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Book Reviews

Meilaender, Gilbert. *Thy Will Be Done: The Ten Commandments and the Christian Life.* Baker Academic, 2020. pp. 125, $21.99, hardcover.

Gilbert Meilaender, a Lutheran research professor at Valparaiso University in Indiana, is a leading ethicist. His textbook on bioethics is generally considered a standard. In *Thy Will Be Done* he follows in a long line of Christian tradition that reflects on the Christian life in terms of the Ten Commandments.

On the basis of Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5, it is difficult exegetically to know how to number the Ten Commandments. Three different numbering systems have developed. The Catholic-Lutheran numbering, which Meilaender follows, treats the prohibition against other gods and graven images as the first, the prohibition against using God's name in vain as the second, the command to sanctify the Sabbath as the third, the command to honor parents as the fourth, the prohibitions against murder, adultery, and stealing as the fifth, sixth, and seventh, the prohibition against bearing false witness as the eighth, the prohibition against coveting the neighbor's house as the ninth, and the prohibition against coveting the neighbor's wife, servants, and possessions as the tenth. The Eastern Orthodox-Reformed numbering treats no other gods and no graven images as two commandments and unites the no coveting statements into one commandment. The Jewish numbering considers the first "word" (technically the Old Testament calls them "ten words") to be "I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." Exegetically speaking, the Catholic-Lutheran numbering is doubtful. It would mean that the ninth commandment changed from "neighbor's house" in Exodus 20:17 to "neighbor's wife" in Deuteronomy 5:21. Perhaps the Jewish numbering is the most plausible from an exegetical point of view. At any rate, we know that there are "ten words" (Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 4:13; 10:4).

Meilaender discusses the Ten Commandments by considering five bonds: the marriage bond (prohibition against adultery), the family bond (honor parents), the life bond (prohibition against murder), the possessions bond (sanctify the Sabbath day, prohibitions against stealing and coveting), and the speech bond (prohibitions against taking the Lord's name in vain and against bearing false witness against the neighbor). In the last chapter he considers the first commandment. He looks at God's will as expressed in the Ten Commandments from three angles by asking how they relate to us as creatures created by the Creator, as sinners in need of healing and reconciled to God in Jesus, and as heirs of the future promised by God when we will be perfected. All three angles are important for understanding God's will for the Christian life through the framework of the Ten Commandments. That third angle is often overlooked. "What we cannot do for ourselves or make of ourselves, the Spirit

of the risen Christ promises to do in us" (p. 123). In that sense one might say that for Christians the Ten Commandments also become the "Ten Predictions." In the last chapter he reflects on the two great commandments, to love God and to love the neighbor. He stresses that they summon us to live both loves simultaneously and, at the same time, to love God first, which will inevitably lead to a tension.

By way of evaluation I found the volume to be quite strong, thoughtful, and well-written. In a short compass of 125 pages Meilaender covers a wide array of issues that relate to Christian living, including ethical challenges. I would characterize his own views as balanced and in line with traditional Christian positions. He stresses that the church's practice should conform to the Scriptures. He sees the five bonds as schools created by God to foster a virtuous and a faithful people, so that we are drawn out of a sole focus on self. He has perceptive things to say on each commandment. For example, Christian catechesis often includes obedience to the government under the command to honor parents. However, Meilaender keeps the focus on parents in order to stress that the basic unit is the family, which serves as a defense against an overweening reach of governmental power.

Meilaender brings biblical texts into his reflections, although in places I wanted to see more treatment of the biblical evidence, for example, the promise expressed in the command to honor parents (Ephesians 6:2-3). With respect to the prohibitions against stealing and coveting, a discussion on private property would have been helpful. Meilaender exhibits a wide range of reading and mentions a variety of secondary sources, such as Barth, Bonhoeffer, and C. S. Lewis. He frequently points to Martin Luther's *Small and Large Catechisms*, John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, and the Roman Catholic *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. As evidenced by his use of these sources, there seems to be basic agreement on the Ten Commandments among traditional Lutherans, Calvinists, and Roman Catholics. However, at a few places he expresses disagreement with Roman Catholic positions, such as their positions on marriage and capital punishment. Although Meilaender does not discuss it, one disagreement between Calvinism and others deals with the prohibition against graven images. The disagreement focuses on whether that statement prohibits a crucifix or pictures of Jesus from a church sanctuary.

I highly recommend the book. The Decalogue deserves meditation by Christians, and Meilaender's reflections succeed in promoting and enabling such meditation. His final words give a fitting conclusion to the volume:

> In that day, in the promised new creation, the tension between the two great commandments will be no more. We will hear again the ten words, but now clearly as promise. You *shall* love the LORD your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. You *shall* be a bride eager to greet her bridegroom, a child who loves the Father, a creature who honors the life of every fellow human

being, a creature whose Lord is rich enough to meet every need, a lover of God whose first and last word is, "Thy will be done" (p. 125).

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Enns, Peter. *The Evolution of Adam: What the Bible Does and Doesn't Say About Human Origins*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2012. xx+172 pp. $14.99.

Is there a conflict between evolutionary theory and the Christian reading of Genesis 1–11? Peter Enns (Ph.D., Harvard University), Abram S. Clemens Professor of Biblical Studies Eastern University, writes The Evolution of Adam to answer this very question. Enns' premise in the book not that Adam evolved but that Christian thinking about the historical Adam should evolve because of two key ideas: "(1) scientific evidence supporting evolution and (2) literary evidence from the world of the Bible that helps clarify the kind of literature the Bible is––that is, what it means to read it as it was meant to read" (xiii).

The argument for Enns' perspective of the historical Adam is laid out in two parts. The first part of Enns' book in "Genesis: An Ancient Story of Israelite Self-Definition" (chapters 1–4) address the story of the history of Israel, and the section part "Understanding Paul's Adam" (chapters 5–7) examines Paul's perspective of the historical Adam. Enns' concludes with "nine theses" pp. (137–148). Chapters 1–4 approach the historical Adam's issue through a historical-critical perspective, which treats Genesis and other ancient Near Eastern parallel origin stories as theological myth (pp. 23–37). In essence, Enns and others approaching the Pentateuch as theological myth believe that the narratives in Genesis through Judges "embellished the event to serve another purpose" (p. 62).

Section two (chapters 5–7) argues that Paul's presentation and reading of the historical Adam are based on similar first-century assumptions and beliefs that Jews held about the Genesis narrative (p. 95). This means that Paul held conventions about creation that reflected his cultural context and not the present readers' context (i.e., scientific revolutions). The Last section is a brief chapter, including nine theses that cover the entire work's argumentation. The nine theses are summarized as follows:

1. No literalism in Genesis.
2. Scientific and biblical models about human origins are incompatible.
3. Genesis reflects an ancient Near Eastern story.
4. Two creation stories in Genesis.
5. The story of Adam is about the failure to fear God.

6. Paul uses Adam's narrative as an idiom.
7. God speaks through cultural idiom.
8. Root conflict for Christians is about identity and fear.
9. The real rapprochement between scientific evolution and Christian views of origins requires a complex synthesis.

With the basic argumentation of Enns outlined, what are the strengths and weaknesses of The Evolution of Adam? The work's strength is advocating for a complexity thesis between the sciences and Christian reading of the Genesis text. Evangelicals are guilty in the historical efforts to make science and a literal reading of Genesis agree in the most literalistic way (i.e., Ken Ham, Henry Morris III, Kent Hovind, etc.). Enns is right to note that much effort is expended on reading the Genesis narrative and Paul's recapitulation of Adam through a very strict hermeneutic. For example, the primary question in Genesis 1–11 is not to set out an ontological and metaphysical system that critiques the ancient Near Eastern systems and creation theories. Genesis is a polemic to the surrounding culture, but it is more so about the reasoning behind why humans must die, not merely where do they originate from. This highlight of Enns' work is the extent of its positive features for Christian scholarship.

Enns historical-critical examination and reading of Genesis 1–11 demonstrate the negative attribute of skeptical bible reading. For example, why is science the epistemological arbiter for discussing biblical origin narratives and the theory of evolution? Enns does not answer this question but instead assumes that there is no way to reconcile the two because they speak a "different language" (138). Does this not undermine the ability of historical-critical scholarship to use modern languages and semantic studies to understand ancient cultures and linguistics? Capturing a theological truth from a narrative-driven text does not mean that all literalness is devoid in their present stories.

Another issue that leaves the reader begging for clarification is Enns' understanding of Paul's reading of Genesis and Adam. Enns claims that Paul is merely reading in light of the first-century Jewish worldview. However, Paul is very far from the typical reading of Adam in the Talmud and Rabbinic thought. Adam was never considered in a negative light, as we see in Paul's writing and his recapitulation of the Genesis narrative. Eve is always the source of blame in rabbinic thought. Adam was the first priest and walked with God. Paul is unique in his presentation of Adam as the original sinner. It seems that this fact, which perhaps Enns is either unaware of or ignores, would further challenge his premise that Paul did not believe in a historical or literal account of the man Adam. Paul is merely following the text's logic in the Genesis narrative, "who does humans die?" His answers blame Adam instead of Eve alone. Thus, there is nothing to indicate from Paul's treatment of the Garden narrative that it is merely theological fiction, as Enns suggests in chapter 7.

Enns commits the very exegetical crimes he is putting on trial—forcing the text to argue and say what it does not say. Likewise, evangelicals have been guilty of using the same logic to force scientific evidence to fit biblical narratives (i.e., the flood narrative). The most significant take away from this work is the danger of using one's scientific paradigms to serve as epistemological arbiter. The Bible is a book of faith and works. It is both a work of history and theology revealed through a miraculous and supernatural event––God working through humans.

Joshua K. Smith

Meade, John D. *A Critical Edition of the Hexaplaric Fragments of Job 22-42.* Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2020, pp. 471, $127.96, paperback.

John Meade currently serves as Associate Professor of Old Testament at Phoenix Seminary in Phoenix, AZ. He is also Co-Director of the Text and Canon Institute at the same institution. Moreover, he is a contributor to the Evangelical Textual Criticism blog and the Hexapla Institute. John Meade is a graduate of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he obtained a Ph.D. in OT, under Peter Gentry.

The book under review is the fruit of Meade's dissertation. Meade has established a critical edition of the fragmentary evidence extant for chapters 22 through 42 of the Hexapla of Job. In other words, Meade provides a curated collection of all the readings of Origen's Hexapla as it pertains to the book of Job. This task has led Meade to examine manuscript evidence from Greek, Syriac, Latin, and Armenian sources. As such, this work gives an updated presentation of hexaplaric readings, improving on the work done by its predecessors.

The book is divided into three main chapters. Chapter 1 (pp. 1- 26) does an overview of the textual sources examined. In this part, Meade discusses textual witnesses, how they are grouped and related, previous textual editions, evidence from *catena* manuscripts, and closes with a section dedicated to illustrating how the hexaplaric material is discussed.

Chapter 2 (pp. 27-400) is where Meade presents the best possible hexaplaric readings of Job chs. 22 to 42. Meade utilizes a textual apparatus format. For each lemma in view, then, a series of witnesses for or against the lemma is presented. This format or layout is similar to that of BHS or the *Göttingen* LXX—the witnesses are listed below the main lemma under consideration. However, unlike these two critical editions, the lemma is not part of a continuous flow of text. It stands alone, occasionally with more text in parentheses to provide context. Another feature of this apparatus format is that Meade provides the Hebrew text following the MT tradition and the Old Greek text of the *Göttingen* edition of Job. At other times, where appropriate Meade presents the text of Theodotion (the asterisked text), instead of the Old Greek text.

The last chapter (pp. 401-442) presents all the readings regarded as dubious. These are fragments whose "relationship to the Hexapla" needs further clarification (401). Meade lists them not only for the sake of comprehensiveness but also "that they might become the object of future study" (401).

In order to properly assess the significance of this work, we must keep in mind that it is meant to be and function as a textual apparatus. This fact will affect our reading strategies and will help the reader understand its relevance. It is a reference work first and foremost. Furthermore, Meade has done the hard part of defining the textual relations among the hundreds of MSS containing hexaplaric readings for the book of Job. This work in turn will aid future scholars who might find themselves dealing with textual issues both in Hebrew and in Greek.

Even though the value of the book resides primarily in advancing the study of the history of transmission of Job, there is another aspect of the book which deserves our commendation, and that is its sound methodology. First, not only did Meade have to compile all the manuscript sources available for the Hexapla, he also had to sort through previous scholarship, rectify outdated notions on the relationships among the MSS, and organize it all in a coherent whole. This endeavor can prove to be a dizzying task. As a result, no further work on the history of transmission of Job should be conducted without first consulting Meade's contribution.

