian freedom does not make the problem of evil intractable (pp. 120-127). As one might expect, O'Connor disagrees with Pereboom on several fronts. Interestingly, O'Connor concedes that denying libertarian freedom does not make the problem of evil much worse. However, O'Connor argues that theological determinism makes God the author of evil, and makes the Christian practice of confession and struggle against sin deeply problematic. For if God is the one determining my actions, how exactly should I confess my sins? I suppose one should say, 'Lord, please help me not sin, if that is what you have determined to take place' (p. 138).

Not all essays in this volume have this debate feel to them. For example, Megan Griffith's critique of agent causation, and Laura Ekstrom's critique of libertarian freedom are basically stand-alone essays. Rebekah Rice offers an interesting dilemma for theists who wish to affirm that God acts for reasons, and that reasons are not causes of God's actions. Rice's paper engages with the work of other contributors, but it doesn't have the same debate feel to it. This is by no means a strike against her paper. The dilemma she develops is definitely worth considering.

Some readers of this journal may be disappointed that the volume is not very theologically thick. Most of the contributors are philosophers, and the theological discussions are often quite sparse. While I would like to have seen more explicit theological engagement, that may be asking for too much. The volume is focusing on *theism*, not Christianity. The chapters from Jerry Walls and Jesse Couenhoven are the most explicitly Christian in the volume. Most of the content from the other essays could easily be applied to any theistic religious tradition. That being said, I think this volume is an important contribution for anyone concerned with issues related to free will and its place in Christian theology.

Journal of Biblical and Theological Studies 2.1

For students, this book will not serve as an introduction to free will, nor as an introduction to the place of free will in theology. The essays in this volume assume some level of familiarity with free will and philosophical theology. If you are looking for a good introduction, I would recommend starting with Kevin Timpe's *Free Will in Philosophical Theology* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2014). Once a student has read this, then she can move on to *Free Will and Theism*.

R.T. Mullins
Indianapolis, IN

Book Review Index

<i>The Whole Christ: Legalism, Antinomianism, and Gospel Assurance—Why the Marrow Controversy Still Matters</i> by Sinclair B. Ferguson (Reviewed by Steven J. Duby)	87
<i>Theology as Discipleship</i> by Keith L. Johnson (Reviewed by Justin McLendon)	89
<i>God the Trinity: Biblical Portraits</i> by Malcolm B. Yarnell III (Reviewed by R. Keith Loftin)	92
<i>How to Preach and Teach the Old Testament for All Its Worth</i> by Christopher J. H. Wright (Reviewed by Ryan C. Hanley)	94
<i>From Topic to Thesis: A Guide to Theological Research</i> by Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts (Reviewed by Andy McClurg)	97
<i>Christological Anthropology in Historical Perspective: Ancient and Contemporary Approaches to Theological Anthropology</i> by Mark Cortez (Reviewed by Christopher Woznicki)	99
<i>A History of Western Philosophy and Theology</i> by John Frame (Reviewed by J. Daniel McDonald)	102
<i>Seeking the Face of God: Evangelical Worship Reconceived</i> by J. Daniel Day (Reviewed by Brian Turnbow)	105
<i>The Message of the Twelve: Hearing the Voice of the Minor Prophets</i> by Richard Alan Fuhr Jr. and Gary E. Yates (Reviewed by Brian Koning)	107
<i>A Peculiar Glory: How the Christian Scriptures Reveal their Complete Truthfulness</i> by John Piper (Reviewed by Brett A. Berger)	109
<i>A Time to Keep: Theology, Mortality, and the Shape of Human Life</i> by Ephraim Radner (Reviewed by Joshua Farris)	113
<i>Silence and Beauty: Hidden Faith Born of Suffering</i> by Makoto Fujimura (Reviewed by Richard H. Stark III)	115
<i>Locating Atonement: Explorations in Constructive Dogmatics</i> edited by Oliver D. Crist and Fred Sanders (Reviewed by Jonathan Rutledge)	117

<i>Fundamentals of New Testament Greek</i> by Stanley E. Porter, Jeffrey T. Reed, and Matthew Brook O'Donnell (Reviewed by Andrew Keenan).....	119
<i>Interpreting Prophetic Literature: Historical and Exegetical Tools for Reading the Prophets</i> by James D. Nogalski (Reviewed by David M. Smiley).....	121
<i>Five Views on the Church and Politics</i> edited by Stanley N. Gundry and Amy E. Black (Reviewed by Justin L. McLendon).....	123
<i>Companion to the Septuagint</i> by James K. Aitken (Reviewed by Andrew Keenan).....	129
<i>Representing Christ: A Vision of the Priesthood of All Believers</i> by Uche Anizor and Hank Ross (Reviewed by Mark R. Kreitzer).....	131
<i>Ruth: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text</i> by Robert D. Holmstedt (Reviewed by Adam J. Howell).....	136
<i>A Commentary on 1 & 2 Chronicles</i> by Eugene Merrill (Reviewed by Daniel S. Diffey).....	138
<i>Free Will and Theism: Connections, Contingencies, and Concerns</i> by Kevin Timpe (Reviewed by R. T. Mullins).....	140