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The Catholicity of the Church:

An Interdenominational Exploration

Edited by Ryan A. Brandt and Matthew Y. Emerson

BOOK REVIEWS

Boda, Mark J., Russell L. Meek, and William R. Osborne, eds. *Riddles And Revelations: Explorations Into The Relationship Between Wisdom And Prophecy In The Hebrew Bible*. Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 634. New York: T&T Clark, 2018, pp. xvi + 306, \$114, Hardback.

The rise of intertextual theory in the last five decades has sparked numerous studies into the relationships between various sections of the Hebrew Bible. Most often relationships are drawn from the Pentateuch to other books (e.g. this is what we find in Michael Fishbane's seminal work *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989]). Pentateuchal priority, however, is giving way to considerations of intertextuality throughout the OT and this collection of seventeen essays is proof of that. Following in the footsteps of similar LHBOTS monographs (e.g. Dell and Kynes, eds., *Reading Job Intertextually*, LHBOTS 574, [New York: T&T Clark, 2013]; Dell and Kynes, eds., *Reading Ecclesiastes Intertextually*, LHBOTS 587, [New York: T&T Clark, 2015]), this work seeks to provide a survey of soundings for sapiential and prophetic interplay within the OT. These essays adeptly advance the methodological question and bring new light to how both wisdom and prophetic texts may mutually build upon each other.

A brief editorial preface outlines that the goal of this work is a reexamination of presuppositions and methods regarding the relationship between Wisdom and Prophecy. Russell Meek's opening chapter, the true introduction to the book although not listed as such, outlines the history of methodology concerning prophetic and wisdom interconnectedness from Johannes Fichtner's work in 1949 through the present. Meek highlights that a fundamental issue facing the essayists of this volume is the definition of what constitutes wisdom as a genre. This issue, Meek argues, is not insurmountable, however, and despite difficulties in defining what constitutes a *paideia* or wisdom tradition, form criticism enables scholarship to isolate defining characteristics of wisdom literature sufficiently for the purposes of inner-biblical study. Drawing on the work of Hays, Miller, and Leonard, Meek proposes that scholarship should adapt an author-oriented way to define inner-biblical allusion for comparing wisdom and prophetic passages. The remaining essays flow from this opening and are divided into four sections based on their function. They are (1) Methodology, (2) Wisdom Among the Prophets, (3) Prophecy Among the Sages, and (4) Responses.

For sake of brevity, I will highlight a representative essay from each section to demonstrate the editorial and scholarly aim of the volume. From section one, Will Kynes actively questions whether wisdom as a term is a hindrance since it lacks a clear historical definition. He further doubts if form criticism is the correct starting point for proper methodology seeing as it lacks sensitivity toward the myriad of

ways texts can be defined. In section two, William Osborne highlights that Ezekiel uses *חכמה* more than any other OT work. This usage is especially found in Ez 26 to demonstrate the futility of Tyre's worldly wisdom in contrast to wisdom found in the fear of YHWH. From section three, Martin Shields shows that Job and his interlocutors' function as sages for the bulk of the story, but it is only when direct special revelation occurs ("prophecy") that the full point of the story is understood. Through an intertext reading with the Suffering Servant in Isaiah, the reader is to see that "Job's author knew that accounting for individual circumstances was well beyond the means of even the most exceptional sage without the benefit of divine guidance" (197). From the final section, Tremper Longman evaluates each preceding essay and concludes that the best question raised by this study in the role of divine revelation within sapiential works and calls for a furthering of this scholarly question.

There is much that is commendable in this volume, but it truly shines in its exploration of methodology. For those new to considerations of intertextuality and its application, Meek's essay is an excellent primer that highlights the significant developments in the field over the past seventy years. His ample references to other works will enable readers to identify and engage with many critical volumes in this field. Similarly, Kynes and Dell's essays, both of which probe the problem of genre classification and the depth of intertextuality as a discipline, are tremendous essays that call future scholars toward a more careful and nuanced approach to this topic. Kynes particularly, drawing on the prior work of James Crenshaw, calls scholars to avoid modern and anachronistic categories in genre but instead to engage with categories as the ancient Israelite would have understood them. The middle of the book, while not up to the stellar bar set by the book's opening and concluding sections, still has several excellent essays. In one of the better entries, Eric Ortlund explores the use and subversion of wisdom themes in Isaiah. Ortlund demonstrates that the prophet skillfully highlights the necessity for wisdom to be tied to YHWH and that separated from Him wisdom becomes merely a part of the spiritual blindness within the people. This view of wisdom, as either moral or immoral depending on its source, concurs with what many of the other essays also conclude.

One persistent difficulty facing this work is that the breadth of disciplines it seeks to engage necessarily limits the depth to which it can engage any discipline. This can be seen by a lack of critical discussion on the distinction between diachronic ("author-oriented") and synchronic ("reader-oriented") intertextuality. Lacking such a section, which could have nicely prefaced the work, the reader is left unaware of the deeper questions and possibilities in intertextual study. Additionally, the problems related to category or genre definition, *viz.* the issues raised by Kynes, are present throughout and are not always adequately addressed by specific essays. The problem of category in another sense can be seen in the inclusion of Andrew Steinmann's essay on Daniel as a prophetic book, a classification that is not without some historical

problems. Such issues though do not materially restrict the value of this volume, rather they sound a clarion call for further and fuller work to be done here.

Overall, this work accomplishes its purpose in calling a new generation of scholarship to consider and explore critical questions on intertextuality between sage and prophet. These essays advance the question of textual influence between wisdom and prophecy as presented from the texts while keeping the biblical text front and center throughout. A rich diversity of opinion is carefully captured by the editors, and the breadth of collegial discussion within is to be commended. Those interested in wisdom literature, prophetic literature, intertextuality, or all of the above, should benefit from the robust and clear scholarship found in this volume.

Brian Koning

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Greidanus, Sidney. *From Chaos to Cosmos: Creation to New Creation*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2018, pp. 213, \$15.99, paperback.

The author of *From Chaos to Cosmos*, Sidney Greidanus, retired from full-time teaching in 2004 after serving as a professor at Calvin College, Calvin Theological Seminary, and King's College. Greidanus was also the pastor of two churches. One of his most popular publications prior to this book is *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (Eerdmans, 1999). *From Chaos to Cosmos* is one of nine books making up the *Short Studies in Biblical Theology* series published by Crossway.

Greidanus's main purpose in writing this volume is to demonstrate the presence of a progression from chaos to order in the Bible. He tracks these themes from the first verses of Genesis to the last words of Revelation. The main difficulty in this effort is defining the word "chaos" in a way that does not mistakenly equate the chaotic waters of Genesis 1:2 with evil. After all, these waters were a part of God's good creation. Although Greidanus recognizes that some authors avoid the word "chaos" because of its connotations of evil, he chooses to use this term in an attempt to redefine it. By the end of the text, he successfully clarifies his use of the term. However, there are many points early in the book that are unclear, notably whether Greidanus has confused the good chaos that existed as part of creation with the evil chaos that was a result of sin.

Greidanus' first attempt to avoid this difficulty is to adopt a dictionary definition of chaos: the initial nothingness that preceded creation. This perfectly applies to the chaos that existed as part of God's good creation. However, this is not the chaos that is addressed in the rest of the book. Within a few pages of providing this definition, Greidanus begins using the term to refer to the fallout from sin, without explaining that he has expanded on the initial definition. The result is two vastly different options for what is the opposite of chaos: does the book contrast chaos (meaning initial nothingness) with cosmos (meaning ordered creation) or does it oppose chaos

(meaning the evil effects of sin such as pain and suffering) and cosmos (meaning God solving these issues both now and in the eschaton)? Greidanus attempts to do both, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between them.

This problem is most evident on page 55, which provides a brief recap of Chapter 1. Greidanus indicates that 100% good chaos only existed in Genesis 1:2, while 100% cosmos was only present in the Garden of Eden prior to sin. After the fall, he suggests that there is a mixture of evil chaos and good cosmos. Thus, the former chaos is good, while the latter chaos is evil. Readers must continually ask themselves which chaos is being addressed throughout the book. A companion article, “10 Things You Should Know about Chaos and Cosmos in God’s Creation,” is available at the Crossway website. It provides brief explanations that clarify much of the issue and could have served as a useful introductory chapter within the book itself.

Aside from the confusion resulting from this terminology, Greidanus has achieved his goal of introducing the reader to the themes of chaos and cosmos in the Bible. These concepts have rarely been addressed from a perspective committed to the inerrancy of Scripture. Particularly in the early 20th century, biblical scholars were quick to associate them with the ancient Near Eastern (ANE) myths that supposedly influenced the biblical authors. In so doing, many abandoned the doctrine of inspiration. Greidanus’s work is a welcome contribution to the field: he notes the similar themes in ANE mythology without prioritizing them in the same way that earlier scholars often did.

From Chaos to Cosmos also includes a helpful guide for teaching a Bible study or sermon series on the chaos-cosmos theme. It suggests outlines for studies of various lengths. But the bible study leader who uses this guide should also anticipate questions about how Christians should interact with ANE myths about the chaotic sea and should seek out other resources that will further equip them to answer such questions.

The series title, *Short Studies in Biblical Theology*, informs the reader that its volumes are not exhaustive but rather introductory in nature. This book could serve as the starting point for a reader who is interested in the cloud of negativity surrounding the sea and chaos in the Bible. Those who wish to delve more deeply into the topic, should consult David Tsumura’s *Creation and Destruction* as well as a number of scholarly writings on the relationship between the Bible and ANE myths, such as the section entitled “Genesis 1–11 and Ancient Literature” in Kenneth Mathews’s commentary on Genesis.

Ken Lovett
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Hardy II, H. H. *Exegetical Gems from Biblical Hebrew: A Refreshing Guide to Grammar and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019, pp. 224, \$19.99, paperback.

H. H. Hardy is associate professor of Old Testament and Semitic languages at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary where he has served since 2014 (back cover). Dr. Hardy earned his PhD at the University of Chicago. Alongside teaching, Dr. Hardy is the author of numerous academic publications.

Hardy wrote *Exegetical Gems from Biblical Hebrew* to college and seminary students and former students of Hebrew (xiv-xv). The concept of the book developed in response to students questioning the value of learning Biblical Hebrew (xiii). As a resource to college students, the design of the book follows popular Hebrew grammar structures: nouns, adjectives, verbs, particles, and clause structure (xiv). Hardy suggests that Hebrew instructors use this volume as a weekly supplement alongside a Hebrew grammar to motivate student's desires to learn Hebrew (xv).

The thirty chapters are roughly organized the same. Each chapter receives an introduction, overview, interpretation, and recommendations for further reading. The numerous chapters make listing each chapter cumbersome, but students of Hebrew will have a rough layout in mind from previous studies. The book's first three chapters address the Hebrew language and literature, textual criticism, and word studies before entering into the grammar. Pronouns and prepositions receive two chapters each, verbs receive twelve chapters, and the remaining eleven chapters cover topics such as definiteness, the directive Heh, interrogatives, and clauses. The book includes a scripture index that students and pastors will find helpful when looking for specific Scripture helps.

The grammar surveys a sampling from the entire Hebrew Bible. The reader will notice text selections from the Torah, the Nevi'im, and Ketuvim (the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings). Each chapter generally examines a single verse from the Hebrew Bible, but some chapters introduced multiple verses and a single chapter with three verses. The author, at times, splits verses, but on each occasion, the author worked on the other half of the verse in the following chapter.

The book fulfills the promises held with its title and meets the objectives set by the author. The book proves to be a supplement for Hebrew grammar, and the 'gems' within the book can motivate students. The author accurately writes to his target audience of current and former students of Biblical Hebrew and professors using the book as a teaching aid.

The book shows the need to learn Hebrew. Each 'gem' highlighted in the book is a verse that is difficult to interpret without understanding Hebrew. In some cases, the author disagrees with the translators of popular English translations. However, Hardy is not using this book as a platform to set matters straight. The reader will

notice that Hardy provides interpretations that also agree with English translations, and that Hardy provides conclusions for pedagogical purposes.

The book has characteristics in common with intermediate grammars, but the book is better thought of as a bridge between an introductory grammar and intermediate grammar. These intermediate features are, perhaps, the most attractive component of the book and are most prominent in chapters 9, 10, and 12. While these chapters focus on the Hebrew verb, they also discuss clausal syntax, a topic not often discussed in detail in introductory grammars. Hardy introduces instructors and readers to narrative analysis, mainline and offline, and relationships between clauses.

Exegetical Gems from Biblical Hebrew has two stumbling blocks to instructors and readers using the book. First, the book introduces weak verbs early. An early introduction of weak verbs exposes the fact that the book does not perfectly align with introductory grammar books. For instance, introductory grammars often teach stative and fientive verbs alongside the Qal Perfect, which is often the first verb form taught in introductory grammars. Hardy includes stative and fientive verbs in the eighth chapter on verbs in chapter 17 (105). Second, Hardy's assumption of the student's knowledge may be too much in some instances. For example, the author assumes some textual critical methods are known to the reader in chapter two (9). Also, not all introductory grammars include vocabulary such as transitive and intransitive, which places a burden on the reader who is unfamiliar with these terms (107).

The reader can overcome the difference in order and the author's assumption of previous knowledge through a professor's instruction. However, the reader whose Biblical Hebrew is rusty may find themselves digging up their grammars or running to the library for additional resources to obtain fuller explanations. However, Hardy has included enough information for any reader to utilize and benefit from this book. The chapters include helpful summaries or refreshers of previous material such as a table for derived stems, "Grammatical Categories of Derived Stems" (119). In several instances, Hardy's summaries present information through a set of fresh eyes.

A fresh presentation of information, the 'gems,' and the intermediate grammar material will motivate students. By providing previously learned material to students in an alternative manner, previous material may become clearer and may finally 'stick' for some students. The 'gems' in the book do demonstrate to students the value of learning Hebrew. Every example assists in interpreting the text and will translate into a better understanding of God's Word and better preaching. Finally, intermediate grammar material gives students crucial tools for interpreting Biblical Hebrew. Introductory grammars often leave the student working at the sentence level. Leaving students at the sentence level creates difficulty interpreting passages of the Hebrew Bible. Providing a few examples of clausal syntax will allow students to translate Hebrew better.

Exegetical Gems from Biblical Hebrew is recommended both to professors of Biblical Hebrew and students of Biblical Hebrew. The book provides helpful

grammatical summaries and presents new information close to an intermediate grammar. The verse selection and analysis will surely motivate students to continue their desire to learn the original language of the Old Testament.

Ross D. Harmon
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

DeYoung, Kevin. *The Ten Commandments: What they Mean, Why They Matter, and Why We Should Obey Them*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2018, 203 pages, \$17.99, Hardback.

At the time of printing, and according to the back cover of the book, Kevin DeYoung serves as a pastor at Christ Covenant Church in Matthews, North Carolina, and also as an assistant professor of systematic theology at the Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte. DeYoung completed his PhD at the University of Leicester.

His book begins with a quick tour of secular feelings about the Ten Commandments. This tour becomes the impetus for posing and answering two questions in the introduction: “Why should we study the ten commandments?” and “Why should we obey the Ten Commandments?” The answers to those questions lead to the following ten chapters, each presenting one commandment. These chapters focus on Christian understanding and application, starting with the first commandment in a chapter he titles “God and God Alone.”

“God and God Alone” begins with an appeal to true faith in the true God, then focuses on how the commandments underpin modern society and moral law (p. 30). From there, he works through the first commandment, examines the Heidelberg Catechism to understand the Decalogue in total, and then backtracks to a list of reasons from Douglas Stuart on why the Israelites kept slipping into idolatry (p. 34). The chapter concludes by applying the first commandment to Christianity: “If you don’t know God in Christ, then you don’t really know God” (p. 38). The second commandment (and chapter) is on “worshiping God in the wrong way” (p. 42). DeYoung illustrates this idea with the Golden Calf incident in Exodus 32 (p. 43). Then, he applies this lesson by concluding the right way to worship God is through Jesus. Jesus is “the fulfillment of the second commandment” (p. 50).

Chapters 3-10 all follow different patterns as well, although each one begins with the commandment and ends with an application. In Chapter 3, the commandment on taking the Lord’s name in vain finds application in Christians living worthy of the term *Christ*. The following commandment finds its fulfillment in the Christian taking a sabbath to rest in Christ (p. 77). DeYoung expands the fifth commandment to mean showing respect for all, including those in government (p. 92). He uses the commands of Jesus concerning anger and loving all people for application of the sixth commandment (p.130-4). Commandment seven is expanded to protecting marriage and family (p. 115), the eighth commandment against stealing becomes a

focus on laying up treasures in heaven rather than on earth (p. 137-8), and the ninth commandment is fulfilled by “loving your neighbor as yourself” (p. 152). Finally, the tenth commandment (coveting) is transformed into a focus on the already-not yet kingdom. (p. 165-6).

Overall, DeYoung should be commended for producing a hermeneutic that applies each commandment through Jesus’s ministry. This method negates troublesome applications and legalism. One such example is the first commandment where he places “Have no other Gods before me” in the exclusivity of Jesus Christ. DeYoung should also be commended for working through New Testament passages and allowing them their full weight in application. One such instance is Paul’s words on keeping holy days and Sabbaths in Colossians 2:16-17. Here, DeYoung concludes, “Sabbath keeping was spiritualized to mean a life of devotion and humility to God” (p. 71). He then redevelops the idea of the Sabbath as an issue of trust: a person must decide if he or she is willing to trust God for the time and work lost while resting during the Sabbath (p. 77).