Second, the sound methodology displayed in Meade's work is insightful and of great didactic value. For example, Meade shows us how to properly lay out textual witnesses—in this instance the order of the factors does change the product. The Hebrew MT and Old Greek come first, followed by the Greek hexaplaric variant in question and then the various Greek witnesses. Lastly, we encounter the Latin, Syriac and Armenian witnesses. This order is not haphazard but rather reflects the importance and relationship of each primary source text. Meade, however, goes a step further and discusses the many different issues that arise from variant to variant. Let us keep in mind that we are not dealing with textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible or the Old Greek, but rather the Hexapla which adds multiple layers of complexity.

In conclusion, as much as one ought to keep abreast of the current developments in textual criticism theory, this discipline is learned primarily through practice. Though Meade limits the scope of his work to hexaplaric readings in Job, the principles gleaned in this book can be broadly applied to MT and LXX textual criticism. Therefore, any professor who attempts to instruct his or her students in the art of textual criticism would do well to use Meade's work as a showcase of best practices to follow.

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Belcher, Richard P, Jr. *Finding Favour in the Sight of God: A Theology of Wisdom Literature.* NSBT 46. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2018. ISBN: 978-0830826476. Paperback. $26.00. 272 pp.

Richard Belcher is Professor of Old Testament and Academic Dean at Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte, NC. He has written commentaries on Job and Ecclesiastes, as well as several works exploring the Messiah across the biblical literature. This monograph is a recent addition to the *New Studies in Biblical Theology* series published by InterVarsity Press. The series has over fifty volumes in print, including a few others addressing wisdom.

The monograph begins with a brief exploration of the problem of wisdom literature in the modern discussion. Belcher deftly summarizes the place wisdom has had within biblical theology, including the most recent debates about the wisdom tradition in ancient Israel undertaken by Kynes, Sneed, and Longman. After the introductory discussion, each of the main wisdom texts is explored, with each afforded three chapters—Proverbs (57 pgs), Job (58 pgs), and Ecclesiastes (55 pgs). The monograph concludes with a chapter on the relationship between Jesus and wisdom (23 pgs). While the nature of wisdom in the Song of Songs continues to be contentious (see pg. 10n47), the long Jewish and Christian tradition of reading the book as intimating the love between YHWH/Christ and his people should have warranted some extended treatment, if only to honor the Solomonic association in the canonical text. This would have also fit within the monograph's broader theme of finding favor in the sight of God. In that same vein, noticeably absent is the treatment of wisdom literature within the history of interpretation. None of the main figures in Jewish or Christian history are noted for their significant roles in understanding these books as part of our shared tradition, or even in the contentious debates concerning the association between Christ and wisdom. Surveying the indices, I did not observe any names prior to the mid-nineteenth century.

This absence was especially felt in the treatment of Ecclesiastes. Almost the entire tradition has interpreted Qoheleth's words as a positive contribution to the canon (see Christianson's *Ecclesiastes Through the Centuries* [Wiley, 2007]). Belcher follows a recent trend of distinguishing two voices in the text: the frame editor/voice and the voice of Qoheleth. In his view, the former offers biting criticism of the latter. While I agree that hearing two voices is an improvement over past interpretations, the exegetical basis for a negative assessment of Qoheleth's words is (in my opinion) shaky. Given the ambiguity of the text at several critical junctures, one could hear the two voices congruently. Since one's interpretive decisions here are so important for the overall message of the text, some engagement with the history of interpretation would have been helpful to allow readers a more informed understanding of what is at stake for a theology of wisdom. That said, I came away from the Ecclesiastes

chapters far richer having read them, with a greater appreciation for the structural unity of the book and for a negative assessment of Qoheleth's words.

Notwithstanding these criticisms, I want to emphasize how helpful this volume has been. Nearly every page of my copy has highlights and scribbled notes, and I anticipate returning to it often as part of my wisdom reference material. Concerning his underlying approach, I appreciated Belcher's stance against the typical historical-critical view of wisdom along non-religious or secular terms. He situates wisdom in ancient Israel within the fear of Yhwh, allowing the wisdom books to have a more grounded place in their canonical context. More, the association of wisdom with Solomon is not envisioned as a pious fiction; he is seen to have a real, historical role to play in the wisdom traditions of ancient Israel. The reader will feel like they are being led on a tour of discovery into the text and its canonical associations, rather than around them. This is one of the great strengths of the monograph. The chapters on Proverbs are an excellent introduction to wisdom generally, and Belcher skillfully assessed the hermeneutical challenges of this book. I was most impressed, however, with his chapters on Job. I felt like I was learning something new on every page, and he even changed my mind on a few interpretive positions I previously held. Chapter six—on the debate in Job 4–26 about retribution, suffering, and God's justice—is the highlight of the monograph for me.

In conclusion, I would heartily recommend this book for scholars and biblical-theological students alike. Students picking this up should know that Belcher has "done his homework." He is a well-seasoned scholar and has provided a rigorously academic *and* theologically rich discussion—two things you do not always find together. For my faculty colleagues, I was also assessing this book for future use in undergraduate biblical studies. It might be a good addition in that context for an upper-level seminar course, but outside of that it is more appropriate for masters and doctoral students. A course on wisdom literature would be well-served by pairing this with Longman's *Fear of the Lord is Wisdom* (Baker, 2017). In sum, I found this monograph to be a welcome addition to available resources on the wisdom literature and am grateful for the author's contribution.

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Kynes, Will, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Wisdom and the Bible*. New York: Oxford University Pres, 2021, pp. 712, $150, hardback.

Will Kynes is Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at Samford University. Kynes has authored and edited several books, including his most famous book, *An Obituary for "Wisdom Literature": The Birth, Death, and Intertextual Reintegration of a Biblical Corpus* (2019) and editing alongside Katharine Dell *Reading Job Intertextually* (2013), *Reading Ecclesiastes Intertextually* (2014), and *Reading Proverbs Intertextually*

(2018). Following is a summary, a review of the handbook, and a recommendation for the best use of the book.

The Oxford Handbook of Wisdom and the Bible is a collection of entries on "Wisdom Literature," many from renowned scholars such as Raymond Van Leeuwen, Norman Habel, Mark Sneed, and Tremper Longman III. Each essay contributes to reflections on the concept of wisdom and the issue of wisdom literature as a genre (inside front cover). The handbook is divided into two parts. The first section is about "wisdom as a concept, and the second section addresses "'Wisdom Literature' as a category" (p. 11). The handbook studies a large chronological window. This captures the concept and development of wisdom literature from pre-biblical books to Rabbinic interpretation of wisdom. Similarly, the dictionary provides perspectives for interpreting wisdom books along with multiple culture contexts "beyond Western perspectives" (p. 10).

The volume accomplishes its two-fold goal of informing the reader on wisdom and the Bible, and communicating the scholarly debate concerning the nature of Wisdom Literature. First, the book covers a wide scope of content on Wisdom and the Bible written by the best scholars. The star-studded list of scholars is more significant than that mentioned above. The list of contributors also includes Mark J. Boda, William P. Brown, and more who deserve mention.

Second, the handbook provides the debate about the nature of Wisdom Literature in a balanced manner. The balance between views in the volume is not necessarily opposing forces. Rather, each scholar may share a view upon a spectrum instead of choosing sides. Scholar's views differ on the problem(s) surrounding the Wisdom Literature corpus and its solution. Kynes argues to abandon "post-Enlightenment presuppositions," which introduce anachronistic ideas and restrict thought by viewing wisdom as a corpus in Scripture (p. 9, 9 fn.24). Other scholars share this view in the book. Burnside supports Kynes' view in his entry on "Law and Wisdom Literature" (p. 10). Yet, not every entry proposes a deconstructionist view or projects the same need for a "new" approach to "Wisdom Literature." Witte's contribution "Literary Genres of Old Testament Wisdom" discusses the meaningful function of the classification of texts (p. 353). In addition, Witte presents the concept of genre as a classification, its fundamental components, and a survey of the genre "Wisdom Literature" (pp. 354-357). Although Witte also seeks a "fresh" approach to Wisdom Literature, he seeks a shift in how genre is understood (p. 357).

Two negative critiques to the handbook stand out: (1) At times, an unacademic or personal voice to the essays comes through, and (2) a varying quality of entries. First, some entries were too personal or unprofessional. For instance, an entry plugs a forthcoming commentary (p. 530). A different chapter presents the author's opinion in the introduction, creating a biased reader before presenting the full argument (p. 301). These critiques are minor because presenting future research opportunities and resources and providing clear direction are part of handbook entries. However, these

contributions created the voice of a colloquy in contrast to a formal voice that is traditional for such works.

Second, not all contributions are equally helpful or impactful. For instance, chapter 33 stands in contrast to other entries by using sentiments challenging inspiration and use of quasi-Feminist theology. First, the chapter presents the Song of Songs as an "anthology of secular love poems" (p. 552). Second, the chapter writes of Proverbs' projection of "hidden (and forbidden) desires onto the foreign woman" like "modern Europeans" (p. 559). Also, the entry describes the social milieu of biblical wisdom as one where "women need to be controlled" p. (560). The reader will find little clarity about the inspiration of Song of Songs or data to support the misogynistic views in the Bible. Nevertheless, it aligns with the handbook's overall goal to teach about wisdom and the Bible in light of the current debate over the nature of Wisdom Literature. Outside of chapter 33, the difference in quality may reflect expectations. Seasoned scholars may find some contributions rudimentary, while new scholars may find entries too technical. This may be a strength, or the observed scale may result from an undefined target audience.

The Oxford Handbook of Wisdom and the Bible is a recommended resource for seminary students and scholars seeking to learn basic tenants of Wisdom Literature in light of the current scholarly debate. Seminary students will find this volume able to teach the basic tenets of the concept of wisdom in the OT, such as *wisdom theology*, *wisdom in the ANE*, and *summaries of wisdom in Job, Eccl, and Proverbs*. Students and scholars can use the handbook to learn how leaders in the field of wisdom in the OT are integrating these familiar categories into the discussion on the viability of Wisdom Literature as a corpus. Also, the volume contains several contributors addressing more novel ideas. Therefore, the work will become a resource to reference for decades. In addition, this volume has the ability to bring clarity to the current debate concerning wisdom as a corpus (or not) while presenting solutions. Therefore, scholars will find this volume a helpful resource for constructing a new path forward or re-constructing an understanding of wisdom in the Bible.

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Jobes, Karen H., and Moisés Silva. *Invitation to the Septuagint*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015, Pp 432, $28.30, Paperback.

Septuagintal studies has risen in recent years, but a substantial introduction to the discipline was lacking for students and scholars alike. The technical nature of the discipline left many students unfamiliar with how to proceed into the fray. Karen Jobes and Moises Silva initially filled that hole in 2000, but they have updated and expanded to a second edition of their primer to account for changes in the field of the LXX studies. The second edition responds to a lengthy criticism of the first

edition from James Barr whereby the authors supposedly deemed the LXX unhelpful for determining the Hebrew text (xii n.1). The second addition has been updated the bibliography with references from the last fifteen years. Both authors are world renown scholars for their scholarship in Greek lexicography and the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament. Hereafter, the authors will be referred to as J.S.

J. S. begin with answering the readers' initial question, *Why should I study the Septuagint?* in a brief introduction. They suggest that the LXX aids the interpreters understanding of the Old and New Testament. The body of the book divides into three sections to address three different audiences. The first section, *The History of the Septuagint*, is directed towards students with little to no knowledge of Greek or the LXX. They summarize the origin and transmission of the LXX, editions and contents, and the LXX as a translation. The second section, *The Septuagint in Biblical Studies*, assumes a moderate knowledge of Greek. J.S discusses the language of the LXX, the process of establishing the text of the LXX, the use of the LXX in the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible, the relationship between the LXX and the NT, and the interpretation of the LXX. The third section, *Current State of Septuagint Studies*, reinforces the other chapters through presenting a history of literature. J.S provide a detailed biographical sketch of Septuagint scholars of the previous generation. They discuss current studies in the language and translation, reconstructing the history of the text, and the theological development in the Hellenistic age. They also include four appendixes for further research for the beginner to the advanced student. J.S compiled their book with a pedagogical focus which should encourage professors to implement their resource at the seminary and doctoral level.

J.S have written a clear introduction to a complex discipline and the student and scholar alike will benefit from their work. The authors have compiled a resource that aims for the student to grapple with the larger issues of the LXX. They have arranged the chapters with an upward focus so that the student learns with the book and they target three different familiarities with the LXX. They have struck a middle ground with these sections so that the book grows with the student's familiarity and his understanding of the LXX. The divisions also allow the reader a resource long into his studies into the Septuagint. A slight critique to their approach is that the student who has no familiarity with Greek or the LXX is unable to grapple with the concepts in two-thirds of the book.

J.S navigate complex issues in the Septuagint and present a balanced approach to the subject. They navigate the subject through careful summaries, discussion of terms, examples of principles, and evaluation of evidence. They walk the student through a scholar's approach to the subject, so that they can grapple with complex issues as they read the LXX. A short coming of the edition, the authors discuss translation techniques of the authors, but they fail to instruct the student on discovering these techniques. Readers would benefit from a helpful summary of the ways that translators adapt, modify, or edit a text to their target audience. J.S

highlight the religious climate which the LXX was translated into, but they fail to incorporate a summary of how a translator uses translation techniques to address his context. A famous example is the LXX of Proverbs rearranging the order to highlight Solomonic authorship and remove pagan authorship from the book.

Section two addresses difficult concepts and theories such as the LXX role with textual criticism, DSS, NT and the LXX, and the interpretation of the LXX. This section is the heart of the book. J.S. define their terms and navigate the reader through these challenging concepts. They succeed in reviewing scholarship and addressing each issue so that student will walk away confident of his knowledge of the subject. In contrast, section three ramps up the discussion and reminds the student of the plethora of the unresolved issues within Septuagintal studies. The students' emotions sway throughout the book from confident to overwhelmed. J.S. cannot protect the students from this reality so they present a realistic picture of the field.

This reviewer invites students, pastors, theologians, and scholars alike to the *Invitation to the Septuagint*. J.S has crafted a primer that facilitates an introduction but also a thorough reference to the subject. Scholars such as Jan Jooster, Benjamin G. Wright, Peter J. Gentry, and Gert J. Steyn agree that updated edition will benefit student and scholar alike. This comprehensive primer will not disappoint those who desire to acquaint themselves with the Greek version of the Old Testament.

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Garrett, Duane A. *The Problem of the Old Testament: Hermeneutical, Schematic, and Theological Approaches.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020, pp. 395, $40.00, paperback.

Duane A. Garrett is the John R. Sampey Professor of Old Testament Interpretation and professor of biblical theology at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has written numerous works on the Old Testament, including a commentary on Hosea and Joel (The New American Commentary), a commentary on Song of Songs and Lamentations (Word Biblical Commentary), and *Amos: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, and *A Modern Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*.

Garrett makes his premise clear from the moment his book is picked up by a reader. How can modern readers make sense of the challenges, or the "problem," of the Old Testament? He begins the book by defining the problem, which he does by listing three propositions: the Old Testament is hard to define, hard to read, and hard to reconcile with the New (p. 4). He goes on to demonstrate that the lack of a consistent Old Testament theology or definition of the Old Testament among the early church fathers provides an example of these propositions (p. 45). In part two, Garrett outlines the various hermeneutical, schematic, and conceptual solutions proposed for the development of an Old Testament theology, and he ultimately finds

them inadequate. Garrett's hybrid approach involves multiple methods rather than attempting to use only one solution (p. 158).

Garrett makes use of an Antiochene (that is not allegorical) hermeneutic but supplements it with schematic and conceptual solutions of his own. The following chapters are an application of his solution to the "problem" of the Old Testament within various areas of interpretation, including election and the covenants, law, narrative, and prophecy. He closes the book with a summary of his findings and issues that require further study. He also provides an appendix that serves as a potential preview of a future volume (p. 355).

There are many commendable aspects of this volume. One such aspect is part two of this book, in which Garrett evaluates solutions he has found inadequate to the problem of the Old Testament. Garret clearly and succinctly communicates the arguments of others and fairly represents the scholars he is evaluating. This is prevalent all throughout part two, but particularly in chapter five, in which Garrett describes covenant theology and dispensationalism. Garrett summarizes each system while also mentioning different branches. He balances acknowledging the right level of nuance to each side with acknowledging that his summaries of each side are not exhaustive (pp. 113, 122). Frequently, the author's attempts at summarizing the viewpoint of another either misrepresent his fellow scholar's argument or result in an exceedingly long chronicle that ceases to be a summary. Garrett's writing is a refreshing departure from these tendencies.

Additionally, Garrett's proposed solution to the problem of the Old Testament is well-argued and theologically grounded. As mentioned above, his solution is a hybrid approach that uses a mixture of hermeneutical, schematic, and conceptual perspectives to solve the problem. Though independently, he finds each one of these perspectives in some way inadequate, when viewed together, he argues a solution can be found. Garrett rightly observes the failure of the Antiochene hermeneutic in the time of the Reformation was an inability to demonstrate the applicability of the Old Testament to the Christian church (pp. 100-101). Yet, he selects this hermeneutic over the Alexandrian hermeneutic because he views its allusion as an unacceptable way to interpret Scripture.

Furthermore, Garrett's schematic solution is neither covenant theology nor dispensationalism; he does not believe the Christian church is one people of God or that Israel continues to have a unique relationship with God, entirely independent of Gentiles (pp. 163-164). On the contrary, he correctly asserts Israel continues to be at the center of God's plan of salvation. Yet, Gentiles have now been grafted into Israel and are partakers of the promises of Israel as adopted members of the nation of Israel (p. 172).

Interestingly, Garrett does not believe there is one unifying center to the Old Testament, despite the popularity of the search for such a concept. Many scholars struggle to connect Wisdom Literature to their proposed center. Garrett's solution is

to divide the Old Testament into two parts: Election Literature and Wisdom Literature. In other words, this separates Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs from the remaining books of the Old Testament (p. 171). While at first glance, this seems to be taking the path of least resistance, this distinction allows interpreters to avoid imposing the ideas of a given system on the text and to more honestly interpret the Old Testament (p. 172).

Election Literature is one of the areas Garrett applies these perspectives. Unsurprisingly, Garrett rejects the idea that the covenants are the unifying center of the Old Testament, and he also denies they build off one another. A key point in this argument is his distinction between unilateral (unconditional) and bilateral (conditional) covenants (p. 180). By demonstrating the differences between the types of covenants, he demonstrates each covenant, while related to one another, does not rely on the previous iteration.

Regarding the Law, Garrett argues for four functions of the law (pp. 234-239). Yet, what is more intriguing is his understanding of forgiveness in the Old Testament. He makes a compelling and biblically-based argument that animal sacrifice never was required for the forgiveness of sins. Rather, similar to baptism, animal sacrifices were an outward expression of inward repentance; forgiveness is granted purely on the basis of God's mercy (p. 241-242).

Garrett achieves his goal of providing a solution to the problem of the Old Testament and demonstrates the viability of his solution. There is seemingly no end to volumes on the theology of the Old Testament, but Garrett's volume is a helpful addition to this field. His proposals and perspectives differ enough from previous scholarship to be unique, yet they do not come close to departing from orthodoxy. This volume is best-suited for a seminary student, but anyone would benefit from this book. Even if one does not agree with all of Garrett's conclusions, it will certainly challenge readers to re-evaluate how they read and interpret the Old Testament. Perhaps the most frustrating aspect of this work was that Garrett did not have the space to address Wisdom Literature or to go more in-depth in his various topics. Yet, throughout the book, he promises future volumes, and hopefully, these volumes will be as great of assets to the field as this volume.

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Hays, Richard, B. *Reading with the Grain of Scripture*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020. 479 pp. $55.00, Hardcover.

Richard Hays is Professor Emeritus of New Testament of Duke Divinity School. He is the author of several books, one of the most notable being his 1989 *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*. This book is a set of twenty-one essays generally dealing with the subject of hermeneutics, representing something of the capstone of

Hays's career, a highlight reel of both recent writings and others culled from previous decades. They are very much a collection commemorative of an illustrious presence in the field of New Testament studies, with each representing some of Hays's highest-level writing and strongest argumentation relative to each issue discussed.

The book is divided into four parts, proceeding in stepwise fashion as Hays moves from the groundwork of interpretive method into the person of Jesus himself and how he has been understood by scholars, into Pauline theology, and finally into the broader New Testament as a whole and the theology that characterizes it. The essays, as Hays notes (p. 3), follow six recurrent themes, namely narrative analysis, figural coherence between the Old and New Testaments, the centrality of Jesus's resurrection, eschatological hope, approaching texts with humility and trust, and the importance of reading scripture within and for the community of faith.

Part one begins with a reflection on the task of interpretation, with four essays addressing the unity and diversity of the scriptural narrative. First, he critically reviews the effects of higher criticism on the idea of unity among biblical texts, and illustrates how texts viewed as disjunctive actually "demonstrate a surprising coherence" (p. 22). Second, he explores the possibility of a renaissance in "theological exegesis", that is, reading scripture as a person of faith through the lens of faith. He attests that theological exegesis "is a practice of and for the church" (p. 36), which "attends to the literary wholeness of the individual scriptural witness" (p. 37). Third, he discusses the central role of Jesus's resurrection, noting scholarly engagements with it and explaining how reading in light of the resurrection transforms how a text is understood. Fourth, he elucidates his idea of figural reading, which establishes a connection between two texts in a way that an earlier text signifies not only itself but also a later text, while the later text involves or fulfills the first. This "retrospective… pattern of correspondence" leads to a discernment of an intricate coherence between narratives (p. 74).

In part two, Hays explores the problem of knowing the historical Jesus through three reviews of scholarly approaches and an exceptional essay with his own reconstruction of Jesus. He initially takes on the methodology and conclusions of the "Jesus Seminar", reflecting that "if Jesus said only the sorts of things judged authentic by the Seminar, it is very difficult to see how he could have been mistaken by Jewish and Roman authorities as a messianic pretender who needed to be executed" (p. 97). Hays then evaluates the methodology and contributions of N.T. Wright, both applauding Wright's analytical depth and attention to historical context and also critiquing his methodological "over-systemization" (p. 117) and lack of focus on "narrative identity" (p. 119). He then turns to an assessment of Catholic scholarship, providing a mixed review of Cardinal Ratzinger's treatment of Jesus. Hays applauds Ratzinger's focus on Jesus's divine identity, but critiques him for "downplaying the apocalyptic content of Jesus's message" (p. 126). Lastly, in what is perhaps his strongest essay, Hays proposes his own methodology and guidelines for locating the

Jesus of history, attending to the context, narrative logic, representation of Jesus by each of the available sources individually.

Part three includes seven essays on Paul, the first six on theological issues and the last concerning Paul's relationship to his portrayal in Acts. In his exploration of Paul's Christology and soteriology, Hays draws attention to the role of narrative. He notes that for Paul, Jesus's identity is "disclosed in a seamless narrative running from creation to the cross to the resurrection to the eschaton" (p. 151). Similarly, Hays asserts that Paul's soteriology is "unintelligible apart from a narrative framework" (p. 170). Hays then explores Paul's apocalyptic thought and how this influences his relationship to Judaism, noting that for Paul, Christ "leads him not to a rejection of Israel's sacred history but to a retrospective hermeneutical transformation of Israel's story" (186). Hays's intertextual emphasis also comes out in three essays dealing with Romans, in which he examines Paul's pneumatology, his attitude toward Torah, as well as his overall approach to Judaism and the place of Israel in God's plan. In his final essay, he questions the idea of a dissonance between Paul and the Lukan portrayal of him, examining Old Testament references common to both Acts and the Pauline corpus.

The six essays of part four begin with an exploration of the Christology of Revelation, with Hays arguing that the imagery of the book is best grasped through a reading that treats it as an intertextually rich literary whole. Hays then includes two essays in response to other scholars, with the first seeking to refute the idea that Hebrews proposes a supersessionist theology, and the second critiquing Bultmann's view of Pauline anthropology. This is followed by creative treatments of the different roles of law both in the Old Testament and in modern society, as well as a reading of Romans in tandem with the Nicene Creed, noting confessional elements linking the ecclesiology of both. Hays finishes with an essay on the importance of eschatology for understanding scripture, and how a biblical perspective on eschatology can be distinguished from cultural aberrations and perversions.

Hays concludes with an encouraging call to move from a hermeneutic of suspicion to a "hermeneutic of trust", which he defines as "a way of seeing the whole world through the lens of the kerygma", a posture of reading and exegesis which relies on God in the midst of mystery and yet-unfulfilled hopes (p. 399). One of Hays's greatest strengths is his winsome but rigorous way of analyzing narrative. This is a common theme shining through each essay, whether speaking of the larger theological narrative of the canon or the narrative elements of individual texts. Hays's emphasis on intertextual relationships also greatly accents an otherwise exemplary collection.