Unfortunately, weaknesses in method and argumentation temper these commendations. One such shortcoming is his (several) assertions that lack support or notation. For example, he denies henotheism existed in the Old Testament (p. 31) even though several Old Testament scholars would disagree. They do so for several reasons, including the surrounding culture as the Egyptians and those in the Levant were polytheistic at this time (outside of Akhenaton’s reign if one holds to a later date for the exodus). Furthermore, wars between nations equaled conflicts between gods (YHWH vs. Pharaoh as Horus’s representation on earth, YHWH vs. Dagon in the days of Saul and David, and so on). However, DeYoung makes no mention of scholars who agree or disagree with his position.

A second weakness in argumentation is found in his treatment of the New Testament. In one place, he argues Jesus and Paul stripped the Jewish laws from the sabbath, leaving only the original intent. However, he then explains, “The Gospel writers are at pains to demonstrate that Jesus never violated the fourth commandment” (p. 68). The problem falls in the discontinuity of his arguments: in the first century, the fourth commandment is bound in the Jewish laws they sought to strip. Consequently, Jesus stripping away the first-century understanding breaks the commandment in the context of the first-century Jewish mind. This problem comes to the forefront when some Pharisees confront Jesus in Mark 2:23-27. There, Jesus concludes in “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath” (v. 27). Although arguments can be made for how both statements are true, DeYoung does not explain how that might be.

These two examples of weaknesses, (1) DeYoung’s assumptions and assertions without footnotes, endnotes, or further argumentation; and (2) his discontinuity of arguments illustrate the limited usefulness of this book depending on the target audience. The tone of the book indicates the focus is on the laity. However, his

writing scores above a PhD reading level (using Flesch-Kincaid) in a few places, making it difficult to use this material in a Sunday school class, Bible study, or even as a background study for the average Christian. Furthermore, the argumentation is difficult to follow as several chapters seem to meander between Old Testament interpretation, theology, New Testament interpretation, and application.

Consequently, in its current format, this book is difficult to recommend to bible students, scholars, or lay leaders. However, at the core of this book are the seeds of a great hermeneutic and an excellent tool for pastors. If a second edition can address the concerns listed above, it would be a good book for training Bible students and laity in applying Old Testament teachings to the Christian life.

Christian Wilder
Grand Canyon University

Hill, Carol, Gregg Davidson, Tim Helble, and Wayne Ranney, eds. *The Grand Canyon, Monument to an Ancient Earth: Can Noah's Flood Explain the Grand Canyon?* Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2016, pp. 240, \$26.99 hardback.

The Grand Canyon, Monument to an Ancient Earth is a collaboration by eleven authors to address the “needless controversy” surrounding the creation of the Grand Canyon (11). The eleven authors are scientists—geologists, paleontologists, hydrologists, biologists—and some are admittedly Christian while others are non-Christian (11, 232-35). Many authors hold teaching positions in institutes of higher learning, while others serve(d) in various agencies such as the National Weather Service and the Los Alamos National Laboratory. All authors have contributed greatly to their respective fields (232-35).

In *The Grand Canyon, Monument to an Ancient Earth* the authors offer a response to scientists who argue that Noah's flood created the Grand Canyon (flood geology). Flood geologist, in keeping with a literal understanding of Genesis 1-11, argue that the Grand Canyon did not form in billions of years. The authors of *The Grand Canyon*, however, contend that saying the earth is billions of years old should not be seen as an attack on the Bible (10). They note that of those “modern professional geologists” who hold to the inspiration of the Bible, “the vast majority also understand the Earth to be billions of years old” (10). The authors assert that flood geologists denying the old age of earth while accepting other parts of science is “essentially a statement that science works only when we agree with the outcome” (11). Therefore, the authors, in opposition to flood geologists, describe the creation of the Grand Canyon according to conventional geology and critique the positions of flood geology.

The book is divided into five parts, each containing two to eight chapters each. In the first part the authors define flood geology, and contrast the difference in

opinion between flood geologists and conventional geologists regarding the geologic time frame assigned to the rock layers. The second part, the largest part of the book, describes how geology works: how sedimentary rocks are formed and how they help geologists understand the past, various dating methods, plate tectonics, various fossil types and how they help geologists interpret the past. With a basic understanding of how geology works, the authors move on to part four where they lay out their argument on how the Grand Canyon was formed. Lastly, in part five, the authors describe the geologic history of the Grand Canyon as seen on the South Kaibab Trail, closing with a critique of flood geology.

The Grand Canyon, Monument to an Ancient Earth is clearly written for the novice in geology. With that audience in mind, the authors describe with clarity and effectiveness the processes of geology and how the various features of geology are used to interpret the Grand Canyon's past. Each part begins with a brief introduction that ties the preceding part and chapters with the upcoming chapters; the flow of the argument in each chapter, in each part, and in the entire book is never lost to the reader. Each chapter also contains insets in which the author(s) highlight a specific issue with flood geology; the differences between conventional geology and flood geology are clearly discernible in each inset. The book contains many beautiful pictures of various locales in the Grand Canyon, and the maps and diagrams are well designed and informative. *The Grand Canyon* is certainly an easy book to digest.

In a debate that is hotly contested, it is understandable that the authors take a hard stance on certain issues or conclusions. However, in *The Grand Canyon, Monument to an Ancient Earth* the authors often overstate their case for conventional geology. For example, in their history on the advent of the creationist movement, the authors conclude that “the common claim that all biblically minded people believe in a young Earth”—when compared with the beliefs of church theologians of years past and the first Renaissance scientists—“has little historical precedence” (24). History shows, however, that the belief in a young earth has a long history among Jewish and Christian students of the Scriptures. In their discussion on how sedimentary rocks give clues to the past, Stephen Moshier and Gregg Davidson seem to equate the Principle of Uniformitarianism and “Christian doctrines of God's consistency and providence” (74). Flood geologists, according to Moshier and Davidson, assert that natural laws of physical and chemical processes must have been different during creation, before the Fall in Eden, and during Noah's flood. This assertion by flood geologists, claim Moshier and Davidson, is a departure from uniformitarianism “and from Christian doctrines of God's consistency and providence” (74). A denial of the Principle of Uniformitarianism does not necessarily mean the denial of God's providence; furthermore, it could be argued that the belief in God's providence and consistency undergirds much of the work by flood geologists despite their rejection of uniformitarianism.

Moreover, at times the authors exaggerate flood geologists' position on the Bible in relation to science, or demonstrate a misunderstanding of their position. For example, in one inset Gregg Davidson and Wayne Ranney observe that flood geologists claim that all explanations of the Grand Canyon's creation are based on the Bible. Davidson and Ranney respond to flood geologists with some questions: "So where in Scripture do we find references to Noah's flood linked with earthquakes, shifting continents, rising mountains, tsunamis, and mineral-rich ocean vents? . . . The answer is zero. Exactly how, then, is flood geology a biblical model?" (205) While there are examples of flood geologists reading geological phenomena into verses that really do not support such a reading—such as in various Psalms—it would not be accurate to say that flood geologists expect the Bible to speak on continental drift or every geologic event that occurred during the Flood. This critique seems a bit naive on the part of the authors.

In *The Grand Canyon, Monument to an Ancient Earth* the authors follow familiar lines of argumentation in defending conventional geology against flood geology; the authors do not advance the debate. However, the book is best served as an introduction to the topic of geology and the Bible from the viewpoint of conventional geology. To that end *The Grand Canyon, Monument to an Ancient Earth* serves its purpose well.

Richard C. McDonald

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Walton, John H. *Old Testament Theology for Christians: From Ancient Context to Enduring Belief*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017, pp. 302, \$35, hardback.

John Walton is one of the most well-known and prolific scholars of the Old Testament today, having published several Old Testament introductions, works on the conceptual and contextual world of the Hebrew Bible, and various individual monographs such as the *Lost World* series. He currently serves as a Professor of Old Testament at Wheaton College and Graduate School. An offering concerning the theology of the Old Testament from an author with his pedigree is therefore of significant interest.

Walton's approach in this volume is to try to discern the contextual world of the Old Testament authors and then to try to build a bridge from that thought world towards a Christian understanding of these concepts, or what Walton terms as "enduring theology." This methodology has several advantages, with perhaps one of the strongest contributions being the safeguarding against reading New Testament passages and their theological concepts back into the Old Testament, which may not teach those same principles. This is not to say that Walton holds that the Old Testament and New Testament are contradictory to one another; rather, it is to say that Old Testament concepts should not immediately be seen in light of a New Testament

concept with similar terms. Walton raises “the spirit of the Lord” as one example of this danger (281-282).

For Walton, the spirit of the Lord and the Holy Spirit are different concepts, and therefore Scripture should only be seen as teaching about the Holy Spirit if it specifically references the Holy Spirit. Old Testament teaching on the spirit of the Lord should not be conflated with these New Testament principles. In a particularly poignant passage, Walton explores if the spirit of the Lord should be seen as indwelling in its nature. The Holy Spirit indwells, but the spirit of the Lord is never explicitly stated as indwelling. Walton encourages exegetes to avoid reading that New Testament concept of indwelling into these Old Testament Passages. In this way, Walton anchors Old Testament concepts in their context and seeks to bring them forward modern readers as a separate thought-category from similar New Testament ideas. This book utilizes this approach in exploring six major theological categories: Yahweh and the Gods (29), the Cosmos and Humanity (71), Covenant and Kingdom (105), the Temple and Torah (143), Sin and Evil (183), and Salvation and Afterlife (225). Walton concludes with several helpful lists discerning certain New Testament teachings he feels are not in the Old Testament at all (such as the Trinity, 286-291) as well as some concepts about God that would be unknown if one did not have the Old Testament (such as a theology of Creation or the concept of people as made in the image of God, 291-294).

These concluding lists are an excellent synecdoche for the real strength of this book, which is a sharpened understanding of how the Old and New Testaments relate to one another. One of the strongest portions of the work is the chapter on Sin and Evil, in which Walton argues that the Old Testament concepts of sin, evil, satan, and demons are very different than common New Testament-informed understandings of the same. The Old Testament does not teach Original Sin as such nor does it hold that satan or a demon took an active role in human events (215). Walton offers his readers much wisdom by demanding a clear epistemology: is a concept or definition actually taught in the Old Testament or New Testament, or is that concept or definition something from the conceptual world of either testament, or is it perhaps a product of later interpreters? A too-hasty unification of these ideals will cause the two Testaments to appear to disagree where they may not actually. The concept of “evil” is different in the ancient Near Eastern thought world as compared to the Hellenistic thought world, which informed the New Testament, yet Walton does not feel that the New Testament definitions invalidate Old Testament teachings. At the same time, he shows that the Old Testament concept of evil offers insight to interpreters in areas left unexplored by New Testament passages. “The New Testament offers more specificity theologically by factoring Christ into those purposes, but the Old Testament provides the basis on which this specificity is built.” (217) By sharpening the differences between the Old and New Testament, Walton is able to present his

readers with a broader, deeper, truer understanding of each and the unified picture of God that they present.

While the primary strength of the work is the sharpened view of the differences and therefore the unity between the Old and New Testaments, the other major strength is in the understanding of the underlying concepts of temple and Torah, explored at length in chapter five. Far too often, attempts at understanding Old Testament Law from a Christian point of view are either too reliant on external, non-textual categorizations (such as the divisions between civil, ceremonial, or moral aspects of the Law) or primarily interested in the Law as it intersected the lives of Jesus and/or Paul (such as the modern discussion regarding the New Perspective on Paul). Walton, in my view, gives the most satisfying, approachable window into the Temple and Torah by finding their unifying role as arbiters of sacred space. For Walton, the idea of sacred space has similarities with order and morality, though each of those are more properly understood as the end results of sacred space rather than producers of it (143-144). Israel was different than the surrounding culture by understanding their purpose as partners with God in bringing His sacred space into the world (155). Where the ancient temple was often conceived of as a sacred space because of the presence of a god there, the Old Testament extends that space from the temple to the entire cosmos (146-147). The Law, then, served as directives to help maintain access to these sacred spaces as well as the way that God's presence would be reflected to the outside world. "However, the Torah was contingent on the temple, not the other way around." (157) This focus the Law has on maintaining Israel's status as a covenant people, marked out as holy, who live in proximity to sacred space is unlike other ancient Near Eastern people (159). Walton finds this coidentification the covenant people have with Yahweh as one of the enduring teachings of the Old Testament. In the New Testament, though, the covenant people are defined by a people group given holy status through Christ and the New Covenant. The purpose remains: to coidentify with Christ and to bring His presence and purposes into the world (174). The bridge that Walton builds from the Old Testament conceptual world to a modern understanding of the community of Christ is a very sturdy one.

This volume is excellent. Walton's lifetime of study is brought to bear on this monograph, giving it a depth not often found in a work of this length. His particular point of view is also refreshing, as Walton chooses to focus on concepts that other theologies of the Old Testament don't discuss in depth or see as central. The strength of his argumentation is such that readers will find themselves wondering why these categories aren't seen as the central thrust of Old Testament theology! He finds a way to give voice to the unique contribution of the Old Testament while not totally underlining it from the New Testament nor subsuming its message and concepts to later New Testament ones. Time spent with this work will help a reader appreciate the whole voice of Scripture as a unified view into the purpose, nature, and character of God while at the same time better understanding the diversity of the theology

contained in its pages. This is a task that interpreters spend lifetimes on; few have succeeded as well as Walton. This book is recommended for all serious Old Testament students.

Richard Hannon
Oral Roberts University

Barrick, William D. *Understanding Bible Translation: Bringing God's Word into New Contexts*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2019, 248 pp, \$21.99, paperback.

All eyes were transfixed on the speaker who ascended the lectern. As he opened the sacred book, the hushed crowd rose together as if on cue. After a blessing the standing throng uniformly put their faces in the dust. The Word of God was about to be read! But the reading sounded strange, most struggled to understand the foreign words. Expectant hearts began to grow disillusioned until another man stepped forward to translate the text into the common tongue (Neh 8:1–8). Thus began the history of Bible translation, from Mosaic Hebrew to the Aramaic of the exiles.

Bill Barrick offers readers a window into this history as well as the intricacies and importance of translating God's Word into the common languages of the world. Barrick's resume makes him an excellent guide for such a journey: 15 years as a Bible translator in Bangladesh, 50 years of teaching Hebrew and Old Testament, and a contributor to multiple English Bible translations (ESV, NET, LEB). Having taught for many years at The Master's Seminary, he currently serves as the OT editor for the Evangelical Exegetical Commentary series with Logos/Lexham Press. He is currently writing the *Genesis* volume for that series, having previously written a commentary on *Ecclesiastes* for the Focus on the Bible series (Christian Focus, 2011). He has also contributed to numerous other works, including *The Inerrant Word* (Crossway, 2016), *Four Views on the Historical Adam* (Zondervan, 2013), *Coming to Grips with Genesis* (Master Books, 2008). He serves as an elder in his local church and regularly co-leads creation oriented rafting trips through the Grand Canyon. His experience in the local church, academic scholarship, and field Bible translation offers him a unique vista from which to present the principles and priority of Bible translation.

Barrick begins by going backwards into the history and priority of "common language" Bible translations. Beginning with the earliest translations, he discusses the significance of the Septuagint [LXX] (a translation of the OT into the Koiné or "common" Greek of the period). This translation not only served as 3/4 of the Bible for most of the early church population, but it also became the basis for many other early translations (p. 26). Also of note, the Syriac Peshitta (meaning "simple" or "common") and the Latin Vulgate (meaning "vulgar" or "common") follow the LXX approach of translating God's Word into the common language of a people, not a highly formalized dialect inaccessible to many readers (p. 27). Barrick then goes on to

draw out the significance of this issue in the Reformation era where Bible translation into the common languages of Europe helped to fuel that movement. He concludes that a good translation should be accurate, understandable, and clear (p. 31).

Throughout the book, Barrick is careful to point out that translation and exposition of the text are not the same tasks. A good translation serves expositors and teachers, it does not replace them. He writes, “Translation does not eliminate the need for exposition and teaching. Nor does translation ignore the responsibility of the reader of God’s Word to obey what they do understand. . . . Difficult as it might be, translators must allow the biblical text to force readers to think, rather than to be lazy in their approach to the text” (p. 38). His comments echo the apostle Paul who wrote to Timothy, “Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything” (2 Tim 2:7, ESV).

After the first two chapters, much of the discussion turns to concrete translation principles and examples, mainly from English translations. He discusses how issues of semantics [ch. 3], simplicity [ch. 4], and theology [ch. 5] impact a translation. He summarizes his approach stating, “Sound translation principles require transferring the exact meaning of the original text into the receptor language while maintaining as much of the original wording as possible” (p. 64). He then goes on to analyze in detail how various English translations approach Psalm 23, Proverbs 8:1–11, and Romans 6:8–14. He concludes, “Essentially literal Bible translations provide superb versions for in-depth Bible study, but might not always speak directly to the heart of someone encountering the Bible for the first time—especially in a context characterized by biblical illiteracy” (p. 156). In other words, different translations have different purposes. It is important for readers, especially those with choices among translations, to understand the usefulness of each approach.