From a critical standpoint, a quibble for some readers will be that a number of essays are dated, and thus do not represent the current state of the field. For example, Hays often engages with scholars like Bultmann and Crossan in a manner reflecting a previous generation of scholarship. Such engagements highlight Hays's

own distinguishment of himself from other scholars but limit the book's usefulness to contemporary readers. Even so, the essays were substantive, and testify to the difference that his work has made. This book is certainly recommended for those seeking to listen to the resounding voice of a scholar with a high view of the text, and one who holds a balance between churchman and academic. It will make an excellent addition to the library of one who wants to know how biblical studies came to where it is today, and to what foundation it owes its future trajectory.

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Fabricius, Steffi. *Pauline Hamartiology: Conceptualisation and Transferences*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018, pp. 312, €109.00, hardback.

Steffi Fabricius is a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Siegen where she also teaches theology. She earned her PhD in Systematic Theology at the Technical University of Dortmund where she has also worked as a research assistant in the English Linguistics department. The book under review is a slightly adapted version of her doctoral dissertation similarly titled *Pauline Hamartiology: Conceptualisations and Translationes. Positioning Cognitive Semantic Theory and Method within Theology.* Fabricius' research interests lie at the intersect of theology and cognitive linguistics and the current work is a formidable example of this kind of interdisciplinary work.

In the very short introductory chapter, the author presents a brief sketch of what she will be arguing throughout the book. Though not an explicit thesis, Fabricius suggests that in Paul's undisputed epistles we see *six* conceptual metaphorical mappings that shape his experience and understanding of ἁμαρτία as an existential powerful state: ἁμαρτία as an action, ἁμαρτία as an event, ἁμαρτία as an object, ἁμαρτία as a state, ἁμαρτία as a power, and ἁμαρτία as a slave master (3). Chapter 2 introduces the state of research on Paul's understanding of ἁμαρτία. After reviewing proposals for personifications of sin stemming out of the concept of sin as action (Röhser, Käsemann, Dibelius), sin as demonic entity (Hagenow, Southall, Gunton), and sin as a power (Umbach, Carter), Fabricius observes that scholars often "emphasise one specific attribute of sin and thereby seem to lose the original multi-layeredness of Pauline thought" (25).

The next two chapters lay down the methodological foundations for Fabricius' approach to Paul's use of ἁμαρτία. Chapter 3 introduces the reader to the classical theory of language and categorization as well as to what the author terms the "cognitive turn" and the tools of cognitive linguistics she will be employing. Chapter 4 then positions cognitive semantics within the discipline of theology. Here, she rejects Aristotelian substance ontology (85) and proposes a relational ontology that is grounded on metaphorical language.

Fabricius refers to chapter 5 as the major analytical chapter of her study, which takes up 131 of the book's 267 pages of core content. The chapter is divided into eight subsections and a conclusion, each building on the previous and ultimately developing the author's main argument. She begins by employing Langacker's cognitive grammar to establish ἁμαρτάνω as the morphological and conceptual base of (ὁ) ἁμαρτωλός and ἁμαρτία. She examines Paul's language to show the Apostle's conception of ἁμαρτία first as an action and ultimately as the mega-metaphor of ἁμαρτία as an existential powerful state via the Event-Structure metaphor (170ff). The chapter ends with a series of subsections looking at how σάρξ, νόμος, θάνατος, and Χριστός fit into her "mega metaphor."

In chapter 6, Fabricius revisits her conclusions from the previous chapter as a reflection of Paul's metaphorical ontological thinking. She extrapolates her conclusions about Paul's conception of ἁμαρτία and suggests that cognitive semantics and embodied realism justify the idea of an entire metaphorical ontology of man in relation to God.

Unfortunately, perhaps one of the first things readers might notice as they progress through the book is the frequency of awkward English constructions, grammatical mistakes, and unclear terminology. Because the book itself is already very technical and much of the jargon assumes a lot from the reader in the areas of philosophy (e.g. the distinction between *reality* and *actuality*, *ontic* and *ontological*) and cognitive linguistics (e.g. *translatio*, *verborum metaphora*, idealized cognitive models, running blends), the occasional hurdles with the English can make the book feel tedious at times.

I bring this up first because readers should know that the benefit of having Fabricius' detailed and relevant exegesis in English (rather than in her native German tongue), more than makes up for the occasional obstacles of her English.

The core of Fabricius' argument, namely, that ἁμαρτία is conceptualized by Paul as an existential powerful state is very well presented and compelling. Fabricius speaks competently about the various ways ἁμαρτία has been understood by theologians and New Testament scholars and places her own research well within the contemporary conversation. One of the most illuminating insights pertains to how Paul's multivalent conception of ἁμαρτία must be understood in light of the metonymically related conceptualization of ἁμαρτία as an action, ἁμαρτία as an event, ἁμαρτία as a state, and ἁμαρτία as a power. Fabricius carefully shows how the conceptual mappings of the Event-Structure metaphor ACTION IS MOTION and EVENTS ARE ACTIONS work together with the metaphors STATES ARE EVENTS, CHANGE IS MOTION, and CAUSES ARE FORCES to hold these various elements together.

The detail and breadth with which she builds her cognitive semantic argument is fascinating and robust. The book would have made a significant enough contribution to the field had she simply presented her case for ἁμαρτία. By then placing σάρξ, νόμος, θάνατος, and Χριστός within the Apostle's conceptual network, Fabricius ends

up providing an incredibly helpful conceptual anthropology. It was not always clear, however, why Fabricius ordered the *hypothetical syllogisms* with ACTIVE ENCLOSING containers the way she did. For example, in Figure 19, she places postbaptismal ontic existence ἐν Χριστῷ and ἐν πενύματι *within* the CONTAINER of existence ὑπὸ χάριν rather than the other way around (208). Certainly, an argument could be made either way, but an explanation for her ordering is missing.

More significantly, some of Fabricius' broader anthropological conclusions about the Christian's relationship to sin don't seem to fit very well with the exegetical and cognitive linguistic analysis she presents. She rightly notes that though postbaptismal man is now free to walk κατὰ πνεύματα and not κατὰ σάρκα, he is still ἐν σαρκί. It follows, then, that ἁμαρτία still exerts pressure on the Christian because of his existence ἐν σαρκί. However, Fabricius goes further and says that sin can still exercise dominion on the believer and that though he is no longer ὑφ' ἁμαρτία, he is still nonetheless ἐν ἁμαρτία (215). Moreover, she concludes that "with the Christ event turning man postconversionally into Christians, man as slave is torn between two masters…he is still attached to the old one with the fleshly body" (229). Though the reader might expect her to conclude that the Christ event has utterly freed the Christian to his old master ἁμαρτία, Romans 7:15–23 seems to give Fabricius pause in suggesting that. Though she acknowledges the interpretive debates on Romans 7 in a footnote, one would expect a more robust defense of her interpretation of Romans 7, especially as it seems to undermine some of her fundamental conclusions about Paul's conceptual understanding of being ἐν ἁμαρτία and ἐν Χριστός.

Overall, Fabricius' work is one of the most comprehensive and compelling treatments of Paul's understanding of sin. Her work makes important hermeneutical, hamartiological, and anthropological arguments that need to be considered in the fields of theology and biblical studies. My only fear is that the technical nature of her study, the familiarity with the subject matter she assumes from her readers, and her interdisciplinary approach might prove too daunting for many who would otherwise benefit greatly from it.

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Hixson, Elijah, and Peter J. Gurry, eds. *Myths and Mistakes in New Testament Textual Criticism*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019, pp. 372, $40, softcover.

The editors of this volume are well-known among textual critics. Elijah Hixson is a research associate in New Testament Text and Language at Tyndale House at Cambridge. Peter J. Gurry is assistant professor of New Testament at Phoenix Seminary. Both have published extensively on text critical issues and contribute to

evangelicaltextualcriticism.blogspot.com. The book examines overstated claims, dated information, and distorted statistics by well-meaning apologists.

Chapter One is an introduction by the editors who provide a brief overview of the contents of the book. They resonate with apologists who desire to defend the New Testament text against critics. However, Bible students must not support the text with well-intentioned but ignorant falsehoods. If believers continue to perpetuate errors then they perform a disservice, not a defense. Chapter Two addresses myths about autographs. Certain evangelicals purport that some original autographs lasted for centuries. Timothy Mitchell, however, tempers such claims. Climate, persecution, wars, and natural disasters are a few factors that undercut this myth.

Jacob Peterson takes on math myths in Chapter Three. Those who appeal to quantities of manuscripts to support textual accuracy are mistaken. Instead, it is safer to weigh manuscripts. Some apologists sensationally suggest 24,000 Greek manuscripts are available. Instead, a number from 5,100 to 5,300 is more accurate. Chapter Four addresses popular claims on how much better the Greek text of today is compared to the reconstruction of other ancient texts. But James B. Prothro reminds that statistical comparisons are often based on old data and only demonstrate the New Testament has a better textual basis.

Chapters Five and Six take aim at dating myths and compose two of the best chapters. In Chapter Five, Hixson argues against the common perception that the dates for the earliest manuscripts can be narrowed down. An apt illustration is $^{P}52$, a fragment of the Gospel of John that has been dated to AD 125. Hixson surveys dating methods and concludes that a range of fifty to one hundred years is more legitimate. This would make $^{P}52$ closer to AD 200. Gregory Lanier continues the treatment of dating myths in Chapter Six. Specifically, he takes on the assumption that younger manuscripts are less reliable. This is normally an attack against the *Textus Receptus*. Lanier contends, however, that a multitude of Byzantine readings can be traced to the 200s.

Myths about copyists, copies, and transmission are tackled in the next three chapters. In Chapter Seven, Zachary Cole addresses the quality of copyists and misinterpretations from popular apologists. There were both competent and incompetent scribes. Generally speaking, they were trained and capable and give moderns confidence in the accurate transmission of the text. Nevertheless, copyists did make mistakes, and Peter Malik responds to copying myths in Chapter Eight. This chapter assumes knowledge of text criticism and transcriptional probabilities (what scribes were likely to correct). Malik surveys various ways that scribes corrected mistakes. Thus, there are many mistakes, but only a few examples of theologically-motivated changes. Chapter Nine also expects readers to know something about textual criticism. Matthew Solomon addresses the idea that the textual apparatus at the bottom of Greek texts only mention primary manuscripts. The bottom line is

that although there are many variants, and all variants have some value, they are not determined to be part of the initial text.

In Chapter Ten, coeditor Gurry confronts the popular myth that states textual variants have no effect on Christian doctrine. To the contrary, Gurry affirms that some variants "really do touch on important doctrines" (p. 193). There are half a million textual variants, but only a few dozen are theologically significant. However, when textual scholars address them calmly, these variants do not threaten doctrine. Yet Chapter Eleven confirms some variants are theologically driven. Robert Marcello considers how much and how influential "orthodox corruption" actually is. He examines two texts (Codex Bezae and ^{P}72) and two examples (Matt. 24:36; John 1:18). Marcello concludes that some scribes did change the text for theological reasons, but "variants that might appear to be theologically motivated are better explained by other factors" (p. 227). The reliability of the text of the New Testament is not at stake.

A favorite myth is that the New Testament can be reconstructed (except for eleven verses) from the quotations of the church fathers. Chapter Twelve, written by Andrew Blaski, counters that this is simply not true. There are few exact quotes and patristic theology affects their quotes. Nevertheless, the church fathers are valuable and provide a window into early transmission history. In Chapter Thirteen, the myth that early Christians reserved the codex for canonical books is answered by John Meade. The codex was preferred over the scroll but that does not make all of its enclosed books canonical. The better approach is to study the canon lists to understand how the early church interpreted codex contents.

Chapter Fourteen discusses myths about early translations. Jeremiah Coogan raises doubts that there are ten thousand Latin manuscripts. The number is closer to one thousand. Coogan also surveys Syriac and Coptic versions. Although the number of early versions is less than what is popularly taught, they remain valuable in noting the absence or presence of textual variants. Chapter Fifteen fittingly concludes the book with modern translations. Edgar Battad Ebojo does not mention myths. Instead, he discusses how modern versions report their New Testament variant readings. Some versions do not use footnotes with textual variants while others do. Some versions include disputed passages in the text whereas others relegate them to footnotes. The translators themselves and the communities they translate for make these decisions. The bottom line is, "we should not expect modern translations to be the main place for explaining text-critical issues" (p. 323). The book concludes with a 28-page bibliography and name, subject, scripture, ancient writing, and manuscript indexes.

Each chapter of *Myths and Mistakes* offers valuable advice. This book may not address all the text-critical myths but the popular ones are evident and available in this one volume. Overall, the book is well-structured. Each chapter and topic flows nicely into the next. There is some unavoidable overlap. Several authors mention the usual suspects of Mark 1:1; 16:9-20; and John 7:53-8:11. Other textual examples would strengthen the arguments. But with so many authors it is understandable

that they individually settled on similar verses. As the title suggests there is an assumption that readers are knowledgeable of the basic principles of textual criticism. Nevertheless, pastors can easily adapt these chapters and teach their parishioners. Students with biblical introductory classes behind them can navigate these pages with little difficulty.

Chapters Three and Six are particularly helpful in debates with church members mired in King James Version onlyism. The study could easily be enlarged with another chapter on this persistent problem nursed in the local church via the internet. Chapter Fourteen slighted potential discussion on Armenian, Ethiopic, Georgian, and other early translations. Latin, Coptic, and Syriac received in-depth treatment to the neglect of these languages. The chapter is the longest one but only by a page. Another three pages could have corrected this oversight.

The authors capably address the errors of both popular defenders and critics of the text. I winced several times because of my own repetition of these myths and mistakes. To know that famous and trustworthy evangelicals have also fallen prey to excess makes me feel only slightly less chagrined. The major accomplishment of this book is that the reliability of the New Testament is ably defended without resorting to exaggerations or loaded statistics. The book serves as a trustworthy guide to correct and update common errors. I heartily recommend this book to the church and academy.

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Peppiatt, Lucy. *Rediscovering Scripture's Vision for Women: Fresh Perspectives on Disputed Texts*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019, pp.162, $22, paperback.

Lucy Peppiatt is Principal of Westminster Theological Centre, UK. *Rediscovering Scripture's Vision for Women* is her fourth monograph, building on, expanding, and bringing to a wider audience her previous scholarly work on women in 1 Corinthians 11-14. Winner of the 2019 IVP Academic Reader's Choice Award, the book provides an accessible and succinct biblical and theological case for the full equality and inclusion of women in the home, church, and ministry.

Peppiatt notes that her aim in writing is, as the title of the book suggests, that "those who read it . . . will catch a vision of God's gracious will to set women free" (p. xiv). Consistent with that aim, the book offers a positive and constructive presentation of the case for the full inclusion of women. It is wholeheartedly and unashamedly "mutualist" (p. 6) (a term Peppiatt prefers to "egalitarian")—arguing that the "overturning of an entrenched patriarchal order" (p. 2) is not just permitted but is endorsed by scripture. This is not to say that Peppiatt is naïve to the weight of church history, the persistence of hierarchicalist views and practice in the contemporary

church, nor to the role of the bible within such arguments and practices. And yet she remains convinced—mutualism is not driven by culture, but the opposite: "In this book I argue that those of us who see the overturning of male dominance in the Scriptures are rediscovering an ancient message that has been overlaid and distorted by years and years of reading, teaching, preaching, and writing by those who assumed that the patriarchal world they lived in, which they sometimes saw reflected in the Bible, was the one that God had ordained" (p. 5).

This book is broad-ranging, addressing socio-cultural, hermeneutical, exegetical, and theological issues across the whole sweep of the bible. At the same time though, it is remarkably focused and, in places, quite detailed. Peppiatt does not avoid the hard questions or contested texts but tackles them with confidence and rigour.

Chapter One considers the male-centred nature of historic Christianity and its impact on women, including male language for God, the maleness of Jesus, the twelve male disciples, and whether the Trinity tells us anything about how men and women should relate. Peppiatt traces the damaging impact of the privileging of maleness in Christian history, theology, and the history of interpretation, largely through an improper concretising of God's accommodation in revelation. She reminds us simply that "God reveals himself through a man, but he is not, of course, merely a man" (p. 17). Metaphor and anthropomorphism in revelation tell us "something profound, true, and meaningful about God, but . . . does not and cannot tell us *all* that we can know" (p. 17). True to the rationale of the book, Peppiatt then goes on to revive and remind us of the stories of the female and the feminine that lie alongside these privileged narratives. She points to the profound strength and resilience of women across the ages, and to the power of the Christian gospel to cut through Christian culture: "one of the reasons for the deep attraction and appeal of Christianity to women is rooted in a profound instinct that we are not really excluded after all, despite what outward circumstances tell us" (p. 11).

Chapter two draws in more detail some of the stories of women in the scriptures: Mary the mother of Jesus, and women as "disciples, patrons and witnesses." This leads on to a discussion of what it means to be baptised into Christ, and part of the "one new humanity" (Eph 2), drawing out not just the personal but the concrete social and corporate implications of this new reality. Here Peppiatt draws on a range of New Testament texts (Eph 2; Phil; 1 Cor 11; Gal) and commentators, particularly John Barclay's work on Galatians. Regarding the problem of the "particularity" of Jesus, Peppiatt notes that this applies to all people, not just women ("In an important way, in all his particularities, Jesus of Nazareth was unlike the majority of the entire human population that has ever existed," p. 40). But again, Peppiatt presents not just a defense but a positive vision: "Jesus of Nazareth stands for the one the Jews believed had all the honor and privilege before God—the free Jewish male. That women, slaves, and children were set free to identify with a free Jewish male in the temple of God, communicated to them that they too held the place of highest honor in

the closest proximity to God" (p. 40). She emphasises an understanding of salvation in participatory terms, meaning therefore that "there is nothing in Christ that is other to woman, and nothing in woman that is alien to Christ as they are made for union with one another" (p. 42).

Chapter 3 examines the creation stories and how different readings yield radically different results in terms of how we perceive a woman's natural place in creation, the family, and society. A particular strength of this chapter is its demonstration of how different biblical texts (here Gen 2 and 1 Cor 11:2-10) can be unreflectively "mutually interpreting," their exegetical results unravelling once a particular hermeneutical spiral is broken. Peppiatt is unflinching in naming the implications of finding "headship" theology in Genesis 2 (men are closer to God, women relate to God through men (p. 47)), and competently presents the (now quite well known) flaws in this reading, highlighting the implications for our interpretation of NT texts (1 Cor 11:2-16; Eph 5).

Chapter 4 takes up these NT texts and explores the meaning of headship (*kephale)* in more detail. This chapter condenses (and in parts reproduces) Peppiatt's earlier publications on 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, and 1 Corinthians 14. Those who were unconvinced by Peppiatt's account of Paul's rhetorical strategy there (that verses 7-9 do not represent Paul's own view but that of his opponents), will likely remain so here. However, the discussion is detailed and well-informed, the argument is well-made, and represents some of the closest and most recent scholarship on this text, even as it remains controversial. Peppiatt's survey of the limitations of traditional interpretations, and discussion of the text's difficulties is insightful and worthwhile. Even if her preferred reading does not convince all readers, the textual difficulties she aims to address remain, as does her basic point that any reading depends on interpretative *choices*.

Chapters 5 & 6 deal with the New Testament theology of marriage. Moving on from the previous discussion about *kephale*, these chapters include discussion of the NT household codes, Phil 2, and the role of the doctrine of the Trinity in a theology of marriage. Peppiatt examines the hierarchicalist view presented by Tim and Kathy Keller in their popular marriage book *The Meaning of Marriage* (chapter 5), before presenting her case for the mutualist view (chapter 6). Here she offers a reading of the household codes that demonstrates the radically redefined role of the Christian husband as self-sacrificial in order to empower others, which she describes as (in the first-century context) "a marriage of equals among unequals" (p. 109).

Chapter 7 examines the role of women in the New Testament church, asking (as Scot McKnight repeatedly asks us to): what did they do? Peppiatt argues that the New Testament describes multiple women who functioned as leaders, as prophets, apostles and teachers. It tackles hermeneutical questions about how to "apply" these texts to today's debates about leadership "offices" such as priest, bishop, etc., before turning to ecclesiology and Paul's body metaphor (1 Cor 12) and the implications

for priesthood as “a mediating and representative role” (p. 138). Peppiatt draws out the way that male bias in translation and interpretation has distorted what has been visible to us in scripture.

The final chapter (Chapter 8) deals with what is perhaps the most common—and often considered the most decisive—objection to women’s leadership in the church: 1 Timothy 2:8-15. Peppiatt notes the persistent problems with a “plain reading,” and outlines contemporary work (including scholarship on the Artemis cult by Gary Hoag and Sandra Glahn) that might account for its most problematic elements, whilst also providing a reading of Paul here more consistent with his teaching and practice in other texts. But this text is left till last as Peppiatt argues (as she has throughout) that our readings of it are in part “determined by what we bring to the text” (p. 140)—the consistent story that we see the bible telling, and the way texts are “mutually interpreting.” In other words, there is no such thing as a “plain reading.”

Peppiatt’s book covers a lot of ground. It hits all the key texts and theological issues. That it does so in 150 pages makes it at once accessible and widely useful, but simultaneously open to critique from those who will want more depth or detail. But, this is not the aim of the book. It provides a broad sweep and a grand vision, laying out a positive case for the mutualist view. As an attempt to present a consistent picture throughout all of scripture it is necessarily broad.

An important achievement of the book is its insistence on the mutually interpreting nature of scripture on this issue: its reminder of how the parts relate to the whole and the whole to the parts. For those who insist then on coming at this issue through one text, or even one theological category, it will likely not be convincing (though I hope it might be challenging). But, as Peppiatt continually reminds us, these interpretative moves are a choice, and “at the end of the day, each of us must take responsibility for our own reading, interpretation, and application of scripture” (p. 158). At the very least, the book puts the lie to the claim that mutualists (or egalitarians) do not take scripture seriously. Peppiatt reads the bible as scripture and works hard to faithfully and theologically interpret it. She makes use of respected New Testament and theological scholarship (including her own), though the book is clearly intended to be accessible to a non-academic audience.

If I could go back in time, this is the book I would give to my 17-year-old self when I first encountered these questions. 20+ years later and with my own views now securely settled, this book still provides powerful encouragement and hope.

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Crowe, Brandon D. *The Hope of Israel: The Resurrection of Christ in the Acts of the Apostles.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020. 193 pages $29.99, Paperback.

The resurrection of the body was ancient Israel's hope, not the hope of ancient Greece or Rome.

The apostle Paul said he was in chains because of "the hope of Israel" (Acts 28:20; cf. 23:6; 24:15, 21; 26:6-8). The God of Israel fulfilled this hope by first raising Jesus the Messiah from the dead (Acts 26:22-23). Throughout the Acts of the Apostles we see this emphasis on the resurrection of Jesus the Christ. Brandon D. Crowe has written an excellent study of this emphasis. He is associate professor of New Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary.

Crowe follows the sound method of first examining the biblical texts, each in a holistic way in its written context, and then drawing from them more general conclusions. The three pillars of the resurrection theme in Acts are the speech by the apostle Peter in Jerusalem at Pentecost (Acts 2), the speech by the apostle Paul at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13), and his defense before King Agrippa II in Caesarea (Acts 26). Crowe also looks at additional resurrection statements in Acts by Peter, Paul, James, Stephen, Philip, and others. In the first part of the volume he works through these texts. In the second part he discusses in more general terms the theological significance of the resurrection in Acts.

In terms of the resurrection's significance, Crowe distinguishes between the accomplishment of salvation in history and the benefits of salvation. For Luke, he argues, Christ's resurrection is "a singular turning point in the accomplishment of salvation that ushers in the age of the exalted Messiah" (p. 5). The resurrection, ascension, and exaltation are best seen as "one movement of Jesus's experience of glory" (p. 106). His resurrection marked the beginning of the resurrection age and inaugurated the eschatological age of the Spirit, both promised by Moses and the Prophets. As a result, it signals key redemptive-historical shifts with respect to the temple in Jerusalem as the center of worship and the defining marks of sabbath, dietary laws, and circumcision. With Christ's exaltation begins the worldwide mission.

While Christ's resurrection marks the start of something new regarding the history of salvation, Luke also strongly affirms continuity across the ages from Moses and the Prophets to the public ministry of Jesus before his resurrection recorded in Luke's Gospel and on to his post-resurrection continuing work as recorded in Acts. Examples of continuity evident in Luke-Acts include the forgiveness of sins, justification, and the presence and work of the Holy Spirit.

Crowe makes a persuasive argument that one of Luke's primary aims is to defend the Old Testament. "Luke understands the resurrection of Jesus to be the fulfillment of and definitive demonstration of the Scriptures' truthfulness" (p. 149). It is impressive how many Old Testament texts are explicitly cited in Acts with respect

to the resurrection, such as Psalms 2, 16, 110, and 118. Crowe convincingly contends that the rebuilding of David's tent promised in Amos 9:11-12 and referenced by James (Acts 15:15-18) refers to the restoration of the Davidic dynasty accomplished by Jesus's resurrection. Crowe also offers a nice summary of additional Old Testament texts and intertestamental texts about the resurrection, which corroborate the claim that the resurrection was Israel's hope: "for one to understand the resurrection one must understand the [Old Testament] Scriptures; likewise, to understand the [Old Testament] Scriptures one must believe in the resurrection" (p. 170).