Barrick directs this book mainly to church leaders and interested church members, but one of the final chapters provides some helpful clues as to what makes a good translator. His catalog of skills and attributes can assist both an interested reader and an observant pastor looking for potential missionary candidates. And while Bible translation can appear to be a very human task, Barrick recognizes the spiritual dimension of the work in a detailed call to prayer (p. 219). He concludes the book by reflecting on the significance of this dimension of missionary work, “Long after the Bible translator or translation team has completed their work . . . the Bible continues on to produce spiritual fruit. Its words convert, instruct, encourage, strengthen, guide, and comfort generations of believers yet unborn. No other book possesses such power and potential” (p. 220).

I appreciate the measured and precise approach that the author brings to this topic. He bridges important conversations between the communities of scholarship, missions, and the church. His philosophy of translation strikes a winning balance, “Sound translation principles require transferring *the exact meaning* of the original text into the receptor language while maintaining as much of *the original wording*

as possible” (p. 64, emphasis added). In other words, interpretation is a necessary part of the translation process, but a good translator will stay as close to the *words* of the original as possible. This conviction flows from an understanding of how the Bible functions in the life of the church and the individual believer. The NT clearly ordains the role of “pastor-teacher” in the life of the local church (Eph 4:11–12). Thus, a proper translation will seek to equip these leaders for their teaching ministry as they equip the local body (cf. p. 38). While Barrick recognizes that more “dynamic” translations may have a role to play in evangelism and church life, he posits that Christian growth in biblical and spiritual knowledge will lead them to desire a more direct translation for study and teaching (p. 156).

Barrick also does well in illuminating the theological nature of the task of Bible translation. While writing as a moderating voice, I appreciate that Barrick still takes a clear stand on the inerrancy of the original writings of the Old and New Testaments (p. 217). This conviction on inerrancy, echoing the Chicago Statement, impacts other assertions throughout the book. He writes, “Translators must not add meaning, nor must they subtract any of the meaning. The goal should be to accurately and fully translate the text into its receptor language. . . . The accuracy of one’s theology must rest upon the original text [i.e., the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts]” (p. 120–121). This leads him to emphasize the principles of clear and accurate translation (p. 156). As Hill et. al. write, “[Bible] translators are not as free to adjust the text to the audience’s context as they can in other retellings. . . . Bible translation is a genre which raises the expectation that the meaning the audience can understand from the translation will have a high degree of resemblance to the meaning the original author intended to communicate” (Bible Translation Basics [Dallas: SIL, 2011], p. 110–111). So, while a translation team must be concerned that their translation is understandable and natural in style, theological convictions about the very words of the text demand detailed attention to the words of the apostles and prophets.

No native speakers of biblical Hebrew and Koiné Greek remain on the earth. Thus every Christian today is somehow dependent upon the faithfulness of Bible translators through the ages. Bill Barrick proves to be an excellent guide into the history, significance, and principles of this historic task. I would highly recommend this book for pastors and church leaders who want to understand better how the translation they depend upon weekly came into being. It is also incumbent upon those of us with such a wealth of translations and Bible knowledge to share this with the over 1,600 languages who still have nothing translated, and the over 3,300 who only have partial Bibles. Imagine doing church ministry without the “whole counsel of God” in a language you know best! Barrick’s contribution goes a long way in advancing our appreciation for our own Bibles and spurring us to face the task unfinished.

Marcus A. Leman
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Gladd, Benjamin L. *From Adam and Israel to The Church: A Biblical Theology of the People of God. Essential Studies in Biblical Theology.* Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019, 182 pp. \$22, paperback.

Benjamin Gladd is Associate Professor of New Testament at Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson, MS. His published works include similar topics such as this volume under review, particularly his collaborative work with G. K. Beale. Readers interested in these topics should consult G. K. Beale and Benjamin L. Gladd. *Hidden But Now Revealed: A Biblical Theology of Divine Mystery.* Downers Grove: IVP, 2014.

In this new volume, Gladd states that *From Adam and Israel to The Church* examines the figure of Adam, Israel, Christ and the Church through the lens of the image of God (p. 4). He asserts that the image of God should be understood in the offices of king, priest, and prophet, and then he demonstrates how Adam and Eve fill these offices (pgs. 12-19). Like his previous work, on this point his analysis depends largely upon Eden as temple. Chapter two examines how the fall of humanity led to the abuse of the authority that comes from the image of God. In response, he introduces the concept of an anti-image expressed in the anti-king, the anti-priest, and the anti-prophet (pgs. 27; 33). Chapters three and four move from Adam to Israel, and here Gladd identifies Sinai as a three-part temple parallel to Eden (p. 39). This connection provides background for Israel as king, priest, and prophet. Chapter four also shows that being the people of God should not be understood in purely ethnic terms in the Old Testament (pgs. 52-54).

Chapters five, six, and seven look at Jesus as king, priest, and prophet. Chapter five discusses Jesus as king by introducing the concept of inaugurated eschatology, the idea that Christ's resurrection is a "sample" of the work God is going to finish at the end of time (pgs. 76—78). Jesus as priest is typified by the temple cleansing (pgs. 95-97), with the Great Commission functioning as a promise to make the whole world a temple (pgs. 99-101). Gladd uses the wilderness temptation as a framing device for Jesus' prophetic ministry. Specifically, Jesus's usage of the Old Testament displays his trust in the Father in ways that Adam and Israel failed (pgs. 103-109).

Chapters eight, nine, and ten cover the Church as king, priest, and prophet. Gladd uses the appointment of the Twelve, Pentecost, Paul in Romans 16 and Ephesians 6, and Revelation 7 to show the similarities and differences in the royal responsibilities of Israel and the Church (pgs. 117-127). Chapter nine emphasizes the presence of God in the Church and the accompanying call for holiness. This communicated holiness is the role of the Church as priests. Gladd interprets Pentecost and the expansion in Acts as the reversal of the partial obedience of Adam and his descendants. This contrast is most explicit with his comparison of Babel and Pentecost (pgs. 144-148). The chapter ends with an overview of the perspectives on spiritual gifts (153). Chapter eleven looks at the people of God in the final state. Using Revelation, Gladd points out several images used to describe the people of God and the anti-people of God

(pgs. 157-162). He also examines how kingship, priesthood, and prophethood will function in the new creation (pgs. 162-167). Chapter twelve highlights the key themes Gladd wants the reader to take away from the book: membership in Israel is by faith rather than ethnicity, the significance of life come from reflecting the image of God, Christians should support a just society, Christians should encourage proper worship of God alone, and Christians should value the commands of God (pgs. 171-173)

Gladd's book does not intend to break new ground in the discussion of the people of God. The work is intended to be a general survey of a theme across the Bible from a Reformed perspective. Each chapter is clear and readable, and the author provides helpful bibliography for the themes discussed in each chapter. The works references are from a relatively narrow perspective, but the works cited have a generally broad bibliography. There can be a tendency within biblical theology to read the Old Testament exclusively in light of New Testament use. The treatment of the Genesis narratives shows particular concern to avoid this problem. The discussion of the temple motif of Genesis 1-3 summarizes the main points of the argument.

The book hinges on two interlocking components. The image of God is identified with the classical offices of Christ. Chapter one makes a compelling case that Adam and Eve were kings, priests, and prophets. Likewise, it makes the case that they hold the image of God. The connection between the image of God and the kingly office fit well. However, the connection of the image of God to priest and prophet was tenuous. If the reader accepts the connection between the image of God and the remaining offices, the argument of the book will be convincing. If the reader does not accept those claims, the force of the remainder of the book will be weaker.

A second criticism relates to the structure of the book. The structure of a book or argument matters because it may reflect a particular emphasis of the author. It also influences how a reader understands the work in relationship to the parts and other related works on the subject. Given the parallelism of roles is a key part of the argumentation, the structure of this book is essential. The author appeals obliquely to "theologians" explaining the divine image in these three motifs (p. 12). Eusebius uses the order of priest, king, and prophet (*Hist. eccl.* 1.3.8-9). The Westminster Shorter Catechism uses prophet, priest, and king (Questions 23-27). There is no in text explanation of this order. Hans Walter Wolff's *Anthropology of the Old Testament* is the only author cited in the section where such a justification occurs. Wolff only supports the idea of ruling as the image of God in the place cited. Chapter eleven uses the order of priest, king, and prophet with no explanation of why the previous structure does not work in the discussion of the final state. A discussion of the structure and relationship of the offices would strengthen this book as a whole. *From Adam and Israel to the Church* is a good example of biblical theology accessible to the layperson or useful in a college course on Biblical anthropology. This book is a promising initial installment for the series.

Jonathan McCormick
Gateway Seminary

Schreiner, Patrick. *The Kingdom of God and the Glory of the Cross*. Short Studies in Biblical Theology. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018, pp. 159, \$14.99, paperback.

Patrick Schreiner is assistant professor of New Testament at Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon. In addition to *The Kingdom of God and the Glory of the Cross*, Schreiner has published *The Body of Jesus* and other articles and essays. *The Kingdom of God and the Glory of the Cross* is part of Crossway Publisher's Short Studies in Biblical Theology series. According to the series editors, "The purpose of Short Studies in Biblical Theology is to connect the resurgence of biblical theology at the academic level with everyday believers" (p. 11). Each volume is written with readers who have no theological training in mind.

Schreiner defines the kingdom of God as "the King's power over the King's people in the King's place," a definition similar to those put forth by other evangelical scholars. While recognizing all three elements are essential, Schreiner expresses concern that evangelicals often focus on the King's power or rule (p. 15). The neglect of people and place has often led to the abstraction of the kingdom out of its narrative framework. While never ignoring the King's rule, Schreiner emphasizes the people and place of the kingdom throughout his book. By defining "the kingdom of God" as the King's power, people, and place, Schreiner is able to argue that the theme of kingdom is present in Scripture "from the beginning to the end" (24).

Schreiner follows a Hebrew arrangement of the Old Testament and offers summary statements seeking to encapsulate each division's (Law, Prophets, and Writings) message concerning God's kingdom (p. 24). Schreiner summarizes the Law's teaching on the kingdom as "reviving hope in the kingdom." Contrary to what is often thought, the theme of kingdom did not originate with Jesus in the Gospels or even with the rise of the Israelite monarchy. Instead, as Schreiner argues, the theme of kingdom originates in the initial chapters of Genesis. God created (power), Adam and Eve (people), to be his king and queen over creation (place). This kingdom plan quickly becomes corrupted, however, and thus hope in this kingdom must be revived. This revival of hope in the kingdom comes from God's promises to Abraham (Gen 12:1–3), his creation of a kingdom of priests (Exod 19:6), and that kingdom's (often tenuous) journey to the Promised Land. Schreiner summarizes the Prophets as "foreshadowing the kingdom." Although God brings (power) Israel (people) into the Promised Land (place), this is not an inauguration of the kingdom but a foreshadowing of the true kingdom. Furthermore, the prophets place faith in a coming Davidic ruler who will realize the kingdom. Schreiner summarizes the Writings as "life in the kingdom." These books give a poetic picture of life in the kingdom" (67). "Life in the kingdom" is established by acquiring wisdom, fearing the Lord, and suffering righteously. The Writings conclude by anticipating a return from exile led by the messianic king.

Turning to the New Testament, Schreiner argues that the four Gospels each focus on a different element of the kingdom. Matthew focuses on the King's place; Mark focuses on the King's power; Luke focuses on the King's people; John focuses on life in the kingdom. Acts is framed by references to the kingdom (Acts 1:3–6; 28:23, 31) and shows the spread of the kingdom community from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Rome). Although the kingdom terminology is not prevalent in the New Testament Epistles, the idea forms the narrative framework underlying them. For instance, Paul recognizes Christ as king (Col 1:15–20; Phil 2:6–11), describes how the covenant community enters the kingdom, encourages readers to share in the rule of the king, and looks forward to the rule of the king. Schreiner summarizes Revelation as achieving the kingdom's goal. The opposition to the king's power is defeated. The people of the kingdom are gathered to the king, and the place of the kingdom is revealed. Schreiner concludes by emphasizing the importance of the cross for the kingdom. He concludes by presenting two stories (Passover and the convicts crucified with Jesus) emphasizing the importance of the cross.

Schreiner makes a compelling argument for the centrality of kingdom within every part of Scripture. Without a doubt, his presentation of God's kingdom as consisting of power, people, and place will aid readers in seeing the pervasiveness of this important topic in Scripture. Additionally, his stress on the narrative foundation of the kingdom theme will help readers who tend to abstract much of the Bible's message into a sovereignty lesson.

There were a couple of things which I felt could have been potentially misleading to the intended audience. First, although I am not an expert in the Gospels, Schreiner's depiction of each Synoptic Gospel as emphasizing a particular aspect of his kingdom definition felt somewhat contrived to me. To his credit, Schreiner does acknowledge that each Gospel contains all three aspects and that his presentation was one of emphasis, but since this is the case, I think it would have been more effective to show how each Gospel contained a full expression of the kingdom as Schreiner defined it.

Second, given that this series is directed towards an audience with no theological training, I wonder how necessary it was for Schreiner to emphasize the importance of people and place over power. Schreiner certainly does not ignore the power/rule aspect of the kingdom, but he does seem to favor people and place on multiple occasions. While I would agree with his general assessment that power is often emphasized at the expense of people and place (especially in some evangelical circles), I am not certain that addressing this imbalance in a book directed to a non-theologically trained audience will prove to be helpful. On a related note, in a few places, Schreiner seems to assume more theological background from his audience than he should. One instance I have in mind is when he refers to Adam and Eve as "priest" (38). Schreiner (rightly) shows that Adam and Eve are depicted as royal figures (30–31) but does not argue for their "priestly" role. He does mention that

they were to “work” and “keep” the garden, which is an important indicator of their priestly role, but he does not make this connection explicit.

Despite these critiques, there is no reason to deny that Schreiner has written a tremendously helpful guide to the theme of kingdom within the Bible for the theological non-specialist. Average church members and even many theologically trained pastors (especially those who have abstracted this theme) would benefit from this study.

Casey K. Croy
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Beers, Holly. *A Week in the Life of a Greco-Roman Woman*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019, pp. 172, \$17.00, paperback.

Dr. Holly Beers is Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Westmont College, having previously taught at Bethel Seminary and North Central University. Beers is a Luke-Acts scholar, and earned her PhD in New Testament from the London School of Theology. Adding to her list of publications is the current book under review, *A Week in the Life of a Greco-Roman Woman*. This book is part of InterVarsity’s “A Week in the Life” historical-fiction series, which aims to illuminate the world of the New Testament. Other works in this series examine the week in the life of Corinth, the fall of Jerusalem, Rome, Ephesus, a slave, and a centurion.

Beers’ volume follows the daily life of a woman, Anthia, throughout one week of her life, with each of the seven chapters being told from the perspective of one day of the week. This creative work of historical-fiction reads like a captivating novel, as characters develop, interact with one another, and are exposed to Paul’s teaching about Jesus—who presents a challenge to the cultural worship of Artemis. Readers gain insights on what life was like for first-century women, as Beers highlights Anthia’s pregnancy, parenting, marriage, work, and social status. Beers also aptly shows what it would have been like for a community to hear the teaching of Jesus for the first time, and also how early followers of the Way would have interacted with one another across social barriers. The setting of the book is inspired by Acts 18-20 and 2 Corinthians 11-14.

One of the strengths of the book is its engaging format. Written as a novel, Beers draws the reader into Anthia’s life and thus exposes the reader to the way in which first-century Greco-Roman women experienced their world. To offer additional clarity, numerous descriptive sidebars provide specific information on a variety of topics. These topics include: abortion, infanticide, Artemis, marriage, poverty and subsistence, urban housing, sanitation, medicine and physicians, textiles, teeth, dyeing, cosmetics, laundry and fullers, perfumery, alcoholic beverages, honor and shame, the terrace houses, and patronage. The sidebars range from a brief paragraph

to several pages, and occasionally include pictures. This format of a novel with brief clarification sidebars is both highly readable and also nicely informative.

Through this inviting format, Beers illuminates the world of the New Testament for her readers, showing how the first century would have been experienced by regular people. The reader learns of the dangers and fears surrounding pregnancy, the reality and regularity of spousal abuse, the daily fact of poverty and hunger, and the barriers of class difference and social structures. Along with learning about the daily life experienced by those in the era of the New Testament writings, the reader also gains insights into the ways in which early Christians operated. The reader is invited into the gatherings of the early church, and witnesses how they prayed, healed, read scripture, cast out demons, and cared for one another. Particularly helpful Beers' description of how social barriers were broken in early Christianity. The wealthy violated societal expectations in their care for all people—rich and poor alike—as Christian brothers and sisters of all classes broke bread together, nurturing each other and the poor. This formation of a new family of followers of the Way challenged existing social structures and worship of local gods. The novel format of the book adds a slight touch of suspense, leading the reader to wonder how Anthia will respond to hearing the new teaching presented by Paul, and also whether or not Anthia's husband will welcome the kindness of the Christian community.