He considers how Acts relates to the New Testament canon and New Testament theology. Acts connects with both the Gospels and the Epistles, and its emphasis on the resurrection of Jesus theologically unites Acts with the rest of the New Testament. He concludes his study with a brief discussion of ways in which the physical resurrection of Jesus sets forth the distinctiveness of the early Christian message in the ancient world.

Overall I found Crowe's exegesis of the texts to be very strong, holistic, contextual, and well-versed in the secondary literature. While my overall assessment of Crowe's work is very positive indeed, I did find some of his positions unconvincing. Jesus' statement on the bodily resurrection in Luke 20:27-40 is important for the topic of "the hope of Israel." Crowe follows a common interpretation that Jesus was referring to the intermediate state of each patriarch's soul. It seems more likely to me that Jesus was referring to their future bodily resurrection. Although they are bodily dead now, at the resurrection they bodily live to God because their God is not the God of the dead but of the living.[1] Regarding the Transfiguration, the relevant texts in the Synoptics and Second Peter depict the event as more about Christology than proleptic of Jesus' future resurrection as Crowe maintains. At his Transfiguration the majesty of his deity as the Son shone in and through his human nature.

I appreciate Crowe's attempt to relate his findings to systematics, but in a few places it strikes me as trying to put a systematics square peg into a biblical round hole. He speaks in terms of God "rewarding" Jesus with the resurrection (pp. 109-110). The speeches in Acts express things in a different way, as setting forth the contrast between Jerusalem's response to Jesus in rejecting him and the response of their God in raising him up from the dead and highly honoring him. I am also not persuaded by Crowe's Reformed view that sees Jesus's exaltation as occurring in both natures, as obtaining a glory in both natures which Jesus did not previously have (p. 109). Yet these issues are rather secondary to Crowe's focus.

Given all the religious confusion and distracting noise in today's context, American Christians need to embark on the journey of rediscovering biblical

1. For a discussion, see Jeffrey A. Gibbs, *Matthew 21:1-28:20* (Concordia Commentary series; St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2018): 1132-1147.

Christianity. When we read through all 66 biblical books in a serious, holistic, and contextual way, we might be surprised at what we encounter. There might emerge in the process accents and emphases that have been overlooked. Crowe's careful study of the resurrection in The Acts of the Apostles offers such fresh insights. I highly recommend it. By virtue of our connection with the crucified and risen Messiah of Israel, Jesus of Nazareth, we too wait and yearn for "the hope of Israel," our bodily resurrection unto eternal life.

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Crisp, Oliver D., James M. Arcadi, and Jordan Wessling, *The Nature and Promise of Analytic Theology*. Leiden: Brill, 2019. vi + 104 pp. €70.00/$84.00.

Ever since the publication of the edited volume, *Analytic Theology: News Essays in the Philosophy of Theology*, which formally launched the analytic theology movement in 2009, questions and confusions remain as to what exactly analytic theology (AT) is. Not only do scholars from various disciplines take issue with the qualifier *analytic* in AT, a number of them doubt that AT can even be called *theology* (e.g., Martin Westerholm, "Analytic Theology and Contemporary Inquiry," *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 80, no. 3 [2019]: 230–54). After ten years of various attempts at definition, Oliver Crisp as the co-founder of the movement, together with some of his A-Team, James Arcadi and Jordan Wessling, once again take up the task of restating and clarifying a definition in their *The Nature and Promise of Analytic Theology*. In writing this brief, yet substantive monograph, Crisp et al.'s ultimate aim is not simply to respond to some common misunderstandings to AT; rather they aim to highlight how AT has been operating and developing in the past and how it can contribute further to the task of theological construction today.

This monograph is structured around four sets of arguments that serve as cumulative cases for the legitimacy of AT and its benefits. Chapter 1 begins with further defense and clarification of the formal definition of AT given by Michael Rea in 2009 that has since become standard. In so doing, Crisp, Arcadi, and Wessling note the continuing significance of Rea's paradigmatic prescriptions (P1–P5) of what minimally counts as the analytic style of AT (p. 5). Darren Sarisky ("Biblical Interpretation and Analytic Reflection," *Journal of Analytic Theology* 6 [2018]: 164–65) provides a helpful summary of Rea's P1–P5:

> Analytic philosophers . . . seek to formulate their reasoning so that their core affirmations, or the skeletal outline of their case, could in principle enter into the structure of an argument that may be set out via formal logic; they prioritize precision of statement, transparency of meaning, and the logical coherence of all the beliefs under examination; they write with an austerity

> of style that eschews non-literal language unless it seems indispensable for making a point; they tend to break down complex concepts as much as possible, with the result that they are resolved into more rudimentary elements that are themselves clear and distinct; finally, they move by way of conceptual analysis toward proposals that can cope as well as possible with potential counterexamples.

While agreeing with Rea that AT minimally is defined as an approach to theology that uses the ambitions and style that are distinctive of analytic philosophy, Crisp, Arcadi, and Wessling propose that AT should also be understood as an intellectual culture. According to them the sociological qualifier, 'intellectual culture,' "helps explain why the nature of analytic theology is difficult to communicate to those who have not experienced firsthand the goals and ways of reasoning that permeate analytic approaches to doctrine" (p. 3). Such a qualifier not only requires an analytic theologian to be "bilingual" in the sense that one has to be able to speak fluently in the languages of analytic philosophy and theology (p. 12–13), but it elucidates partly why many non-analytic thinkers keep misunderstanding what analytic theologians are doing. Lastly, they suggest that AT additionally can be thought of as a "research program" with some common theological commitments that include "[1] some form of theological realism; [2] some claim about the truth-aptness, and truth-aimed nature of analytic theology; and [3] some claim about the importance of providing theological arguments for substantive doctrinal claims that reflect the sort of intellectual virtues and sensibilities prized by analytic theologians" (p. 15). These commitments, though certainly not shared by *all* analytic theologians, do highlight the *theological* nature more substantively rather than just the analytic style of AT.

In chapter 2, Crisp, Arcadi, and Wessling examine a fourteenth century method of doing theology that serves as a methodological antecedent for AT. In that medieval period, several theologians, including Durandus of St.-Pourçain, Peter Aureoli, Godfrey of Fontains, Gregory of Rimini, and Peter of Candia, operate with what was called as "declarative theology" (p. 20). Durandus, for example, defines declarative theology as "a lasting quality of the soul by means of which the faith and those things handed down in Sacred Scripture are defended and clarified by using principles that we know better" (p. 21). Moreover, following Aureoli, Crisp, Arcadi, and Wessling mention four functions of declarative theology that can benefit believers, for they might "(a) not understand the terms utilized in the articles, (b) come across defeaters to their belief in the articles, (c) lack examples or analogies, and (d) fail to have probable arguments to support their belief" (p. 25). Just like declarative theology, which uses philosophical reasoning to "imagine in a better and clearer way the things he believes," AT is therefore "unique among methodologies on offer in contemporary Christian theology" (p. 33).

Chapter 3 follows the general thesis of chapter 2 in securing AT as a genuine species of systematic theology. Crisp, Arcadi, and Wessling select three contemporary

theologians from various traditions, viz., John Webster, Brian Gerrish, and Gordon Kaufman, to demonstrate that, despite their differences as to what constitutes systematic theology, one can abstract from their work what Crisp and company call the "shared task" or the "conceptual threshold" for systematic theology (p. 38). Against critics who worry that AT is only philosophy or philosophy of religion in theology's clothing, Crisp, Arcadi, and Wessling show that AT, at its best, has indeed been committed to the shared task of "explicating the conceptual content of the Christian tradition . . . using particular religious texts that are part of the Christian tradition, including sacred scripture, as well as human reason, reflection, and praxis (particularly religious practices), as sources for theological judgments" (p. 38). Moreover, AT cannot easily be dismissed as ersatz theology for deploying a distinct (analytic) philosophical method in addition to the shared task, "since all theologians use philosophical ideas, and very often align themselves with one or more philosophical tradition (Aristotelian, Platonic, existential, continental, hermeneutical, and so on)" (p. 42).

Admittedly, there might be *some* analytic theologians who would not follow closely the shared task closely, either by going too far in attempting to explain away all genuine mysteries of the Christian faith, or by relying too much on what Robert Jenson called "secularized theology" (p. 50). However, one should not overstate the case that *all* AT practitioners operate in a uniform manner. As argued in chapter 1, Crisp, Arcadi, and Wessling remind the theological community that AT as an intellectual culture is not "a *bounded group* where a perimeter is policed so that one is either 'out' or 'in.' Rather, it is something more like what might be termed *a centered group*, where we can see a cluster of members that are right at the heart of the movement, and others less central, or more peripheral, with others still further out with some connection, but without being entirely identified with the movement" (pp. 52–53). In short, not all analytic theologians are created equal, so it demands a case-by-case analysis before one judges AT as insufficiently theological.

The final chapter ends with the summary points from the previous arguments and further highlights the promise of AT as a "generative research program" (p. 57). The writers give examples of AT's penchant of providing "theological models" in explicating core doctrines such as the Trinity and the incarnation, including recent developments in less popular ones like apophaticism, liturgy, the Eucharist, and more. Lastly, they note the ultimate appeal of AT: as an intellectual culture, it can indeed be "truly a global and ecumenical enterprise" (p. 67), even an interreligious one, though more work in areas of contextual or comparative AT are admittedly still in their infancy (p. 66). Notwithstanding, looking at how AT has been developing so far, I agree with Crisp, Arcadi, and Wessling that "it is perhaps not too bold to say that analytic theology represents one of the most significant developments in recent theological history" (p. 67).

In my estimation, therefore, this monograph succeeds in further clarifying what AT is and is not, and thus modestly promoting AT as an intellectual culture with a distinct, fruitful research program. By way of minor improvements, the authors could have included more thorough discussions (1) on the current state of the analytic/continental divide in philosophy, including how the two camps can work together to achieve the same theological goals, and (2) how AT can help theologians not only to "think God's thoughts after him," but also "to trace their unity" (i.e. the coherence between different *loci* in systematic theology) precisely because "God's thoughts cannot be opposed to one another and thus necessarily from an organic unity" (Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 4 vols., ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend, [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003–2008], 1:44). Perhaps (2) also can serve as a link between the typically narrow foci of analytic philosophy and continental philosophy that tend to be "system-builders," thus showing how both camps can and should cooperate in doing theology. With these two augmentations, I believe that this present work would further benefit many analytic and non-analytic thinkers alike in understanding AT, if not already.

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Swain, Scott. *The Trinity: An Introduction (Short Studies in Systematic Theology)*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020, pp. 154, $15.99, paperback.

Scott R. Swain serves as president and James Woodrow Hassell Professor of Systematic Theology at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, Florida. In addition to the book being reviewed, he has written *The God of the Gospel* and edited *Retrieving Eternal Generation*. Swain is an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church in America.

In *The Trinity: An Introduction*, Swain seeks to introduce the doctrine of the Trinity. As part of Crossway's series Short Studies in Systematic Theology, the goal of the present volume is to give readers a brief but accurate overview and introduction into the area of the Trinity. While it is a challenging assignment, Swain handles the doctrine of the Trinity with precision.

While not explicitly divided into sections, *The Trinity: An Introduction* functionally has three areas. In chapters 1-3, Swain helps readers gain their footing in thinking about issues of the Trinity. Chapters 1 and 2 cover fundamental matters of grammar and text types that discuss the Trinity. Swain focuses on the need to understand God as one existing in three persons, and these first two chapters focus on that unity of personhood. While focusing on the unity of the personhood of the Trinity, terms are carefully defined, and readers are pointed to specific Biblical texts that show the basic structure and contours of Trinitarian thinking. Chapter three is a helpful description and brief analysis of the doctrine of Divine Simplicity concerning

the Godhead. Simplicity is a difficult doctrine to comprehend, but Swain does an excellent job of helping readers grasp simplicity.

Chapters 4-6 could be described as section two, where Swain addresses issues related to each person of the Trinity. He carefully walks through issues related to all three persons of the Godhead while saturating each person's work with Scripture. Chapter four focuses on God the Father. By concentrating on grammar issues dealing with God the Father, it is possible to see the unique role that the Father plays in the personhood of the Trinity while not confusing the unity and other roles that the Son and Spirit operate. Readers will find Swain's work in chapter five on the Son particularly helpful. Noting the recent discussion and debate on Eternal Functional Subordinationism (EFS), Swain concisely explains the error as he sees it with EFS. While proponents of EFS will disagree with the presented argument, Swain's description of EFS is fair and charitable. The final chapter in this section covers the Spirit's work and the office that the Spirit occupies. Swain is careful to show readers how the Spirit operates while avoiding the issues in holding to EFS.

The final section of the book takes the reader back to the issue of the Godhead once more as chapters 7 and 8 covers the subject of God's work. In chapter seven, Swain reminds readers, "the works of God are not a matter of three friends getting together, each getting together, each doing his part, to accomplish a common goal. Nor are the works of God the exhibition of an indistinct force. The worlds of God are the works of the thrice-holy Trinity" (p. 108). Chapter 7 also returns to the issue of EFS one more time as the missions of God are explained and how those missions should not be seen as subordinationism. Instead, divine missions exhibit both the inseparable nature of God's external works and the Trinitarian shape of God's external works (p. 119). The final chapter of the work focuses on the end of God's work. Swain attempts to pull all of the material together and show how the Trinity helps the church and pastor's as they seek to minister. Swain quickly reminds readers that God's supreme end in His works is a supreme act of charity because nothing enriches God and nothing adds to His glory (p. 127). Readers are helped as they see that the triune God is on full display through preaching and the sacraments provided that He is exalted.

Swain's work on the Trinity is a valuable gift to students and the church alike. The aim of the series and Swain's ability readers seeking to dive deeper into the study of the Trinity will be well served. Not only is the work helpful for students, but lay leaders and church members will also find *The Trinity: An Introduction* an accessible entry point into studying the Trinity. As pastors and theologians need refresher material on Trinitarian issues, Swain's work should be recommended not only for its brevity but for its accessibility.

Swain is also helpful for those looking for concise, careful, and useful rebuttals to the issue of EFS. With only a few pages dedicated in multiple places in the book,

readers can find helpful answers to the debate surrounding the Trinity without feeling overwhelmed.

Readers will need to be aware that just because the volume is short does not mean a lack of technical terminology and work. While not surprising given the nature of the Trinity, but readers will need to be aware nonetheless. Also, while the series is intended to be brief, readers may feel like they are not getting the complete discussion on all topics discussed. It is important to remember that the aim of the volume and the series is to be brief but accurate. Swain helps the reader who wants to dive deeper as his footnotes are helpful extensions of the book's arguments and provide descriptions of useful volumes that will carry the reader deeper into a discussion on the Trinity.

Finally, Swain is to be commended for his work in saturating the book with Scripture. He does an excellent job of walking the reader through brief portions of Scripture on the Trinity and pointing to texts to support his argument further. The textual nature of the book will serve the reader well as they study the Trinity.

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Williams, Rowan. *Christ the Heart of Creation.* London: Bloomsbury, 2018, 279pp, ٢٥£, hardback.

A former Archbishop of Canterbury and recently retired as Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, Rowan Williams has long been an influential leader in both church and academy. *Christ the Heart of Creation* builds upon a lecture series given at Cambridge in 2016, although Williams's work on Christology—especially on patristic and mediaeval interpretations of Christ—stretches back to the earliest years of his academic career in the 1970s (p. ix). Few others could have produced a book as erudite yet elastic. The reader will quickly recognise *Christ the Heart of Creation* as the product of nearly five decades' dedicated scholarly research and ecumenical work, a daring and difficult attempt to trace a specific Christological and metaphysical golden thread running through theological writers diverse as Maximus and Aquinas, Calvin and Bonhoeffer.

So, what exactly does Williams want us to know? An early answer comes from the (quietly Johannine) title, that Jesus Christ is the living core of all things under God. The *who* of Christ can tell us much about the *how* of the cosmos. Williams's task is thus: to draw out the mutuality between the doctrines of Christology and creation and consider what implications this has for how we think about our relationship with God. Williams begins with the underappreciated Anglican theologian and philosopher Austin Farrer—who in 1948 gave an important lecture series on the imagination, later published as *The Glass of Vision*—as a reliable guide to point us through some deep metaphysical thickets without losing sight of the person of Christ. It is Farrer who indicates the way Williams must take through his questioning of the 'finite/

infinite distinction' (p. 6) as it relates to divine and human *agency*. How is it that God may act sovereignly in his creation *through* free human agents? For Williams, the critical point to observe is the (asymmetrical) causal continuity between infinite and finite agents. 'Infinite agency' cannot be 'excluded' by any finite act in the same way that an act of Peter is thus not an act of Paul, lest the infinite be made a mere 'thing' alongside another such 'thing' (p. 4). Williams is after an understanding of finite and infinite agency that preserves both the integrity of createdness *and* God's creative, sustaining, and redemptive power. Here a revelatory act is less an interruption of the finite than 'a particular configuration of finite agency such that it communicates more than its own immanent content' (p. 5). In very broad terms, Williams's claim is that historical Christological doctrine helps Christians realise that natural and supernatural are not two distinct spheres held in opposition.

The book is comprised of two parts. The first covers the development of classical Christology, from Augustine to Aquinas, without forgetting the major Byzantines along the way. Williams conducts a tour of the Church's earliest centuries that is measured, profound, and a little bit dizzying. Thomas in particular is singled out as the great synthesiser of preceding tradition. Like Farrer, Thomas assiduously wants to avoid disjoining natural from supernatural, and Williams stakes much of his argument on the Angelic Doctor's grand vision of Jesus of Nazareth, Son of God, second person of the Trinity, as a single *esse* (pp. 12-26). The book's second part shifts its focus to consider the contributions of the magisterial reformers and their descendants. Williams makes clear that Luther's somewhat idiosyncratic vision of Christ is surpassed by the more careful work of Calvin (Williams suggesting—not unlike Julie Canlis—that Calvin is not out of step with the patristic inheritance [p. 166]), before working up to the complex Christologies of biblically and doctrinally astute twentieth-century figures like Barth and Bonhoeffer and, in the conclusion, Erich Przywara. There is no excess in a book this slender, and every theologian is included for good reason; Williams's ressourcement of the classic theological claim that the finite *is* only by the infinite is solidly rooted in the Church's common witness that Christ is man *and* God. Ultimately all of these thinkers help Williams affirm the holiest 'paradox' of Christological tradition: 'only the creator can fully exhibit what it means to be a creature' (p. 239).

Particularly encouraging is Williams's prolonged and very positive interaction with Bonhoeffer's Christology. While deservedly well-known for his courageous ethical and political witness in Nazi Germany, Bonhoeffer was also a superlative academic theologian and it is a delight to see Williams's bring the German pastor into constructive dialogue with confreres both contemporary and historical. Williams puts Bonhoeffer very close to Farrer and Aquinas in his articulating a Christocentric finite-infinite relationship, refusing, like them, 'to see the integrity of the finite somehow disrupted or diminished by the infinite' (p. 194). Throughout his analysis, Williams rightly emphasizes Bonhoeffer's uncompromising Chalcedonianism, that

is, how Christ is for Bonhoeffer the unique embodiment and possibility of the 'non-competitive relation of Creator and creature' (p. 216). The choice for Bonhoeffer as his modern example of the theological position Williams had earlier referred to as 'mutual illumination that connects Christology with the doctrine of creation' (p. xiii) is inspired, for it helps cast a much broader ecclesial light on Bonhoeffer's early "sociology of the Church" (from *Sanctorum Communio*, his dissertation) and how this thoroughly incarnational approach had developed by the time of his execution in 1945.

Somewhat less inspiring is the book's relative lack of discussion on theologies of creation as such, which, while somewhat beside the point Williams is trying to make, are today increasingly important. Given that Williams is an active supporter of greater ecological responsibility, some reflection on the specifically ecological implications of his Christological theses would have been a relevant and welcome expansion and would no doubt have helped to advance ongoing conversations within this popular sub-discipline. Furthermore, Williams is not famous as a biblical scholar, and his introductory discussion of the New Testament will be all-too-brief for some.

In sum, *Christ the Heart of Creation* is a characteristic achievement of scholarship that, in its subtly ecumenical outlook, takes Paul's insistence on the one-ness of the Church as Christ's body (Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12, 20) with the utmost seriousness. *Caveat lector*: this is an advanced, densely argued book, quite different from the author's more popular-level books (although no less impactful). The reader should pay attention to Williams's balancing of biblical reference with careful theological and philosophical reflection; although far from being a Thomist work *per se*, Aquinas is more than just another historical source for Williams, and acknowledging this will better position the reader to appreciate some of the moves made by Williams. His efforts will be of most help to graduate students and ministers looking to expand upon an existing knowledge of creedal Christology and/or historical theology. In reference to his contemporaries, Williams's rhetoric is probably more accessible than, say, that of David Bentley Hart or John Milbank, but his concern for an intelligent Christianity that can still preach to the world beyond the sanctuary is no less rigorous or relevant than anything found in these similarly philosophical theologians. Like Bonhoeffer before him, Williams wants to explicate *who* Jesus Christ is for us *today*, a task he carries out with commensurate knowledge and skill.

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Farris, Joshua R. *An Introduction to Theological Anthropology: Humans, Both Creaturely and Divine*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020, 336, $29.99, softcover.

Joshua R. Farris (PhD, University of Bristol) is Executive Director of Alpine Christian School and former assistant professor of theology at Houston Baptist University. Farris has edited and written numerous works on anthropology, making him ideally suited to pen an introduction to theological anthropology.

While questions of anthropology continue to dominate contemporary discussions within and without the church, the academic resources providing both introductions and specialized focus lag. This makes Farris's *Introduction to Theological Anthropology* a welcome source. Farris covers all the major areas in theological anthropology, expanding beyond what is typically found in overtly theological material or overtly philosophical material. He writes as a sort of bridge between theology and philosophy, engaging the questions, topics, and ideas from both disciplines in a single volume. There are chapters on human identity and ontology (e.g. materialism vs. substance dualism vs. hylemorphism, etc.), human origins, the *imago dei*, free will, original sin, Christological anthropology, culture (e.g. race, disability, and work), gender and sexuality, the afterlife, and the *telos* of humanity. Each chapter attempts to provide a high-level summary, explaining the various views and offering several costs and benefits to each. Farris does not always take sides in these debates. His overall goal with the volume is to "advance an overarching vision of humanity that is consistent with ancient and biblically driven views of the human and that, at the same time, is commensurate with and informed by contemporary reflections from the sciences" (p. xviii). Methodologically, he works from Scripture as the norm that norms all other norms but maintains other theological authorities such as creedal statements, conciliar statements, confessional statements, great theologians, reason, and experience (p. 5). The fundamental premise he presupposes throughout the work is that humans *are* souls (xvii).

Now, I think there are several aspects of this volume worthy of specific commendation. First, Farris covers a huge array of topics, providing a comprehensive *introduction* to numerous topics and debates. Whether the reader agrees with his conclusions or not, they will benefit from being exposed to the wide range of ideas. This is the book's greatest benefit and what makes it so useful for undergraduate level classrooms. It will allow students to be exposed to all the major topics and debates in anthropology in one single volume. Second, given his philosophical acumen, he makes a very helpful distinction in chapter 1 between "personal" and "narrative" identity (p. 45). Typically, volumes use "identity" language and mean "narrative" but never explain this. By offering this clear distinction and explaining each, he provides readers with a beneficial resource for navigating these discussions. Third, his distinctions on the versions of the soul (pure soul, kind soul, hybrid soul) is helpful (pp.

64-65). Fourth, his summary of the *imago dei* and the various views is tremendous. Moreover, his conclusion that while the *imago dei* may not be identical to a substance view (the view that identifies the image with certain properties or capacities), that any view ultimately requires *at least* the substance view is perceptive (89).

While more could be said regarding various strengths of the volume, there are also potential weaknesses. And given the need for *critical* book reviews that are more than mere summaries, I will engage five specific examples in order of ascending importance. As a disclaimer: I have numerous misgivings with his defense of substance dualism, though this is partially my own bias. Therefore, I attempt to limit my critiques at this point to the areas that I find lacking in substantial argumentation rather than mere disagreement.