The biblical and theological student should remember that this book is a novel—not an academic textbook. As such, the academic audience should feel the freedom to simply read and *enjoy* this book, while gleaning insights about first-century women and culture along the way. Students should enjoy the story-telling nature of the book, and the way in which it puts flesh to knowledge—remembering that women are *real people*, not merely topics to be studied. Though not an academic or technical book, this book is helpful for students of the New Testament to better understand the realities of how women experienced life in the Greco-Roman world. The academically-inclined reader will also be pleased by Beers' useful bibliography of additional sources. This bibliography can point the reader who desires additional academic resources to further materials on the topics discussed in the book, including resources on Greco-Roman women, early Christian meetings, Artemis, and economic and social systems.

Overall, Holly Beers' book *A Week in the Life of a Greco-Roman Woman* is highly recommended. The lay reader and academician will enjoy a leisurely Sunday afternoon read of this narrative, as Beers creatively weaves academic insights into this novel. This book will appeal to readers interested in the New Testament, in topics related to women, and the culture of the Greco-Roman world, along with readers who enjoy reading a good story.

Emily Buck
Fuller Theological Seminary

Keener, Craig S. *The Mind of the Spirit: Paul's Approach to Transformed Thinking*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016, pp. 448, \$29.99, paperback.

Craig S. Keener (PhD, Duke University), F. M. and Ada Thompson Professor of Biblical Studies at Asbury Theological Seminary, is one of the most widely read and respected New Testament scholars today. He has continually published a number of important commentaries, books and essays, particularly concerning the study of the Holy Spirit – these include *Gift and Giver* (Baker Academic, 2001), *Miracles* (Baker Academic, 2011), *Spirit Hermeneutics* (Eerdmans, 2016), *Between History and Spirit* (Wipf and Stock, 2020) and, not least, his *magnum opus* four-volume exegetical commentary on *Acts* (Baker Academic, 2012-2015). Keener's *The Mind of the Spirit* is another academic accomplishment pertaining to the study of the Holy Spirit, with special reference to Paul's understanding of the transformed human mind. The main aim of the book is to use the concept of mind – in particular, the mind transformed by and in Christ – found in the Pauline passages to explicate how believers' righteousness (in terms of one's status or relationship with God) and/or moral transformation actually take place in the life of believers (pp. xv-xvi).

Chapter 1 explores Paul's argument concerning the corrupted pagan mind in Romans 1:18-32. Despite ancient philosophers' repetitive call for rational mastery over passions, according to Keener, the supposedly wise pagan mind became subject to passions, corrupting nature's evidence for God, rejecting the knowledge of God, and misconstruing reality, particularly human purpose and identity (pp. xvi, 1, 28-29); as a result, the Gentiles were given to idolatry and sexual immorality. However, for Paul even the Jewish mind enlightened with the Torah without the Spirit eventually remains the mind of the flesh – Keener dwells on this topic further in chapter 3. Chapter 2 discusses “the mind of faith” (6:11) or “the new way of thinking in Christ,” which comes from one's new identity in Christ. For Keener, Rom. 6 consists of two elements, namely, “indicative” and “imperative.” The indicative element is “Christ's death and resurrection, historically accomplished events” or “the new reality” that needs to be embraced with faith or to be “reckoned” with “(6:11: ὑμεῖς λογίζεσθε ἑαυτούς; ‘reckon yourselves’ – a cognitive action)” (pp. 31, 32, 44, 45, 53). The imperative element invites the believers who have been righted with God through faith to more fully share and live out God's perspective on their union with Christ. Chapter 3, the longest chapter of the book, revisits the topic of the fallen mind and explores “life under the law without life in Christ” in Rom. 7:15-25 (p. 56). Keener's basic assumption is that Rom. 7:7-25 is not Paul's current experience as a Christian but rather “Paul's graphic dramatization of life under the law” (p. 112). This passage thus describes “the more knowledgeable Jewish mind” or “the religious mind informed by God's righteous requirements,” in contrast to the pagan mind in Rom. 1:18-32

(p. xvi). This religious mind enlightened by the law is “all the more frustrated by passions, because it knows right from wrong yet is unable to silence passion” (p. xvi).

Chapter 4 deals with “the mind of the flesh” (Rom. 8:5-7), juxtaposed with “the mind of the flesh” in chapter 3. As opposed to “the mind of the flesh” that is subject to passions, the mind of the Spirit – that is, the new way of thinking in Christ – is able to fulfill God’s will because this mind is guided, motivated and empowered by God’s Spirit that now dwells in believers. The frame of mind involving the Spirit is characterized by life and peace. This peace can refer to both the individual tranquil mind and to communal tranquility (pp. 135-141). Chapter 5 continues with a similar theme, “a renewed mind,” in Rom. 12:1-3 in which Paul exhorts his hearers to renew their minds, “according to the standards of the coming age instead of the present one,” so that “[s]uch a mind leads one to devote one’s individual body to the service of the larger body of Christ” (xvi). Chapter 6 explores “the mind of Christ,” (1. Cor. 2:15-16; 2 Cor. 3:18) that sheds light on how “the indwelling of God’s Spirit shares with the spiritually mature...a measure of God’s own wisdom” and “a foretaste of eschatological reality” (xvi). Keener’s basic claim is that “true wisdom is found in the cross,” and “[a]n increasingly fuller understanding of the character of Christ crucified could increasingly transform [one’s] character, conforming [him or her] to Christ’s glorious image” (p. 216). Chapter 7 briefly touches on the cognitive themes in Philippians: 1) divine peace guards the minds casting their worries to God (4:6-8); 2) a Christlike mind leads to serving one another (2:5); and, lastly, 3) those of citizens of heaven look to the matters of the heavenly, not of the earthly. The eighth and final chapter carries on the last theme of Philippians, “the heavenly mind,” with special reference to Col. 3:2. As opposed to the abstract and transcendent nature of heaven for ancient philosophers, the heavenly focus is clearly the exalted Christ for Christians. Contemplating Christ will result in Christlike character and daily living in accordance with his character.

Unquestionably, the book is well-researched and compelling, possibly paving a new path in Pauline studies. *The Mind of Paul* is unique and special in its contribution to Pauline anthropology, for no other scholars have yet given extensive attention to Paul’s view of the mind, as Keener does, especially against the backdrop of a wide selection of ancient sources. Consulting with a plethora of Greek, Roman and Jewish sources, on the one hand, enables readers to delve deeper into the logic of Paul’s argument concerning the notion of mind, in comparison with other ancient philosophical ideas. On the other hand, Keener successfully shows Paul’s distinctive view of the nature of the human mind, in contrast to the ancient philosophers’ perception of the human mind.

His detailed exegetical and theological reflection offers many practical (e.g., pastoral and psychological) insights into the human mind according to Paul. Just as Keener himself predicted in his postscript, the book will “challenge the [socially constructed] common divide in many Christian circles between emotional religion

(related to US frontier revivals and earlier mystics) and intellectual religion (historically related to academic training)” (p. 257). Keener’s attempt to “surmount such historically and socially formed forced choices” (p. 258), despite some foreseeable disagreements and controversies related to the issue, will awake a responsive chord in the hearts of those who are serious about the call to love another (Rom. 13:8-10) despite the differences on secondary matters (14:1-23).

Furthermore, Keener’s interdisciplinary call to use Pauline thought to contribute to Christian psychology is unique and refreshing (pp. 260-261). Although such an interdisciplinary endeavor can be extremely challenging – for there are a “vast array of theories of counseling and psychotherapy today” (p. 260), an attempt towards an interdisciplinary dialogue between biblical studies and psychology will certainly benefit those interested in Christian psychology.

Overall, Keener has written another helpful and informative book concerning the study of the Holy Spirit, with his special reference to key Pauline passages. With his exegetical, charismatic, multidisciplinary and pastoral concerns seen throughout the book, church and academy alike will certainly benefit from the book. I highly recommend this book for students with a particular interest in the role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian mind.

Sungmin Park
University of Aberdeen, UK

Tonstad, Sigve. *Revelation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019, 398 pp, \$65 hardcover, \$29.72, paperback.

Sigve Tonstad is a well-established scholar whose work in biblical studies explores issues of theodicy, hope, and ecological hermeneutics. In addition to the volume under review, his English works include *The Scandals of the Bible* (Pittsburg: PA, Autumn House Pub. 1996); *Saving God’s Reputation* (New York: NY, T&T Clark, 2006); *The Lost Meaning of the Seventh Day* (Berrien Springs: MI, Andrews University Press, 2009); *The Letter to the Romans: Paul Among the Ecologists* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Press, 2017); *God of Sense and Traditions of Non-Sense* (Eugene: Oregon, Wipf & Stock, 2016), and numerous articles. Tonstad is a research professor at Loma Linda University. His background as a physician has made his study of Revelation as a book of healing (Rev. 22.3) a personal interest.

Revelation is a new addition to the Paideia commentary series by Baker Academic. As with most commentaries on this challenging book, Tonstad includes the requisite introduction to Revelation. He discusses topics which give the reader a foundation on which to build an interpretation of the book. Among these are: questions of authorship, the relationship between Ancient Roman and Revelation’s visions, interpretative stances (preterist, futurist, historicist), genre, date, and the structure of the book.

Tonstad divides the remainder of his book into eleven chapters, following the contours of Revelation. He sees the units of Revelation as comprised of 1.1-20; 2.1-3.22; 4.1-8.1; 8.2-11.19; 12.1-14.20; 15.1-16.21; 17.1-18.24; 19.1-21; 20.1-15; 21.1-27; 22.1-21. Those familiar with commentaries on Revelation will recognize Tonstad unites certain sections which are typically treated individually in other works. Each section begins with a brief overview. In the “introductory matters” Tonstad connects the passage with the larger rhetorical flow within the storyline. Next is “tracing the train of thought” which contains a narrative dialogue with the text, often accomplished by uniting several verses together to capture the main thought. The chapters conclude with a discussion of the theological themes brought out in the passage being examined.

The previous paragraphs might leave the impression that Tonstad’s work is simply one in a long line of books attempting to make sense of Revelation’s visions. While true in one sense, the *way* in which Tonstad attempts to bring clarity to the symbols and meaning of Revelation is at once new, thought-provoking, exegetical, surprising, and devotional.

The introduction alerts the reader that this is not just another commentary on Revelation, but one that explores the book from an innovative perspective. Tonstad demonstrates chapter 12 exerts an influence reaching both directions within Revelation. The war in heaven scene is felt throughout the entire book. It permeates chs 4-11 as well as chs 13-22. From this viewpoint, Satan is not simply an ancillary character in the book, nor merely a representation of evil, but a thoroughly biblical character who plays an important role in the on-going conflict. Most commentaries do not develop the war in heaven theme nor mine it for its interpretative potential.

Tonstad engages with the expansive scholarly literature that views Revelation through the lens of the cult of emperor worship. He then demonstrates that this common view is the foundation for many interpretations of the book. Tonstad unfolds the weakness of this perspective, evidenced by the shifting understandings of Revelation’s historical context. Rather than Ancient Rome being an interpretive key, he posits an alternative. Tonstad argues the cosmic conflict is the lens through which the book needs to be read, and that the visions serve as an *exposé* of the deceptive agency of Satan.

Seen in this light, the throne scene of ch 5 is understood to be a reaction to the war that began in heaven. This war is won by the slain lamb (Rev. 5.5-7). Tonstad emphasizes that the lamb, though powerful, is slain by violence. This raises the paradox as to how the lamb can conqueror, while being slain. However, it is precisely in being slaughtered, that the lamb wins the war. Additionally, the idea of being crushed by violence is part of the character of the lamb, an aspect of his essential identity. In order to read Revelation correctly, Tonstad argues, the rest of the book must be interpreted through the *revelation* that the slain lamb provides.

Book Reviews

In his discussion on the first six trumpets (8.6-9.12), Tonstad pursues an interpretation that is focused on the question of *agency*. The trumpets are almost overwhelmingly understood as God's retributive judgments on an unrepentant world. Tonstad explores whether this perspective does justice to Revelation's narrative. He concludes that the hyperbolic language here is more reflective of demonic activity than divine action. For example, the repeated use of "a third" in this section (8.7, 8, 9, 10, 12; 9.15, 18), is reflective of the "third" of the stars thrown to the ground (12.4, 7). There is a fallen star (8.10; 9.1), which reminds the reader of Isa. 14.12-15. The army described under the 5th and 6th trumpets are clearly demonic in nature, as is the king who presides over them (9.11). If Revelation is to be understood as an exposé, then it is appropriate to ask who is being exposed? God is revealed through the slain lamb, the Ancient Serpent (12.9) is revealed despite his deception and slander.

Tonstad's handling of the sea and land beasts (13.1-18) continues his interpretative stance. Instead of viewing the beasts in this chapter through the "Roman lens" or a "future antichrist" lens, Tonstad draws attention to the idea that Satan is acting through his intermediaries. Rather than focusing on the myth of Nero's return or what might unfold in the future, Tonstad demonstrates that this section is "Satan's story." The passage underscores both the slanderous lies that portray God in a wrong light, as well as the imitative aspect of the sea beast. Satan is the one behind the powerful imitation which results in the whole world being brought into the deception.

In the Rev. 22, Tonstad finds further confirmation for his cosmic conflict hermeneutic. The imagery of the tree of life brings the reader back to Gen. 3, where the serpent first promulgates his lies about the character of God. The serpent used the tree of knowledge as his instrument to misrepresent God. The interweaving of the biblical narrative that finds its culmination in the last book of the NT, makes a true revealing of God's nature its main concern. Revelation portrays the reversal of all that was lost in the first garden. Distrust, alienation, and fear are replaced with open communion with God.

This commentary holds an important place in biblical-theological studies due to its insistence that the cosmic conflict holds a primary place for interpreting the text. Tonstad's reading the text through the imagery of the slaughtered Lamb in battle with the slanderous, deceitful serpent brings new insights to several passages. His ability to carve out a fresh reading of Revelation while interacting with several schools of interpretation, and to do so in an accessible manner is to be highly recommended. The concepts Tonstad brings out demand important consideration in forming a correct interpretation of Revelation. The reader might not agree with all he has written but will be challenged and benefited from engaging with this work.

Steven Grabiner
Collegedale, TN

Frey, Jörg. *The Letter of Jude and the Second Letter of Peter: A Theological Commentary*. Translated by Kathleen Ess. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2018, pp. 560, \$69.95, hardback.

At 560 total pages, approximately 430 of which are devoted to detailed study of the introductory and exegetical questions that confront interpreters of the slim epistles of Jude and 2 Peter, this commentary on two of the smallest texts included in the New Testament is a mammoth, thoughtful, provocative, and thoroughly welcome contribution to the growing body of scholarship on these letters. Jörg Frey is Professor of New Testament Studies at the University of Zurich. This book was originally published in German in 2015 (*Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus* [Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament 15.2; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2015]), and it is likely to be regarded as the most important commentary on Jude and 2 Peter since Richard Bauckham's 1983 volume on the letters (*Jude, 2 Peter* [Word Biblical Commentary 50; Waco: Word, 1983]). Although Frey differs from Bauckham on a number of important points, not least the date of 2 Peter and its relationship to the second-century *Apocalypse of Peter*, the careful historical study of the text and the dedication to a theological reading of Jude and 2 Peter will make this commentary a valuable dialogue partner for all who study the Catholic Epistles. The translation of Kathleen Ess is clear, admirably readable, and conveys not only the meaning but also much of the tone of the German passages that this reviewer spot-checked. In short, this is a volume worth consulting when exploring either Jude or 2 Peter.

Frey follows much of New Testament scholarship in dating the letter of Jude before 2 Peter. Jude thus precedes 2 Peter in the commentary. The letter includes a number of words that do not appear elsewhere in the New Testament (*hapax legomena*), and Frey concludes that it is linguistically one of the more sophisticated rhetorical compositions in the New Testament (pp. 10–12). While Jude may not quote often from canonical Old Testament texts, it employs scriptural examples and is aware of Second Temple interpretive patterns. Most striking, perhaps, is the extent to which Jude draws upon *1 Enoch*, even quoting *1 En.* 1.9 at Jude 14–15. Frey argues that the author of Jude, whom Ess refers to as Judas (Ἰούδας; see further p. xv), has written a pseudepigraphal text that can roughly be dated between 100 and 120 CE. In Frey's view, the text was written in part as a response to the author's opponents, whom the author understands to have transgressed cosmological boundaries with regard to the recognition of the cosmic powers. Frey thinks that it is most likely that these opponents, whose own words we no longer have access to, can be placed within the Pauline reception that occurred in the late-first and early-second centuries. In tension with the treatment of Christ's defeat of the powers in Ephesians and Colossians, the author of Jude maintains a high view of the angels even while depicting Christ as the pre-existent master and Lord.

A few highlights can be given from the commentary on Jude to offer a taste of the exegetical work in the commentary. Frey understands the participial clause in Jude 3 (which can be woodenly translated as “making all haste to write to you about our common salvation”) to have a “relatively weak” concessive relationship to the main verb (p. 67). The faith about which the author speaks in the same verse should be understood in terms of *fides quae creditur*, that is, the faith that is believed. Thus when Jude speaks of faith in v. 3, he refers to something that approaches Christian doctrine rather than to the act of believing. Jude does not hesitate to quote *1 En.* 1.9 as an Enochic prophecy (Jude 14–15). Frey differs from Bauckham’s position that Jude has directly translated *1 En.* 1.9 from Aramaic into Greek. Instead, Frey considers it more plausible that Jude drew on a Greek version of *1 Enoch* that was available to him. In turning to the doxology of Jude 24–25, Frey helpfully points out that the liturgical ending to this letter indicates that it was composed in order “to be read aloud in the context of worship among the addressee congregation(s) (p. 154). Although individual interpreters may find points of disagreement along the way, Frey’s exegesis is consistently engaging and carefully argued.

Perhaps the most significant point of difference between Frey’s commentary and the work of Bauckham concerns the relationship between 2 Peter and the *Apocalypse of Peter* as well as the implications that these discussions have for the date of 2 Peter. Frey follows Wolfgang Grünstäudl in arguing that 2 Peter postdates the *Apocalypse of Peter* (pp. 201–206; see further Grünstäudl, *Petrus Alexandrinus: Studien zum historischen und theologischen Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes* [Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2.353; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013]). If both Jude and the *Apocalypse of Peter* precede 2 Peter, then the dates of these texts become vitally important for determining the date of 2 Peter. If Jude was written in the first two decades of the second century (see pp. 31–32) and the *Apocalypse of Peter* dates to the 130s (see pp. 202–203), Frey regards a time between 140–160 as the most likely date for 2 Peter (pp. 220–221). This date requires a pseudepigraphal interpretation of the letter. Frey goes on to ask important questions about the genre and function of pseudepigraphy (pp. 217–220). He argues that the letter is openly pseudepigraphal. On such an understanding, one may suppose that the author wrote a pseudepigraphon without particularly trying to disguise their effort, although it is not necessarily the case that the audience would have been as willing to go along with the fictional ascription. Indeed, the reception of the letter and its place on the fringes of the canon during the third and fourth centuries suggests that later readers had particular difficulty in accepting a pseudepigraphic letter and also in accepting that 2 Peter was authentically Petrine (on the early reception of 2 Peter, see pp. 168–173).

As with any attempt to date a historical document, this lengthy discussion of the date and authorship of 2 Peter may be challenged. Yet even those who regard 2 Peter as authentically Petrine will benefit from reading Frey’s exegesis of the letter. He interprets the language of “partners in the divine nature” (2 Pet 1:4) in ethical terms

and employs a variety of sources from multiple Greco-Roman, Hellenistic Jewish, and early Christian backgrounds (pp. 263–269). He regards Peter’s eyewitness testimony to the Transfiguration as closer to the account of the Transfiguration in the *Apocalypse of Peter* and thus not as dependent upon Matt 17 (pp. 294–296). Finally, Frey helpfully draws attention to the unusual way in which the author of 2 Peter mentions Paul—whom he has not yet mentioned explicitly—in the letter closing (2 Pet 3:15–16), a place in the letter where one would not expect the introduction of a new topic (p. 419).

In an exegetical project that is this large, one will likely find places to disagree with interpretations of particular passages. For example, Frey’s interpretation of the allusions to the Transfiguration and their relationship to the *Apocalypse of Peter* may downplay the importance of Synoptic accounts of the Transfiguration too much. In particular, if one allows for the transmission of the Matthean Transfiguration account through social memory or secondary orality, it may be possible to grant a larger place to the Synoptic Gospels in the composition of 2 Peter. Nor will all be convinced by the dating scheme that Frey proposes for Jude, the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and 2 Peter. The dating of these texts remains challenging, and further discussions have followed Frey’s commentary (see, for example, the essays in Jörg Frey, Matthijs den Dulk, and Jan van der Watt, *2 Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter: Towards a New Perspective*, Biblical Interpretation Series 174 [Leiden: Brill, 2019]). Such disagreements among interpreters, however, are part and parcel of New Testament scholarship. They do not take away from the immense value of Frey’s theologically oriented exegesis.

Reading this commentary from beginning to end is not an activity for the faint of heart. The text is filled with small-print excurses that provide additional information detailing the history of scholarship on an issue or supporting Frey’s arguments for an interpretation. Yet it is precisely in the combination of the many detailed arguments and the coherent portrait that the commentary paints while exploring these small epistles that the richness of Frey’s exegesis is to be found. The seriousness with which this commentary takes Jude and 2 Peter as theological texts, wrestles with the implications of their polemic, and situates these letters alongside other early Christian literature are much to be admired. The translation and publication of yet another important German-language commentary by Baylor University Press is a gift to Anglophone students, teachers, and researchers. These, along with the theological libraries who support their study, will want to consider purchasing this important commentary on Jude and 2 Peter.

Jonathon Lookadoo
Presbyterian University and Theological Seminary, Seoul

Anizor, Uche. *How to Read Theology: Engaging Doctrine Critically and Charitably*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018, pp. 204, \$22, softcover.

Reading theological literature critically and charitably is a necessary discipline for scholars, pastors, and students. How one goes about cultivating the appropriate skills to read in this way requires instruction and example. Uche Anizor (Ph.D. Wheaton College), associate professor of biblical and theological studies at Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, serves the academic community well in this primer where he addresses critical virtues for theological reading. Throughout its six chapters, Anizor's straightforward argument addresses the need for and the instruction to reading critically and charitably. Part 1, "On Reading Charitably," consists of two chapters, and Part 2, "On Reading Critically," consists of four chapters. At the conclusion of these two parts, Anizor includes an epilogue where he further assists readers in applying his methodology. Here he provides examples of theological texts from which one should choose to implement his proposed strategies for critical and charitable reading, even guiding readers through the questions and steps one should expect throughout the process.

In chapters one and two, Anizor describes the challenges associated with reading theology charitably, noting the critical importance of understanding the primary role of context for theological reading. In chapter one, Anizor identifies four enemies to charitable reading: pride, suspicion, favoritism, and impatience. Each of these enemies stifle effective reading, but further, their presence poisons the readers apprehension and appreciation of theological writing. Against pride, Anizor urges humility for it "prompts me to recognize that I do not have the market concerned on theological truth, but that I am in constant need of the palliative breeze of other, diverse voices blowing through my mind" (p. 10). Reading suspiciously is to read while not considering the best of others (p. 11), ultimately leading one to magnify bad qualities while minimizing the good (p. 12). Against suspicion, Anizor urges readers to approach theological authors with a "sympathetic embrace" (p. 14). This posture is born out of love, which "is not crippled by fear, a close correlate of suspicion" (p. 12), and careful work to avoid suspicion in theological reading allows the reader to avoid imputing bad motives to another. Instead of favoritism, readers must cultivate the requisite skills to give a fair hearing to those espousing alternative views. Finally, impatience emerges most often when readers fail to embrace a patient undertaking of theological meaning, often rushing to find application. These four obstacles affect theological readers from every background, from the lay person to the senior scholar. Anizor's counsel helpfully locates and instructs readers to a better way.

Chapter two's importance could hardly be overstated, for here Anizor explains the importance of context when wrestling with theological literature. "Theology is written from within a context," Anizor claims, "and therefore bears

certain contextual marks that must be attended to if we are to understand and assess it well” (p. 28). Anizor focuses on the issues of historical context (one’s culture), ecclesial context (one’s church tradition), and the polemical context (the presence of conflict). Using examples from Barth, Moltmann, Gutiérrez, and Bonhoeffer, Anizor demonstrates why these contextual realms prove critical in reading a theologian’s work critically and charitably.

Chapters four through six apply these practices through the four sources of theology: Scripture, Tradition, Reason, and Experience. In these chapters readers are instructed to avoid the errors of proof-texting, and Anizor gives careful instruction on how to apply Scripture to theology. Anizor provides readers with a seven point outline for how one should go about assessing doctrinal constructions through the lens of Scripture. On tradition, theological reading must assess and learn from historical developments of doctrine and the practices those doctrines created. Anizor helps readers think through tradition by overviewing creeds, confessions, doctors (theologians), and other teachers (Anizor’s description of the conversation partners one can experience). In his discussion of reason, Anizor demonstrates Christian theology’s view of faith and reason. He guides readers with principles on how to build sound arguments that remain true to Scripture and tradition.

Finally, Anizor (in perhaps the best chapter of the whole book) explains carefully the critical importance one’s experience has in theology, while also stating clearly the inherent dangers in allowing one’s experience to be given too great an importance over the previous three emphases (particularly Scripture). For Anizor, experience includes “religious and the nonreligious as well as the individual and the communal aspects of experience” (p. 154), but he insightfully demonstrates that experience not only contributes to theology’s content, it is also a consequence of theology. “Theology, if it is done well, should lead to an experience of the good, true, and beautiful” (p. 164).

Written as a primer, and written with students in mind, one can hardly quibble with Anizor’s instruction. Quite simply, this book should be required reading for students entering academic institutions (seminary, divinity school, graduate school, etc.) in preparation for academic or church-based ministry. Due in part to the ever-increasing toxicity in contemporary dialogue, students must cultivate convictions early on that theological reading can and must be pursued in the manner Anizor prescribes. Regarding Anizor’s instruction, students should apply his methodology by selecting both a theologian within his/her tradition and one from without. In this way, students might be further helped acknowledging their own biases and default reactions within their theological reading. Additionally, this book is organized in such a way that it could easily be incorporated into a mentoring relationship in academic and ecclesial settings.

Some seasoned scholars might underestimate the applicability for a primer on this subject to have relevance with their own practices, but Anizor demonstrates

convincingly how theological students, both new and old, need frequent reassessments of their theological reading techniques. Theologians, pastors and ministers, and theological students are all prone to pride, and this ancient sin often manifests itself in how one approaches the work of others. For these reasons, books like Anizor's give a needed antidote for the sort of reading that honors the dignity and contribution of all who participate in theological conversation. Although this book could be applied to any tradition, Evangelical students and faculty will find the most usefulness of the approaches Anizor advocates.

Justin McLendon
Grand Canyon University

Abraham, William J. *Divine Action and Divine Agency Volume III Systematic Theology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018, pp.284, £75.00, hardback.

The third in a projected tetralogy, this volume sketches an entire systematics that follows a traditional credal structure. Abraham's goal is to rescue Christian theology from the Procrustean constraints of an epistemological preoccupation with the problem of divine action. Recent projects, he claims, have worked with a "closed concept" which narrows the scope of God's work attested in Scripture and tradition. This generates an impoverishment of theology with deleterious consequences for church practice. Prioritising the notion of God as "Agent" as opposed to "Being" or "Process", Abraham seeks to offer an account of the range of divine activity (understood as an "open" concept) from creation to eschatology. His intent is to defend and develop the canonical traditions of the church as these emerged in the patristic period. Hence his account is resolutely Nicene and Chalcedonian in its approach, and largely impatient with modern projects such as that of Schleiermacher who is charged (perhaps mistakenly) with losing the doctrine of the Trinity (p. 10). For Abraham, systematic theology is a self-critical appropriation of the canonical teachings of the church directed towards spiritual formation (p. 32). What emerges is an unashamedly ecclesial exercise intended to serve church leaders as well as an academic audience.

This book is never dull. In a lively and engaging study, Abraham offers his readership a fair few surprises, many of these reflecting an appreciation of the Orthodox tradition allied to evangelical and Methodist leanings. So Symeon the New Theologian is frequently eulogised. Prayers for the dead are commended. Anthropomorphic descriptions of the divine are said to be more right than wrong. Feminine pronouns refer to the Holy Spirit. Miracles are accorded a central place, and not only for the apostolic commencement of the faith. Demonic possession and angelic guardianship are defended, while exorcism is advocated. The virgin birth is judged fitting and therefore true. The veneration of saints and icons is valid and

useful. Messianic Jews make an indispensable contribution. Universalism is firmly rejected (though surely its leading Cappadocian exponent was Gregory of Nyssa and not Gregory of Nazianzus, p. 258). Each of the eighteen chapters offers insights and arguments that repay serious study—the present reviewer has profitably worked through the text with a group of graduate students. Of particular note are the clear and productive treatments of creation, providence, anthropology, and the balanced remarks on divine grace and human freedom. These loci admirably reflect Abraham's capacity to combine his expertise as an analytic philosopher with his commitment to theological education.

Yet, notwithstanding its many merits, the book also raises some critical questions. I shall concentrate on three of these.

First, one might ask how well this work fulfils its intended function of providing a one-volume systematics accessible to the wider church. There is frequent use of extensive quotation, while too many allusions and footnote references seem to assume prior in-depth knowledge of the field. This applies also to many of Abraham's quips which are actually very good, but likely to be lost on the intended audience. How many of them are already aware of open theism or the John Templeton Foundation which I take to be the intended referents of the remarks at pp. 144–145? Swipes at the Jesus Seminar and other targets also add to the piquant flavour of the study but again one wonders if these assume too much on the part of the imagined readership.

Second, the way in which the 'canonical' tradition is used to frame the content of the study raises some material difficulties in my mind. In particular, the concentration on a narrative of human predicament and divine solution often feels too restrictive. A few examples may suffice. The classical doctrine of the Trinity is elegantly defended by showing that it improved upon the deficient alternatives of modalism, subordinationism, and tritheism. But one wonders if the seeming attractions of modalism for a contemporary audience are really recognised or if the uncertainty surrounding the person of the Spirit until the second half of the fourth century is fully registered. Is the patristic tradition as unilinear as seems to be suggested? With respect to Christology, little attention is given to the life of Jesus as narrated in the synoptic gospels. As in the classical creeds, we move too swiftly from birth to death, while in Abraham's 'expressivist-cognitivist' approach to the atonement, which some will regard as a disguised subjective theory, there is almost no reference to the resurrection. The two-natures formula is robustly defended with reference to the ecumenical councils, yet modern anxieties around Chalcedon (many of these borne of pastoral concerns about the loss of Christ's humanity) are not properly ventilated. These have been with us for more than two centuries and cannot easily be ignored, especially given the ways in which the Fourth Gospel must now be read. The discussion of the work of the Spirit focusses on the church and the Christian life, but despite what is said earlier regarding the person of the Spirit as divine energy and force there is insufficient reflection on its broader manifestations

in nature and history. His account of creation has the potential to move beyond an ecclesial anthropocentrism in a richer and more variegated study of the goodness of the natural world, ecological balance, the diversity of species, the benefits of civil society, and the riches of art, science and religion. Yet, despite occasional gestures, these are mostly neglected themes as we move swiftly from creation to salvation. The overall result is again a narrowing of theological focus within a traditional scheme reflecting a classical credal pattern of sin, redemption, and eschatology. A further consequence is the lack of any attention to the theological significance of other faiths—the exception is Judaism, where one wonders if the phenomenon of Messianic Judaism can provide the bridgehead he intends. Abraham may well face some or all of these issues in the fourth volume to which I look forward, but judged as a stand-alone contemporary systematics there are some obvious lacunae here.

Third, there may be a further factor present in all of this. Much of the volume appears to be informed by a fear that theology (and church) are in danger of being instrumentalised by liberationist projects that subordinate the work of God to cultural criticism. Although largely undeclared, one suspects that this anxiety results in a deliberate refocusing of systematic theology as an ecclesial project. This seems to me a welcome corrective, but it results at times in a lack of developed ethical reflection. Admittedly, socio-political concerns appear sporadically, for example in his defence of democracy (p. 166) and especially in his stirring conclusion (p. 275), but these could have been foregrounded earlier for the sake of comprehension and balance.

Nevertheless, this is an important four-volume venture, and I salute Abraham's intention in this third part to overcome the growing chasm between church and university. His insistence upon a more open concept of divine action seems well made to me, with the resultant emphasis upon God as 'Agent' restoring a more Scripturally inflected account of the divine economy. On a personal note, I regret not having the benefit of learning from Abraham's work while writing a recent monograph on providence. Perhaps it takes someone with his philosophical acumen to challenge distortive if beguiling approaches to divine action, and thus to release systematic theology from philosophical captivity. For this and much else, we can be grateful to him.

David Fergusson
University of Edinburgh

Krötke, Wolf. *Karl Barth and Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Theologians for a Post-Christian World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019, 272 pp., \$48, hardcover.

Wolf Krötke (b. 1938) is professor emeritus of systematic theology at Humboldt University in Berlin, where he began teaching in 1991 and retired in 2004. A student of Eberhard Jüngel (one of Karl Barth's most distinguished pupils), Krötke

was the recipient of the international Karl Barth Prize in 1990, and he is one of the few theologians today who have done detailed work on both Karl Barth and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. However, as John Burgess notes in his translator's preface, "while Professor Krötke is regarded in Germany as a major theological voice and a superb interpreter of Barth and Bonhoeffer, little of his work has been translated into English" (ix). This book serves to remedy this issue.

Although the title suggests otherwise, this book is not about Karl Barth *and* Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Instead, it is a collection of seventeen translated essays about Barth *or* Bonhoeffer, all previously published in German, from across Krötke's career (the earliest in 1981, the latest in 2013). The first eight essays are about Barth, and the final nine are about Bonhoeffer. In lieu of summarizing all of the essays, it will suffice to note some common moves that Krötke makes throughout the collection.

Throughout the essays, Krötke strikes an excellent balance between defense and criticism. He is able to correct various misconceptions about the theologians without becoming a Barth or Bonhoeffer sycophant. Frequently, Krötke highlights the nuances and continuity of Barth's and Bonhoeffer's views before asserting his own critiques. In chapter 2, for example, Krötke provides a helpful summary of Barth's concept of religion (pp. 28-29). He argues that Barth was not overwhelmingly negative toward religion before critiquing his appraisal of atheism as a fundamentally *religious* critique of religion. Krötke, in contrast, thinks that religion and atheism are meaningfully different (pp. 42-44). Krötke similarly defends and appraises Barth's anthropology (ch. 3), christology (ch. 4), doctrine of election (ch. 5), description of pastoral care (ch. 6), political theology (ch. 7), and ecclesiology (ch. 8). Specific areas of disagreement with Barth include his handling of the resurrection and the virgin birth (pp. 67-70) and his conclusions about the church as the body of Christ (pp. 125-26). In an especially strong discussion of Barth's theological perspective on resistance as it developed over time (ch. 7), Krötke also denounces his appropriation of war (p. 117).

As for Bonhoeffer, Krötke devotes three chapters to Bonhoeffer's discussions of "religions and religionlessness" (ch. 9), "religionless Christianity" (ch. 10), and the "nonreligious interpretation of biblical concepts" (ch. 16). The rest of the chapters focus on Bonhoeffer's views on theology proper (ch. 11), exegesis of the Psalms (ch. 12), divine guidance (ch. 13), political resistance (ch. 14), and the state (ch. 15). Krötke maintains that Bonhoeffer's critiques of Barth in prison were largely misguided (p. 58), and that his exegesis of the Psalter was too exclusively christological (p. 186) and not eschatological enough (p. 188). Chapters 13-15 especially illustrate Krötke's tendency to defend Bonhoeffer against accusations of inconsistency, even as he acknowledges the provisional nature of Bonhoeffer's thoughts on these matters. Krötke's analysis of the similarities and differences between Bonhoeffer's and Feuerbach's critiques of religion when it comes to the question of "sharing in God's suffering" (pp. 155-62) would be worth the price of the entire book!

Overall, the major strength of this book lies in the East/eastern German experience and perspective from which Krötke speaks. Although he never got the opportunity to study with Barth (or Bonhoeffer), Krötke immediately put their theologies to the test in the high-pressure, ideological environment of East Germany before the fall of the Berlin wall and in the post-Communist milieu. In chapters 1 and 16, Krötke reflects upon the legacy and relevance of Barth (ch. 1) and Bonhoeffer (ch. 16) for East (now eastern) Germany. He laments the East German tendency to misinterpret and coopt Barth and Bonhoeffer for nefarious ideological purposes. And he mines both theologians for resources that the church can use in eastern Germany's especially "God-forgetful" (pp. 135–37, 235) context today. Krötke's analysis of how the church should relate to the state and to the world (see chs. 1, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, and 16) has an experiential immediacy to it that younger, American Barth and Bonhoeffer scholars simply cannot manufacture.

Because Krötke is a leading contemporary figure in both Barth and Bonhoeffer studies, this book would be well-suited for a student researching the topic of one or more of the essays. For example, chapter 7 provides an excellent discussion of Barth's thought on theology and resistance, while chapter 12 offers a great starting point for research on Bonhoeffer's exegesis of the Psalms. That said, depending upon the original publication date of a particular essay, Krötke's analysis may or may not reflect recent developments within Barth or Bonhoeffer studies. For example, two of Krötke's three Bonhoeffer essays that address "religionlessness" and/or the "nonreligious interpretation of biblical concepts" were written in the 1980s, before Ralf Wüstenberg's influential study of Bonhoeffer's changing views on religion was published (*A Theology of Life: Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Religionless Christianity* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998; German original, 1996]). Some of Krötke's early conclusions about Bonhoeffer seem to overlook how Bonhoeffer's description of "religion" changed quite drastically, especially in *Letters and Papers from Prison*.

Also conspicuously absent from this book was any mention of Andreas Pangritz's indispensable monograph on the Barth-Bonhoeffer relationship, *Karl Barth in the Theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, first published in German in 1989 (Westberlin, Germany: Alektor Verlag) and now in its second English edition (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2018). Furthermore, there is only one mention of Bonhoeffer's well-known accusation of Barth's "positivism of revelation" (p.58). Even there, Krötke does not offer his own explanation. It is unclear whether the absence of Wüstenberg and Pangritz from this book was due to Burgess's decision to eliminate certain footnotes from the German original of these essays.

Most disappointingly, the relationship between Barth and Bonhoeffer is mentioned only four times (pp. 58, 116, 147–48, 226). Although Krötke offers the reader much to think about when it comes to specific topics and themes in their thought, and although he gestures throughout this book at the relevance of each theologian's work for today, this reviewer desired much more from him on how both

theologians, taken together, might help the church move forward theologically in a “post-Christian world.” Surely Krötke is one of the best-equipped theologians alive to offer such comparative and critical analysis of Barth and Bonhoeffer. Unfortunately, he provides precious little of it in this collection of essays. At the very least, a more accurate, chastened title would help readers know what to expect.

Therefore, a student who would like to learn more about the historical and theological relationship between Barth and Bonhoeffer would be much better served by Pangritz’s *Karl Barth in the Theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer* to start, Wüstenberg’s *A Theology of Life* to understand Bonhoeffer’s thought on “religion,” and Tom Greggs’s *Theology Against Religion: Constructive Dialogues with Bonhoeffer and Barth* (New York: T&T Clark, 2011) to apply their ideas to today’s complex environment of pluralism and secularism. If, after this, Krötke addresses a particular topic in Barth’s and/or Bonhoeffer’s thought that is relevant to the student’s research, then he is worth adding to the discussion as an important voice—especially now that a sampling of his contributions is available in English.

Joshua P. Steele

Wheaton College Graduate School

Neder, Adam. *Theology as a Way of Life: On Teaching and Learning the Christian Faith*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019, pp. 176, \$18.99, paperback.

Adam Neder is Bruner-Welch Professor of Theology at Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington. Neder offers readers a short, engaging, and wise book on the art of teaching the Christian faith.

Neder begins by urging teachers to move beyond communicating theological knowledge by guiding students to “exist in what one understands” (p. 4). In order to accomplish this task, Neder alerts his readers that he draws deeply upon the work of Barth (of whom this book began as a conference paper on Barth’s *Evangelical Theology*), Kierkegaard, and Bonhoeffer. Neder wants readers to know that he believes this book is useful not only for professors, but that connections for congregational ministry are “always just beneath the surface” (p. 9).

Following his introduction, Neder begins the second chapter by claiming: “Anthropology is the soul of pedagogy” (p. 15). He unpacks loaded claims such as this, but also peppers his book with enough unexplained nuggets to cause the reader to pause and think. This chapter provides the foundation for Neder’s philosophy of teaching: the art of teaching the Christian faith is bound to the doctrine of reconciliation. He believes, following Barth, that reconciliation is a reality that includes everyone, while “one’s subjective response to this objective reality is very important” (p. 23). Those unacquainted with Barthian reconciliatory nuance may struggle with Neder’s primary framing of theological pedagogy, but this obstacle can

be overcome. Put more simply, and, perhaps, diluted from his intent, Neder argues that students are designed and prepared for a restored relationship with Jesus Christ. As such, theological education is germane for *all* students in a way that the study of chemistry is not.

Neder encourages teachers in his third chapter, “Knowledge,” to envision the practical implications of knowledge in life. He used to think that connecting lecture material to “real life” unserious and homiletical, but he now views this task as essential. Neder argues in his fourth chapter, titled “Ethos,” that the vice of theological educators is vanity. Neder explains that Barth understood a vain theologian as “an embodied contradiction of the gospel and the very antithesis of Jesus Christ himself” (p. 65). Neder reminds readers that Jesus told his followers to give up their possessions – for theologians this includes reputations. Neder aims for the ivory tower and pulpit jugulars, writing: “how easily we forget that every Christian leader profits off of Jesus Christ’s suffering and death. He gets crucified and we get paid. That’s the arrangement” (p. 76).

In the final two chapters, Neder explores the danger and type of conversations needed for theological education. He claims the subject matter of Christian theology demands a decision, and it demands a decision now. When we present and exist in the theology we profess, there should be unease, tension, and danger across the spectrum of taught classes. Neder explains that his current students prefer to listen and observe more than those of years ago. As such, teachers must work intentionally (and harder than before) to stimulate conversations. Conversations require improvisational unscripted dialogue, and are, therefore, risky. Neder advises teachers to not answer their own questions, but to let the wheels of their student’s minds turn in silence. In this sense, teachers step out of the way, even if just for five or ten seconds. He implores: “few pedagogical practices are more important than the skillful use of awkward silence” (p. 138).

Those who have stepped behind a lectern with any level of self-awareness are likely to identify with Neder’s overarching main idea: the responsibility to convey what must be said about God. It may be true that educators have some level of training in order to be teaching others, but when teaching about an infinite God, does it help all that much if the professor is one small step further down the academic road than his or her students? Yes, and no. In some strange way – yes, educators do have something to offer, they are placed in the classroom to bring to light what is already present in the hearts of students. Neder rightly challenges educators to move beyond effective information delivery. Educators must accept that their total effectiveness will usually be unknown beyond the length of the course.

Readers will not struggle to see why Neder has won multiple teaching awards at Whitworth. In *Theology as a Way of Life*, he demonstrates that if one delivers the content of the material for what it actually is (God), then it is a different kind of material, a different kind of “topic.” In this sense, educators are guaranteed to be

humiliated because they will delve into discussions about the unknowable. They will invite risk into their classrooms. This is why Neder urges theological educators to believe that prayer is “the essential pedagogical practice” (p. 34).

Neder’s insights will resonate most with those who have taught theology in the classroom for at least a few years. He articulates what it *feels* like to teach theology. Newer teachers might be disappointed if they are looking for a list of practical teaching tips (though some are presented). Neder’s admonition in theological humility is reminiscent not only of Barth’s *Evangelical Theology* but also of Helmut Thielicke’s *A Little Exercise for Young Theologians*.

Sean McGever
Grand Canyon University
Young Life Staff

Greggs, Tom. *Dogmatic Ecclesiology Volume 1: The Priestly Catholicity of the Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019, pp. lxxviii+492, \$50.00, hardback.

Professor Tom Greggs holds the Marischal Chair of Divinity at the University of Aberdeen. He has authored numerous articles and books, including *Theology Against Religion: Constructive Dialogues with Bonhoeffer and Barth* (T&T Clark, 2011), *Barth, Origen, and Universal Salvation: Restoring Particularity* (OUP, 2009), and the forthcoming *The Breadth of Salvation: Rediscovering the Fullness of God’s Saving Work* (Baker Academic, 2020).

In *Dogmatic Ecclesiology Volume 1: The Priestly Catholicity of the Church*, Greggs presents us with the first entry in a three volume project. The themes of the three volumes reflect a coordination of the threefold office of Christ as priest, prophet, and king with the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed’s description of the church as catholic, apostolic, and holy. Volume 2, then, will address the church’s “prophetic apostolicity,” while volume 3 will attend to its “kingly holiness” (p. xxi). As if such a project was not ambitious enough already, each volume will follow the same outline. For example, chapter 1 in each book will address the Spirit’s role through the lens of the volume’s unique theme, chapter 2 in each book will address the role of Christ, and so on.

What the reader will encounter in this, the first volume, can be most aptly described as a non-exhaustive, conscientiously protestant, pneumocentric, dogmatic account of the church according to its priestly vocation and its catholic scope. Insofar as its approach is dogmatic, its goal is not to advocate for a specific form of polity or liturgical life, but rather “to speak of the church and its life in a way that seeks to reflect on its place theologically within the broader account of God and God’s ways with the world” (p. xx). What this means, then, is that Gregg’s focus is the “what” of the church, rather than the “how”. As such, the subject matter is not ecclesiology

in vacuum, but rather ecclesiology as a derivative doctrine that is intersected and shaped by other central doctrinal loci. Moreover, in his dogmatic approach Greggs is forthright about his own ecclesial commitments (Methodist), even as he draws extensively on thinkers from other traditions (most centrally, Karl Barth).

Greggs lays all of this out at length in the preface, before turning in the first four chapters to explain how the church's ontology must be understood in light of the fact that it is established in space-time by the Spirit as a particularization God's universal reconciling work in Christ (p. 21). It is in these chapters that he introduces the key themes and frameworks that recur throughout the rest of the book. Greggs paints a complex and dogmatically thick picture, so it is impossible to do justice to all the contours of his account in a brief review. However, of particular note are his emphases on Christ's sole priesthood, the provisional and instrumental nature of the church as it participates in Christ's priestly work, and the manner in which the church's priestly vocation orders it both internally and in its outward orientation toward the world.

The following chapters unfold Greggs' account of the key aspects of the church's life as they are graciously caught up in Christ's priesthood by the Spirit for the sake of the world. In addition to the expected chapters on baptism, holy communion, prayer, and the congregation, there are also chapters on thanksgiving and praise, sanctification, and the communion of saints. While Greggs does at times touch on the "how" of these features of the church's life, he generally disciplines himself to outlining what their import and dogmatic substance in light of the emphases noted above.

To conclude the book, and as a sort of bookend to the first four chapters on the church's divine origin and ontology, the final two chapters focus on love and priestly catholicity. For Greggs, love is the feature of the church "which corresponds most closely to the priestly life" (p. 403), and as such, many of the aspects of the church he has already addressed are summarized and encapsulated here. The final chapter, then, makes the case that priestly catholicity locates the intensity of the church's identity at its boundaries insofar as catholicity is rooted in Christ's universal work of reconciliation and priestliness is, at its root, participation in Christ's being for the other. A concluding coda serves to remind the reader that, although ecclesiology is basic in the order of knowing, it is, in the order of being, a derivative doctrine that must always be understood as having its roots in the immanent life of the Trinity.

One of the central strengths of *Dogmatic Ecclesiology Volume 1* is its ability to accomplish two tasks simultaneously that are often played against each: namely, he offers a rich dogmatic account of the church *as* a missional church. In other words, while most work on ecclesiology tends to focus on *how* to be the church (or, to Greggs' mind, worse: how to *do* church), Greggs takes the "how" to be simultaneously derivative of what the church is and in service to the church's mission. Thus, the "how" of polity, liturgical life, and even the sacraments (in the chapter on baptism,

Greggs argues against the usefulness of “sacrament” as a genus) must be qualified by and subordinate to the church’s origin and goal. Insofar as the church’s priestly identity subsists in Christ’s sole priesthood and, in Christ, is ordered in service to the other, the “how” of church must be indexed to these realities.

This is not to say that Greggs remains agnostic on the “how” in all places. For instance, he advocates for a thoroughly—although ecumenically qualified—memorialist understanding of the eucharist. However, he almost completely avers from addressing questions of polity, and advocates for the semiotic import of retaining both the practices of infant and believer baptism. Even in these instances, though, he argues cogently from the framework he has established. For example, on the matter of polity he is clearly concerned to, on the one hand, not detract from Christ’s sole priesthood by advocating for a separate essential hierarchy in the church. On the other hand, he is keen to avoid allowing a focus on the clergy-laity distinction to subvert the church-world distinction (to be clear, for Greggs, the church is separate *for* the world rather than *from* the world).

Given that this is the first of three volumes, it would be unwise to take issue with what might at present be seen as an omission, oversight, or one-sided account. Indeed, even with all three volumes in view, Greggs is explicit that his goal is not to offer a comprehensive account of the church. My primary critical comment, then, pertains to form more than content and is, as such, quite minor. In the opening section, “How to Read This Book”, Greggs eschews “reductive modes of deductive reasoning” in favor of what he describes as “theological wavelike movements” (pp. xxiv–xxv). This approach is often very effective. However, inherent to these wavelike movements is a repetition that can at times become tedious, especially when it is paired with Greggs’ propensity for long, highly qualified sentences and complex formulations. As such, there are points when the waves threaten to overwhelm the reader rather than carry her along toward the argument’s conclusion.

Ultimately, though, this should and undoubtedly will be essential reading for all those with a vested interest in ecclesiology, and especially those who are keen to understand its doctrinal location and interrelations. The dogmatic approach is both refreshing and compelling, capturing one’s theological imagination in a way that texts on the church often fail to do. Moreover, it is a dogmatic account that is also thoroughly and deeply conversant with Scripture throughout. As disenchantment with the institutional church continues to grow in the global West, Greggs offers a clarion call for Christians to ground afresh their hope for the church in the God who establishes it in Christ by the Spirit. In his concluding coda, he expresses his hope that the book will be taken as a “*partial* attempt at a faithful, hopeful, and (most of all) loving dogmatic account of the life of the church” (p. 455, emphasis original). To the mind of this reviewer, this is both a fair description of the book and central to what makes it so compelling.

Koert Verhagen

University of St Andrews

Jeffrey W. Barbeau, *The Spirit of Methodism: From the Wesleys to Global Communion*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019, pp. 224, \$20, paperback.

Jeffrey W. Barbeau, professor of theology at Wheaton College, has written a history of Methodism at a moment of crisis within the United Methodist Church. As this review is being written, the specter of conflict threatens to divide that denomination. The debates over sexuality that drive this conflict have been going on for several decades, but seem to be coming to a head. Many United Methodists feel anything but united.

Barbeau writes with the hope that a coherent history of Methodism will help readers gain some perspective: “If the future of the movement seems uncertain to many American Methodists today,” he writes, “at least part of the problem is a persistent myopia” (p. 101). To address that myopia, Barbeau has produced a short, easily-read survey of the history of Methodism, or more accurately, “Methodisms.” *The Spirit of Methodism* rightfully covers not just Methodism in Great Britain and the United States, but in south Asia, east Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Barbeau also reminds readers that Methodism is not just the United Methodist Church, but also other Methodist, holiness, and Wesleyan denominations—such as the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and the Salvation Army. These different Methodisms point to the sheer breadth and diversity of the movements that sprang from John Wesley’s ministry.

Rather than original scholarship for academics, *The Spirit of Methodism* is a survey for interested laypeople and seminarians. Still, Barbeau has set for himself a tall order, bringing coherence to a movement containing millions of people over two and a half centuries, from numerous denominations, living in the major cultural regions around the globe. Barbeau is quite aware that generalizations have to be made, some eras and movements will be left out, and the day-to-day experiences of ordinary Methodists cannot be unpacked with any depth. To describe the core of historical Methodism in such a short account, Barbeau addresses both large-scale, structural developments as well as the personal, spiritual promptings in individual lives. *The Spirit of Methodism* highlights representative leaders from different eras and regions, as a way to illustrate particular spiritual and social dynamics of Methodism. Of course, the famous “founding” personalities are here, like John Wesley and Francis Asbury. But Barbeau also touches on personalities that appear less often in popular histories of Methodism, such as Phoebe Palmer and John Mott. More importantly, Barbeau brings to the forefront important Methodists from around the world that would only be known to specialists of particular branches of Methodist history, such as D. T. Niles in Sri Lanka, Thomas Birch Freeman in West Africa, and Willis Hoover in Chile. Many of these individuals get a concise summary in an inset box, as do key events, practices, and organizations, such as the stillness controversy, love feasts, and the World Council of Churches. Throughout the narrative, Barbeau

regularly links new developments back to theological principles, sermons, or practices of John Wesley.

What holds these disparate bodies and individuals together? Barbeau argues that it is grace, “the active presence of the Spirit of Christ” (p. xiv). With this framework, *The Spirit of Methodism* moves perceptions of the historical core of Methodism away from opposing oversimplifications -- either as a set of evangelical doctrines or progressive theological innovations. By arguing instead for a “Broad Church Methodism,” Barbeau seems to be speaking primarily to the opposing sides of the conflict within the United Methodist Church today, as well as insular oversimplifications that may operate within other Methodist and Wesleyan denominations.

If Methodism is framed within the American context, the cultural and theological power of these oversimplifications make it uncertain that many will embrace Barbeau’s approach of a Broad Church Methodism. There is more hope, however, if the scope is global. That is why the substantive inclusion of Methodists from Latin America, Africa, and Asia form such an important part of the story. The burning of fetishes in Korea or E. Stanley Jones’s Christian ashrams in India hint at complicated theological and cultural issues that most North American or British Methodists have yet to come to terms with. As a survey, *The Spirit of Methodism* cannot explore these issues with any depth and so it is possible many readers will miss the theological implications at work here. At the very least, though, the inclusion of Asian, African, and Latin American Methodism ought to keep readers conscious that the movement is bigger than its American forms. Readers who undertake further investigation of Methodism from the framework of missiology and the history of world Christianity will quickly discover new conceptual and theological questions to ponder.

Finally, *The Spirit of Methodism* reminds readers that conflict, controversy, and division have been present within Methodism from its very beginning. John Wesley’s debates with George Whitefield, the American break with the Church of England, denominational divisions over racial problems, arguments over the holiness movement, indigenous complaints about missionary authority—these disputes, among many others, indicate that one would be hard pressed to find an era or region without conflict. Barbeau keeps the work of the Spirit present within and around these historic controversies, providing assurance that the Methodism will continue to transform lives and societies after our current conflicts have subsided.

Oddly, this raises interesting and unintended questions about the nature of conflict with Methodism. Barbeau closes with the understandable observation that schism and division harm ministerial effectiveness. Undoubtedly, there is pain and loss amidst Christian controversy. But one could read *The Spirit of Methodism*

from a different stance. For instance, Methodist divisions over racism produced an institutional reservoir of spiritual sustenance, activism, and hope for the African-American community—the AME church—which Barbeau rightfully describes as “one of the most significant events in the history of American Christianity” (p. 74). Similarly, when Christians in Africa pushed back against missionary paternalism, claiming more responsibilities for themselves, “churches began to grow and thrive” (p. 127). In China, John Sung butted heads with liberal Methodists, resisted interference from denominational leaders, and energized an indigenous church, forming a movement that produced an estimated ten percent of all the Christians in China. Are we to see these movements thriving despite conflict? Or is it possible that conflict—and perhaps even some sort of structural division—were necessary to produce these vibrant movements? Perhaps we all need a more robust theology of Christian conflict.

In the end, *The Spirit of Methodism* succeeds splendidly as an introduction to the complexities of historic Methodism. It is hoped that readers will use it as a springboard to more fully explore a wide range of questions.

Jay R. Case
Malone University

Berhow, Michael. *Dysteleology: A Philosophical Assessment of Suboptimal Design in Biology*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2019. 148 pages, \$21, paperback.

“Dysteleology” is a term invented by Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919) to describe the apparent suboptimal design and lack of function of biological order. Colloquially known as the “problem of bad design”, dysteleology has long been a central counterargument to the argument that biology was intentionally created by an omnipotent and perfectly good Creator. In the book, *Dysteleology*, philosopher Michael Berhow approaches the problem by contrasting theistic evolutionist Francisco J. Ayala’s dysteleological argument with Intelligent Design (ID) proponent William A. Dembski’s thought. The primary goal of the book is to show that dysteleology, as formulated by Ayala, fails as a counterargument against Intelligent Design. A secondary goal is to show that the project of theodicy requires a teleological worldview, and that Intelligent Design provides better support for such a worldview than Ayala’s brand of theistic evolutionism. Thus, Berhow concludes ambitiously that “If philosophers and theologians hope to develop a coherent evolutionary theodicy . . . they must appreciate the insights offered by ID advocates like Dembski” (p. 139).

Berhow’s critique of Ayala’s theodicy follows familiar lines of argument from the literature. Ayala argues that a non-directed process of evolution absolves the Creator of blame for the suboptimality of biology, but ID, in arguing that evolutionary mechanisms cannot explain biological adaptations, lays the blame on God. This,

according to Ayala, makes Darwinian evolution the preferable option for theological reasons. Many, including Dembski and many theistic evolutionists, have remarked that this does not actually solve the problem, as God would still be responsible for the evolutionary process, and thus indirectly responsible for bad design. Berhow follows this view, and acknowledges that there are more sophisticated evolutionary theodicies (p. 127), but he does not engage with these or the literature in depth, as these are outside the narrow aim of the book. This is a shame: While Ayala is an eminent scientist and an esteemed participant of the science and theology conversation, his brief and popular-level books do not contain all the relevant arguments.

In addition, Berhow also argues that Dembski's design argument can accommodate all the good features of Ayala's evolutionary theodicy, since Dembski and other ID proponents also allow for chance and necessity to have a real explanatory role in biology, as well as design. Here Berhow's discussion sidesteps some of the more theologically difficult parts of the ID hypothesis, such as Michael J. Behe's claim that the malarial parasite is exquisitely designed, and cannot be explained by such undirected processes. So, it seems that at least in some cases, proponents of ID do indeed need to appeal to direct divine or demonic design as the explanation, in contrast to theistic evolutionists following Ayala. However, it is indeed unclear whether Ayala's theodicy could succeed in removing the Creator's responsibility even as the indirect cause of such features. The notions of moral and causal responsibility that this particular evolutionary theodicy depends on are murky and in need of much more work before they could be credible. This is not to say, however, that other evolutionary theodicies could not be successful.

On the theological side, Berhow follows Dembski and other ID proponents in arguing that the detection of design does not require the evaluation of the optimality of that design. After all, we are routinely able to detect imperfect design. Instead, Berhow argues that dysteleology can be analysed as a separate theological question, and in this context it can be shown that theism does not require optimal design. Here engagement with the critical literature on Dembski's argument would have been needed to make the argument more convincing. Both philosophical analysis and empirical studies seem to show that the detection of design both in the human context and in nature is influenced by our background beliefs, and this holds true for both critics and defenders of design arguments. This means that it may not be possible to separate theological and philosophical questions from the design argument as neatly as Dembski claims. There is a vast literature of design arguments, as well as critical responses to Dembski, which Berhow does not engage with in depth in the book.

One of Dembski's core theological arguments against theistic evolutionism has been the alleged fideism of theistic evolution. Berhow similarly argues that "the fundamental difference between Ayala and Dembski, then, is over the detectability of design" (p. 93), and Berhow presents no critique against Dembski's quoted statement that "within theistic evolution, God is a master of stealth who constantly

eludes our best efforts to detect him empirically” (p. 93). As Berhow notes, for Ayala, the scientific undetectability of design is no problem, because Ayala rejects scientism. But Berhow quickly dismisses this as irrelevant, since proponents of ID also wish to reject scientism (p. 108). Berhow then goes on to argue that because Dembski provides evidence supporting a teleological understanding of nature, in which mind is fundamental, Dembski’s framework therefore also provides a better foundation for theodicy than Ayala’s theistic evolutionism. Nevertheless, it seems that the influence of scientism does distort this debate. Discussion of the further literature beyond Ayala’s works would have helped probe the relationship of faith and reason deeper. The scientific undetectability of design because of methodological naturalism would not imply that purpose is undetectable in nature overall, or that the theistic evolutionist cannot have other reasons for belief in a teleological worldview. Indeed, many of the best defences of the contemporary theistic arguments, such as the fine-tuning design argument and the cosmological argument, have been written by theistic evolutionists. Moreover, the relationship of faith and reason is a complex matter, not reducible to a binary alternative between either evidentialist support for intelligent design, or a blind leap of faith for theistic evolutionism.

The book’s narrow focus on Ayala’s dysteleological argument against ID limits the book’s helpfulness for the scholarly debate. There is a vast literature on evolutionary theodicy, dysteleology, Intelligent Design, Dembski’s design argument, theistic evolution, faith and reason, and so on, which is not taken into account here in much depth in order to make conclusions relevant for the broader discussion. The coherence of a teleological worldview does not rest on ID, nor could ID alone provide sufficient support for it even in principle, since proponents of ID acknowledge that their design argument does not demonstrate the identity of the designer. Nevertheless, Dysteleology will be interesting for followers of the debate over Intelligent Design. Whereas the debate is often acrimonious, Berhow writes refreshingly cordially and clearly intends to be fair to all sides. The book is lucidly written, and Berhow capably corrects many misunderstandings of both Ayala’s and Dembski’s arguments.

Erkki Vesa Rope Kojonen
University of Helsinki

Burgess, John P., Jerry Andrews, and Joseph D. Small. *A Pastoral Rule for Today: Reviving an Ancient Practice*. Pp. x, 190. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2019. \$20.00.

John P. Burgess is Professor of Systematic Theology at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and author of *Holy Rus’: The Rebirth of Orthodoxy in the New Russia* (2017), and *Encounters with Orthodoxy: How Protestant Churches Can Reform Themselves Again* (2013). Jerry Andrews is pastor of First Presbyterian Church in San Diego California. Joseph D. Small is retired director of the Presbyterian Church

(USA) Office of Theology and Worship, and author of *To Be Reformed: Living the Tradition* (2010), and *Proclaiming the Great Ends of the Church* (2010).

A Pastoral Rule for Today “emerged out of an initiative of the Office of Theology and Worship of the Presbyterian Church (USA) called Re-Forming Ministry” (p. ix). The book is the culmination of denominational dissatisfaction with the current state of pastoral ministry and a successful attempt by three significant figures to “analyze the current situation of the church and to propose ways to strengthen the theological foundations of pastoral ministry” (p. ix). “While other members of the initiative pursued different areas of concern,” Burgess, Andrews, and Small committed themselves to “formulating a contemporary pastoral rule that could guide and sustain the ministers of their denomination” (p. 163). The authors express concern with the state of pastoral ministry today and upsetting trends like the “deep declines in membership and significance” (p. 3) within mainline Protestant denominations, as well as the rise of technology and the time constraints placed upon pastors. By establishing a pastoral rule for today of healthy patterns and practices, pastors can stop suffering from “constant distraction, interruption, and fragmentation” (p. 4). By looking into the pastoral rules of the great saints of history, the authors seek to “stimulate creative thinking and spiritual discipline among our pastors and churches” (p. 163). “This book,” they claim, “is not an exercise in history for history’s sake but rather a grateful acknowledgment of how Christ binds us together with the saints and wise elders of every time and place” (p. 2).

The rule consists of three components which they argue have been practiced regularly by the great Christian theologians and pastors of history: “personal discipline, conduct in ministry, and structures of mutual accountability” (p. 165). Though their aim is practical, their method is historical-theological. Andrews writes chapters on Augustine and Gregory the Great, while Small contributes entries on Benedict and Calvin. John Burgess writes three chapters covering the “rules” of Wesley, Newman, and Bonhoeffer. One significant strength of their method is that it clothes each historical chapter with practical ecclesiastical application and spiritual earnestness. One would expect the practical aims of their work to influence the content in negative ways, thus failing to plumb the theological depths of each figure and time period. Conversely, others may expect the theological depth of each chapter to deter contemporary readers. However, the authors have crafted a book that suffers not from these challenges. Their argument for establishing a pastoral rule for today is confidently interwoven into each historical sketch because of their belief that “the Christian past does not constrain our imagination but rather opens it into insights and possibilities for ministry” (pg. 1).

The authors admit that their list of historical figures “is in no way exhaustive, but it does represent a wide swath of the Christian faith: Catholic, Protestant (Reformed, Methodist, and Lutheran), ancient and modern, monastic and lay” (p. 9). “Each figure played a key role in inspiring and organizing communal life in his

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time” (p.9). Community life for Augustine was marked by theological friendship, while Benedict stressed obedience: a concept “not valued by contemporary pastors” (p. 48). Gregory the Great argued that “pastors, like monks, need a life of disciplined prayer,” (p. 10) and a constant daily movement from the “vertical to the horizontal; God and neighbor” (p. 72). Mutual supervision and corporate accountability were hallmarks of Calvin’s Genevan school. Wesley’s rule, however, was not established by Wesley himself but only regarded as a rule by the authors. This makes the chapter on Wesley rather weak. Wesley simply urged that graciousness be on the lips of those speaking “in conference” (p. 117). The Wesley chapter should either not be included in the book or moved to the place of an appendix. The Newman chapter, written by Burgess, examines the discipline of reading and study for the purpose of spiritual growth and discipleship. However, Burgess places too much emphasis on the need for pastors to have an “attachment to a place” (p. 141). While having such a place is no doubt helpful to pastors, some pastors who do not have the luxury of a permanent study room, must learn the art of being nimble. Such a requirement by Burgess lies outside of a biblical and historical rule, and fails to meet the criteria of the rules established in other chapters. The simplicity of Bonhoeffer’s rule of life in the Finkenwalde community is refreshing. The discussion questions following the Bonhoeffer chapter are practical for using in a small group. The last chapter of the book gives a helpful plan for establishing one’s own rule. The authors encourage the establishment of a written rule within a community of other pastors/elders/leaders.

In conclusion, the authors successfully convince the reader that a pastoral rule is needed for today. They unearth the lost arts which many early theologians and pastors practiced throughout history. They present a convincing case for recovering and reestablishing a more robust sense of community through discipline in the church. Readers must decide if establishing a rule in their community is worth the costs. Because the book is written from a particular denominational perspective, it lacks certain qualities that could be more winsome to independent autonomous churches and leaders. Pastors who serve singularly in independent autonomous churches will find the book to be admirable and valuable, but they will struggle to make it apply to their own situation. The rule may simply become a type of personal growth plan with no corporate accountability. However, the book could also serve to stir such pastors to becoming more accountable to others instead of “free agents” (p. 92) who struggle to be disciplined.

Luke Panter
Grace Fellowship Church
Grand Canyon University

Witmer, Stephen. *A Big Gospel in Small Places: Why Ministry in Forgotten Communities Matters*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2019, pp. 204, \$18, paperback.

Stephen Witmer is the lead pastor of Pepperell Christian Fellowship in Massachusetts and is an adjunct professor of New Testament at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Witmer is cofounder of Small Town Summits, an organization partnering with the Gospel Coalition, which serves rural pastors serving in rural churches in the New England area. Witmer has written *Eternity Changes Everything* and numerous articles for websites such as *Gospel Coalition* and *Desiring God*.

Many Christian ministries and books have focused on the importance on reaching large, strategic cities in urban areas because they are the center for culture and, as a result, are seemingly more important than rural areas. However, Witmer makes the case that since over three billion people live in rural areas—nearly half of the world’s population—rural areas are important and need fruitful ministry. Witmer uses the term “small places” to refer to areas that are relatively small in population, influence, and economic power, but are worth the investment from potential pastors and ministry leaders (p. 22).

Witmer seeks to answer how to have fruitful ministry in rural contexts by addressing three specific issues. First, he describes the attributes of small places. Second, he considers the elements needed for fruitful ministry in small places. Third, answers the question of whether someone should minister in a small place. In seeking to look at these three specific issues, Witmer provides a gospel-shaped vision for ministry that sees both “our ourselves and our places as God does” (pp. 12-13). By seeing one’s ministry context as God does, one should have a more theological vision for ministry, which should not be defined by the context in which one serves.

In seeking to establish attributes of small places, he argues that small places are *both* better and worse than people think. According to Witmer, small places are better than people think because God has a plan for them to “lavish his grace on them through his body, the church” (p. 41). In this way, Witmer stresses that fruitful ministry in a small place is centered around seeing the community as God sees them, as more valuable than Christians often do. Conversely, Witmer rightly points out that small places are often stereotyped as being inherently good, and this sentiment is both naïve and dangerous. Small places are not simply idyllic places but places that are stained with sin and hopelessness. Witmer stresses that because small places are better than one thinks, they are worth the investment; because they are worse than one thinks, they deserve a lifetime of dedicated ministry.

In seeking to discuss how to have fruitful ministry in a small place, Witmer posits that what is needed is not more ministry tips or advice; what is needed is a theological vision that motivates and molds ministry (p. 62). While tips and practical steps can help inform ministry practice, they cannot change a minister’s heart. Only

a proper theological vision that sees people the way that God sees them can change hearts. Witmer stresses that small place ministry can be fruitful when pastors and ministers see their context as important because God wants to lavish his grace upon the area through the church. As one sees this as the basis for theological ministry, one begins to see the value in investing in smaller places.

In seeking how to deal with whether someone should invest in small place ministry, Witmer discusses reasons (good and bad) why some are unwilling to invest in small place ministry. Some think they are too educated or talented to serve in small place, while others simply desire the comforts of the city. Perhaps others see small place ministry as too difficult. Regardless of reasons why, Witmer makes the case that people who see the value of small places will see people as worth the investment. While small place ministry can be difficult, it is worth it for those who truly want to make a difference in these areas.

Small place ministry is important because people in all places need the gospel. In this, Witmer is correct. Small place ministry is important because God wants these areas to have proper access to the Gospel and needs theologically grounded pastors serving churches in these areas. Witmer makes a strong case that pastors need to see these areas as valuable places that need long-term investment and care despite the size of the community or the size of the church. While this book makes the case that small place ministry is important, it also honestly deals with some of the challenges that comes with it.

In chapter nine, Witmer deals with a few challenges to small place ministry that are especially helpful to pastors. He deals with discontentment, envy, and fear. These challenges do not only affect small place ministry, they are often byproducts of it. However, seeing people as God sees them stresses the importance of small place ministry and, as Witmer rightly notes, “nothing is little in God’s service” (p. 129). If pastors and ministers see people in small places as God sees them, they will see that their ministry matters and, when convinced of this, ministry will be seen as a joy and not a burden despite difficulties. If pastors view people in their context as those needing and deserving a gospel-centered ministry, they will develop a tender heart towards their ministry, regardless of size. In this, Witmer makes his strongest case that ministry, no matter the context, is worth the investment from pastors and ministers who seek to see people as God sees them: people who need Christ.

Adam Wyatt

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Perry, Tim (ed). *The Theology of Benedict XVI: A Protestant Appreciation*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2019, pp. 314, \$25.99 hardback.

Tim Perry, adjunct professor of theology at St Paul University (Ottawa) and Trinity School for Ministry (Ambridge), is editor of this wide-ranging volume on the

theology of Benedict XVI. Leading Catholic theologian, Matt Levering, describes the publication as being in ‘the top handful’ (p.282) of studies on Ratzinger’s thought and this judgment rings true given the calibre of the various essays. The fifteen contributors span a range of denominations (e.g. Southern Baptist, Anglican, OPC, and Lutheran) and in their trawl of Joseph Ratzinger’s voluminous writings manage to cover virtually every aspect of contemporary theology. Trinitarian thought, Christology, revelation, tradition, theological method, hermeneutics, the relationship between faith and reason, theological anthropology, prayer, catechesis, Mariology, ecclesiology, priesthood, the theological virtues and liturgy all come into play in this evangelical *homage* to one of Catholicism’s finest living theologians.

Benedict XVI emerges from this study as an outstanding theologian of culture whose trenchant critique of current societal and theological trends will both enrich and challenge those standing on the other side of the Tiber. This image of Benedict is exemplified in Ben Myers’ opening essay. Here he makes a convincing case that evangelicalism has much to gain from Ratzinger’s synthesis of faith and reason, particularly as it engages with postmodernity’s rejection of any overarching or shared rationality. Katherine Sonderegger’s chapter on ‘Writing Theology in a Secular Age’ is one of the gems of this publication, not least for her incisive portrayal of Ratzinger as a theologian who tells the unvarnished truth about a world estranged from God. This unflinching portrayal of reality on Ratzinger’s part she characterises as ‘a gift above all’ (p. 30). Her robust synopsis of Ratzinger’s critique of modern trends opens a window on his unequivocal opposition to secularism: ‘Secularism cannot be a form of realism – his claim is that strong. What is necessary for the human subject, for the life and flourishing of the human person, is that this shell of atomized rights and liberties must be shattered, *killed*, so that a larger, ‘new subject’ can be born who has God as its ground, Christ as its *inner* subjectivity.’ (p.38)

Kevin Vanhoozer’s chapter on Revelation, Tradition and Biblical Interpretation presents Ratzinger as seeking to follow the same *via media* as evangelicals between fundamentalism and modernist Christianity, or in Benedict’s context, neoscholasticism and modernist biblical criticism. His major emphasis is on the way Benedict has challenged biblical scholarship to take seriously what has been termed the ‘theological interpretation of Scripture’, and not merely to focus on the historical critical dimension of the text. In terms of the championing of this cause, Vanhoozer believes evangelicals may have something to learn from the former Pope (p. 67). R. Lucas Stamps’ excellent chapter on anthropology highlights how Benedict’s Augustinian theology (sober and realistic in its account of humanity) can help the church navigate the difficult waters of late modernity. A proper vision of humanity’s vocation as creature of God, and an understanding of sin as that ‘which distorts our freedom and pulls us away from God and our own good’ (p. 97) emerge as ways out of the various blind alleys now opening up within the culture.

Christopher J. Holmes' intriguing chapter on Christology serves to highlight a defining component of Ratzinger's ministry as a theologian. For the Pope Emeritus, the great truths of the faith (not least Christology) are comprehended in the context of prayer, or not at all. As Holmes puts it, drawing at points on a famous Ratzinger text, 'Without prayer we cannot progress in theological understanding. Prayer evokes an "eye of love" and "encourages the faculty of beholding." Without love, we can neither behold Jesus Christ nor receive him.' (p. 110). This 'hermeneutic of faith' was to inform profoundly Ratzinger's great Christological trilogy, *Jesus of Nazareth*. Perhaps what will be the most surprising chapter for evangelicals is Tim Perry's exploration of Ratzinger's Mariology. Here he acquaints his readers with Ratzinger's defence of Mariology, which is derived from prophetic and typological readings of the Old Testament. Once we factor these in to our engagement with the few NT Marian texts that we have, the Catholic view that Mary is typologically present in the Bible is thought to make *some* sense. (p. 134). While remaining a convinced Protestant, Perry's goal is to challenge his fellow evangelicals to engage with the typological basis of Mariology and take the Catholic approach seriously. Another key chapter is Fred Sanders' work on Ratzinger's Trinitarian theology. While acknowledging that the latter has not written extensively on the theme, he draws out key emphases in Ratzinger's work which speak to current deficiencies within systematic theology. Most strikingly, Ratzinger is opposed to a reductionist Trinitarianism (à la Küng) which focuses on the economic Trinity but effectively dismisses the immanent one. Sanders demonstrates how for Ratzinger the Trinity is essential for our knowledge of God and our certainty of being loved. Without a Triune God who is love in himself, we can have no certainty that God is love (p. 145).

Carl Trueman's chapter on ecumenism is the least effusive in its praise of Ratzinger and the most wary of Protestant adulation of the retired Pope. His suspicion is that some have lost sight of the fundamental differences between the two traditions and in the process neglected Protestant distinctives. Ratzinger, on the other hand, has remained committed to the ecclesiology of his own church, note the tone of *Dominus Iesus* and the decision to create an Ordinariate. Trueman claims that perhaps Benedict's most valuable lesson to Protestants is on how to be faithful to one's own convictions (p.167). However, the absence of engagement with Ratzinger's most significant publication on ecumenism ('Luther and the Unity of the Churches') or awareness of his crucial behind-the-scenes support of the Joint Declaration on Justification, raises questions about whether we have been given the whole picture as regards Benedict's attitude to ecumenism. Peter Leithart's complex chapter on the Bible and Liturgy explores two fascinating themes in Benedict – church music and the essential nature of the eucharist. This essay marks one of the few points of disagreement between Ratzinger and his Protestant interlocutors. Leithart argues that Benedict is willing to acknowledge that patristic thought veered away from the apostolic trajectory by downplaying the theological significance of music in worship.

However, with another vital movement away from the apostolic pattern (the eucharist ceasing to be a communal meal and taking on the function of a sacrifice), Ratzinger seems to have conceded very little. Leithart suggests that he should perhaps be more open to acknowledging other points (e.g. food) where the post apostolic church has not kept in step with the scriptural trajectory. The final chapter considered is Bishop Joey Royal's reflection on Ratzinger's Eucharistic theology. In a brave move, especially given American evangelicalism's strong Zwinglian orientation, Royal suggests that Ratzinger's careful explanation of Eucharistic sacrifice and transubstantiation could allay many Protestant misunderstandings about these contentious ideas and potentially overcome barriers still existing between Catholics and Protestants who already believe in the real presence (p. 217).

As I hope the content of this review indicates, the theology of Benedict XVI has much to offer Protestantism. This publication makes it accessible to a new audience who will benefit from Benedict's incisive engagement with contemporary culture, his intelligent articulation of orthodoxy and most-tellingly, his Christocentric spirituality.

Patrick McGlinchey
Church of Ireland Theological Institute
Trinity College, Dublin

Cotherman, Charles E. *To Think Christianly: A History of L'Abri, Regent College, and the Christian Study Center Movement*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2020, pp. 320, \$31.50, hardback.

I owe a great personal debt to Christian study centers. I became a believer at Swiss l'Abri, from an agnostic background at age 19. My wife and I were on staff at the FOCUS Study Center (Fellowship of Christians in Universities and Schools) on Martha's Vineyard for a number of years. And I was a Senior Faculty Member (a part-time job) at the Trinity Forum Academy (which became the Trinity Fellows Academy) at Royal Oaks, Maryland, for some fifteen years before its closure. Even though my career has been largely in established graduate schools, I am a strong believer in lay education.

At a time when many histories of the evangelical movement are critical (sometimes deservedly, but often agenda-driven) it is refreshing to read Charles Cotherman's perspective. Cotherman, a Vineyard pastor, based *To Think Christianly* on his University of Virginia doctoral dissertation. This is a marvelous book—informative, engaging, and deeply fascinating. Both the main thesis and the outline are simple. The argument is that l'Abri and Regent College, in two rather different ways, spawned a number of influential study centers which changed thousands of lives. After the Foreword by UVA Professor of Economics Ken Elzinga (active in Christian ministries) and an introduction, there are seven chapters, each dedicated to one of the following centers: L'Abri (Huémoz, Switzerland and elsewhere), Regent

College (Vancouver, British Columbia), the C. S. Lewis Institute (Springfield, Virginia), the Ligonier Valley Study Center (Stahlstown, Pennsylvania), New College Berkeley (University of California-Berkeley), the Center for Christian Study (UVA), and the Consortium of Christian Study Centers (Charlottesville, Virginia, a few miles from UVA).

In lieu of rendering a pedantic account of each of these chapters, a few substantial comments will suffice. The work most familiar to the reviewer and perhaps to most evangelicals is l'Abri (as an aside, the French spelling with a small "l" is better). Cotherman managed to avoid opinions about Schaeffer's move into alliances with the evangelical right, the rather poor quality of the late-1970s film series, *How Shall We Then Live?*, and son Frank's tirades. In one way, good for him. Perhaps in a book about community, though, some mention could have been made about the difficulty of raising a family in the midst of stardom, the problem of succession after Schaeffer's death, and the pressure many felt to imitate the Schaeffers without having their boundless energy or charisma. Succession was a challenge in most of the other study centers.

His account of Regent College, and particularly the role of co-founder Jim Houston is riveting. Readers may be surprised to learn how many of these study center leaders came from a Plymouth Brethren background. Humanly, this might explain two things. One is the hunger for a broader and deeper connection between the Christian faith and the world around. Brethren theology is not typically concerned for social issues. Reactions are understandable. The other is the burden for lay training. The Brethren, at least under John Nelson Darby, did not recognize an ordained clergy. Houston, David Gill, and others were less doctrinaire about this, yet they clearly developed a sensitivity to training those not necessarily called to the pastoral ministry. Regent would eventually develop a biblical and theological track, but it always kept its focus on educating lay persons. How does the gospel apply to business, science, the arts, and other fields? Unlike l'Abri, Regent was founded by an Oxford don (Houston). Although it bore some similarities to l'Abri, it was more closely modeled after Tyndale House in Cambridge, England, an evangelical research institute for biblical scholarship. In addition, Regent sought to attract first-rate scholars to its staff. It was helpful that Houston had a friendship with C. S. Lewis. The close connection of Regent to the University of British Columbia was intentional.

As is well-known, other players at Regent such as Professor of New Testament Ward Gasque and his wife, Laurel, and Professor of Old Testament Carl Armerding helped foster an atmosphere that combined academics with hospitality. In one way or another, this combination is reflected in each of the places Cotherman looks at. As well, one observes that each was created or sustained by a strong personality. It could not be otherwise, though. Such bold initiatives usually do not spring up from an amorphous background. Jim and Lorraine Hiskey, retired from the golf world, helped create and sustain the C. S. Lewis Institute. The location in suburban

Washington, D.C. meant it was natural to contact politicians and chaplains along the way. Ligonier Valley was centered on R. C. Sproul, one of the greatest communicators of theology on the planet. New College was from the mind of David Gill, a Jacques Ellul specialist. The Center for Christian Study was led by David Turner and Drew Trotter (who held a PhD in New Testament studies from Cambridge University).

One concern Cotherman regularly brings up is the role of women. Regent had more of a place for women than many ministries. Linda Mercadante and Thena Ayers, both from a l'Abri background, contributed significantly to life at Regent, Mercadante as a 1978 Masters of Christian Studies graduate and Ayers as Regent's first permanent female professor. The Ligonier Valley Study Center, while heavily oriented to R. C. Sproul's vision, gave a prominent teaching and leadership role to Jackie Shelton (later Jackie Griffith) in 1975. Sharon Gallagher shared in the leadership of New College Berkeley with David Gill. Still, women do not seem to have true equality with men in these places. Cotherman notes this issue without any kind of vendetta.

Historiographically, demonstrating the role of l'Abri and Regent in spurring the other centers is a tall order. But Cotherman's case is persuasive. Both informally and through the formal interactions of these places with Schaeffer and Houston, a clear connection exists. After reading this thoroughly documented story, so well written, three issues needing further exploration. First, why did every one of them, at least from their original form, decline or even fold? Some did morph into new expressions: l'Abri is alive and well in various branches; the Center for Christian Study continues to provide a haven for students. But not everything went well in these places after the initial thrust. As one could anticipate, there were leadership issues, leading to problems with burnout and succession. Financial strains were omni-present. But Cotherman also suggests another reason. There was a shift in the priorities for many young people these centers were trying to reach. According to various studies, whereas in the 1960s American freshmen endorsed "developing a meaningful life philosophy" as an essential value, by the late 1980s financial security and personal peace were the norms (p. 182). Certain issues caught the study centers unaware, particularly in the area of gender and sexuality. Unless new wineskins could be found some of these centers would lose their purpose. The 2018 closure of Trinity Fellows Academy in Maryland is a recent example.

The second question is how these study centers relate to the church. To be sure, none of these works could be strictly ecclesiastic, nor perhaps should they be. A few, such as the Center for Christian Studies, were strongly supported by a local church (Trinity Presbyterian, led by Joseph "Skip" Ryan). The creative minds who led them were necessarily mavericks but none of them denied the centrality of the church (Matthew 16:18). Schaeffer, for example, founded a small Presbyterian denomination (the International Presbyterian Church), and l'Abri residents attended church on Sundays. Yet Schaeffer also called evangelicals "bourgeois," and it was easy for some participants to resent the institutional church's inability to think through issues

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and to reach people effectively. Consequently, some viewed study centers as an ecclesiastical alternative rather than accompaniment. But could there not be a way to have integrated these centers more symbiotically with the church? Perhaps the model of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City is a potent example of combining traditional worship and preaching with endeavors such as Faith and Work. But how to challenge the local church to respond to the issues in the surrounding culture remains.

The third issue is rather petty. Or is it? The title of this wonderful book is *Thinking Christianly*. Yet the bulk of it is not about Christian philosophy but about community living. To be sure, the purpose of these communities is to foster a place for education; however, readers are left without much comment on the task of thinking Christianly. Perhaps, it was wise to leave this stone unturned. A second book may be needed to examine the philosophy, theology, and worldviews taught in these places.

Where do we go from here? In the end, Cotherman pleads for “faithful presence,” the phrase elucidated by eminent sociologist of religion and evangelical commentator James Davison Hunter in *To Change the World* (OUP, 2010). In the first part of his book, Hunter chides Christians for worldview thinking and idealism. I say, let’s be idealistic! With realism, yes, but with hope. Charles Cotherman deserves thanks for opening the door.

William Edgar
Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia

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