First, I found it frustrating that Farris does not always clearly say which view he advances. Given that he takes such a controversial opinion as substance dualism from the beginning, I would expect him to continue to be clear as to which positions are preferrable throughout. But he doesn't do this. For example, when discussing the old earth view of creation and how humans are related to Adam, he doesn't take a position and doesn't help the reader determine which might best fit Scripture and tradition (p. 60). While an introduction doesn't necessarily need to have the author plant his flag in every area, given that he has already done so in potentially more controversial areas is curious to me. Now, it is possible that he simply doesn't have a strong opinion on some of these and therefore wants to avoid making a decision, which is fair. However, more importantly, many times when he fails to defend a position, he *doesn't guide the reader* in thinking about which may be preferrable. With this said, it would be too hasty to conclude that he *never* guides the reader or that he *never* makes a firm conclusion. He does this on many, if not most, occasions. However, the times that he doesn't are a missed opportunity.

Second, when discussing personal identity, he repeatedly claims that the soul can account for it while materialism cannot since the body changes every day (pp. 32, 37, 42, 44). But the claim that bodies continually replace themselves has scientifically been proven *false*. There *are* parts of bodies that never change throughout our lives. While some of our parts change, not all of them do. Moreover, there are reasons to reject the claim that mere change in parts is sufficient for change in the whole. Therefore, the argument against versions of materialism from the persistence of identity ought to focus elsewhere than naïve mereological replacement views.

Third, his definition of Reformed theology is overly broad and misleading. He claims Reformed theology is "the tradition that renovated the church by steering it away from the doctrinal excesses found in the Roman Catholic Church…." (p. 5). Elsewhere in a footnote he says that Reformed theology "is a reference to a sociological and ecclesiological tradition that is broader than Calvinistic soteriology" (p. 11). While it is true that Reformed theology necessarily must be these things, it is more than them. And while there are internal debates regarding many historic "Reformed"

doctrines, they have boundaries that are tighter than Farris allows. Thus, the way he uses 'Reformed' is an improper use of the term and one that is likely unrecognizable to most of his readers. A better term for what Farris means is 'Protestant.' 'Reformed' is usually historically reserved for those streams of Protestantism that confess the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Belgic Confession of Faith, the Thirty-Nine Articles, etc. Admittedly, his problematic usage of Reformed is not universal throughout the book and he regularly seeks to buttress his writing from traditional Reformed sources.

Fourth, he mentions early in the book that there are two necessary conditions for a church to be catholic. His second necessary condition includes "some understanding of [baptismal] regeneration" (p. 7). However, this is decidedly *non-catholic* given the overwhelming contemporary Protestant opinion that rejects baptismal regeneration. While his emphasis is on the necessity of a sacramental order of the church, which is absolutely commendable and needed, I do not think this mention of baptismal regeneration was necessary for the argument of the book. It would have been better to remove this unless he was willing to spend a sufficient amount of space defining and defending it.

My fifth and final critique is similar to my first. There is a serious unevenness with *some* of his critiques of various positions. To be clear, most of the chapters evidence fairness in argumentation. However, there are others that are seriously lacking. While Farris has full rights to ignore potential solutions to views he rejects, he gives such scant attention to the alternatives of views he rejects it is rather disappointing. For example, in his chapter on freedom, he provides a section devoted to a critique of compatibilism. However, libertarianism receives no such treatment. It is assumed as true because it is "the commonsense view" (p. 123). While I have no problem with defending positions in an introduction (as noted in my first critique, I prefer it!), I find it unhelpful to not provide a list of true costs and benefits for every view—including one's chosen views.

So, how should the biblical-theological student interact with this book? As mentioned, it would make a great main text for undergraduate students to introduce them to the wide range of issues in theological anthropology. His treatment covers far more ground than other works such as Marc Cortez's *Theological Anthropology: A Guide for the Perplexed*, making it an ideal resource. Therefore, those considering what textbook they should use for classroom type settings should give serious consideration to it. For those unfamiliar with the terrain of anthropology and many of the philosophical disputes yet interested in beginning to understand them, Farris speaks in an understandable way that would allow anyone to understand the issues. Ultimately, while I have criticisms of the book, I think it provides a readable reliable guide to the topics and is especially useful for classrooms.

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Sollereder, Bethany N. *God, Evolution, and Animal Suffering: Theodicy without a Fall*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2019, pp. 202, $48.95, paperback.

Bethany Sollereder (PhD, Exeter) is a systematic theologian and postdoctoral fellow in the Faculty of Theology and Religion at the University of Oxford. She writes on theodicy, animals, interpretations of Genesis, and science and religion.

Sollereder's outstanding book asks how "a good and loving God [can] create through an evolutionary process involving such suffering, death, extinction, and violence" (p. 4). It is not a defense of Christian theism in light of the violence of evolutionary history, but an exploration of ways to understand the God-world relation in light of what is so baffling about evolution. Taking a line from Christopher Southgate, she explains her project "arise[s] out of protest and end[s] in mystery" (p. 4).

Blending an account of love borrowed from Aquinas and an Open Theist take on divine action, Sollereder tells a creative, complex, and at turns, mystifying story. She argues the disvalue of evolutionary suffering is a necessary byproduct of God's generous gift of being to creatures and refusal to 'micromanage' (p. 183) the trajectory of any individual or species' growth and development. Furthermore, no disvalue is beyond the possibility of redemption because of God's infinite, creative love. She critiques approaches to the problem where the supposed benefit brought about through suffering neither affirms the value of animals' lives nor benefits the actual individuals that suffer (p. 50). She likewise rejects theological models that propose too revisionary an account of divine attributes (p.67).

In chapter 2, Sollereder contests traditional interpretations of the Bible where natural evils, or as she prefers, disvalues, are explained by appeal to the fall of humans and/or angels. Arguing that the natural world *itself* was never corrupted, she argues that the Genesis 3 curse on how humans relate to the earth was lifted with the advent of the Noahide covenant (p. 36). Hebrew Bible scholars will find her arguments here of interest.

In chapter 3 she offers an overview of recent suggestions for theodicies and appropriates Southgate's "only way" argument, which says "an evolutionary process is the only way to create life without constant intervention" (p. 52), where that life boasts the kind of diversity and freedom we see in the world. This affirms the value of that diversity and freedom, and likewise holds that law-like causal relations free from divine intervention make the world navigable for both humans and animals—a benefit both can enjoy. As Sollereder notes, the goodness of nomic regularity for each individual is not always proportionate to how much any individual suffers, so there has to be more to the story (p. 55). Sollereder takes line that a compound of multiple approaches is required for addressing evolutionary suffering (p. 79-80).

In chapter 4, Sollereder begins with Eleonore Stump's version of Thomas Aquinas' definition of love: a conjunction of desires for union with the beloved and for the good of the beloved (p. 94). She argues this definition requires that divine love is

particular to each individual and essentially noncoercive. From there she examines how a world made in love would contain creatures given significant freedom, and how the freedom afforded creation might help us understand the coexistence of an infinitely loving God and evolutionary suffering.

In chapter 5 she turns to a version of Open Theism where God limits God's own knowledge in order to make room for significant creaturely freedom. According to Sollereder, God is temporal, watching evolution unfold as time elapses. God does not know the path evolution will take or the choices any individuals will make. God does not even know what God will do in the future (p. 112). But since the limits on God's knowledge are self-imposed, it is not beyond the scope of God's power to find creative ways to bring about redemption in the end, even if that ending will be a surprise to God. Furthermore, in stepping out of Classical Theism, she is able to claim that God is able to co-suffer with creation (p. 112).

Her emphasis on non-intervention as entailment of divine love and her embrace of Open Theism position Sollereder to argue that God is not on the dock for all the natural tragedies in evolutionary history. There is value in what she calls 'selving,' a process of self-realization through the exercise of one's powers and particular characteristics. The powers an animal exercises in selving are ones that can create goods for it and for its kind but can also create disvalues. She summarizes the significance of selving,

> a creation made in love would necessarily involve allowing creatures to "selve" with significant freedom. Creatures would selve without micromanagement into lions and lettuce, dinosaurs and diphtheria. Life was not drawn inexorably along fortuitous lines of descent but was allowed to develop according to each creature's own needs and agency, sustained by the unflinching generosity of God to all life" (p. 183).

To deny creatures the opportunity to selve would be a failure of love.

Lastly, Sollereder speculates about redemptive possibilities for creatures, both in this life and the next. The clearest form of immanent redemption Sollereder considers is ecological (p. 158). The death of an individual creature can restore energy to the soil, which can nourish plants, which can sustain an ecosystem, and so forth. Possibilities for immanent redemption, whatever they amount to, stress the value of each life that is lived so that the goodness of those lives does not just materialize in the eschaton.

Since Sollereder seeks a narrative where the value of each life is affirmed *and* where the outweighing goods connected with suffering are ones that benefit the animals themselves, she must appeal to the afterlife. She argues for the possibility that every living thing will be resurrected and enjoy life with God in heaven. There the suffering contained within each creature's life will be a source of glory for that creature (p. 168). The role that creatures played in the bigger narrative of God's

work—culminating in the Christ event—will be part of a whole that brings good out of their past suffering. Here she makes good on her promissory note that the project ends in mystery.

How might the ecological and eschatological levels of redemption fit together? She says that "the meaning of a good life is a gift given by God in an act of eschatological creativity" (p. 169) Sollereder's explanation bottoms out in metaphor, hinting at how that the different levels of redemption are connected. She utilizes an image employed by Stump: a fractal where the organizing principle of each part recurs at each ascending level of complexity of a structural whole. The story of an individual's redemption is nested within a larger story of the ecological whole, which is in turn nested within and even bigger story—each bearing similarities in narrative structure.

Sollereder is sympathetic to Trent Dougherty's defense for animal suffering, where resurrected animals level up in heaven and acquire the cognitive capacities necessary to see their suffering as defeated (p. 168). Dougherty's suggestion is promising, but I fear Sollereder's emphasis on the essentially non-coercive nature of divine love and the value of selving might undercut any such move. If it is inconsistent with divine love for God to nudge the mechanisms of evolution to soften its violent tendencies, surely any means of causing animals to level up in heaven would be even more inconsistent. If selving is not just a necessary consequence of permitting nomic regularity, but an entailment of divine love, it's not clear how radical transformations of any sort would be possible.

I see further worries about the role that selving plays in her account. Despite saying that God's love is particular to each individual, in claiming the permission for selving is universally required by divine love, Sollereder seems to apply the same conditions for love between persons to love between persons and non-persons. In Stump's explanation of Aquinas' view, God would be failing to love an individual if God were to coercively influence that individual's free will. That is because the union desired in love requires the union of two wills—God's and the beloved's—not a unilateral imposition. But would it be unloving to use coercion against a creature who does not have free will? The question is actually pretty thorny and turns on our understanding of animals' agential capacities.

On the one hand, Sollereder is right that [many] animals have significant agency—they are not mere creatures of instinct. On the other hand, I would argue that whatever kind of agency animals have is different not just in degree from human agency, but different in kind—at least for the vast majority of non-human species. Animals cannot take higher-order evaluative stances toward their own desires and motivations. While they can choose to act or refrain from acting in particular ways, it is far from obvious that these choices are the product of any kind of deliberation.

These differences matter for two reasons. First, I suspect that the value of having the ability to satisfy one's own desires and exercise agency depends on the *strength*

of one's agency. If a creature lacks self-awareness, cannot conceive of its own good as such, or appreciate its own exercise of freedom, just how valuable can selving be, at least *for that animal?* While it might be aesthetically valuable or conducive to nomic regularity for creatures to develop by the exercise of their own powers, how is that kind of freedom a good that animals can experience subjectively? And if it's not a subjective good for animals, what kind of good for them can it be?

Furthermore, when it comes to human relations, we tend to think that paternalism can be appropriate, and maybe obligatory, toward individuals with limited agency. Arguably, the level of independence one ought to give someone they love depends on the degree to which they are able to exercise freedom. The freedom I extend my teenager in love would be terribly unloving if extended toward his much younger sibling.

Something similar strikes me as the right way to think about paternalism towards animals, too. The good shepherd builds a fence around his sheep and guides them with his staff. The loving dog-owner forces his animal to go veterinarian, even against the dog's protest. Maybe these examples are slanted toward domesticated animals, but a similar point stands when it comes to wild animals, too. If an endangered animal's habitat were irreparably encroached by human occupation, it would be best to relocate the animal, against its wishes, if such relocation would give it a better chance at flourishing and its species a better chance at survival. I hesitate to use the term because it's so heavily freighted, but this might be part of what it means for humans to have dominion over creation. And if humans can exercise such providence over animals, directing them toward their own particular ends, surely a loving creator could so too.

Sollereder does not place all her bets on the value of selving, so the foregoing is not a deal breaker for her approach. But there is something very clever in her claim that selving is a consequence of divine love. Many theodicies and defenses for evolutionary suffering appeal to the value of non-interventional mechanisms for bringing about diversity in creation. But where in most other accounts that is a global good unconnected to the good of individuals who suffer, Sollereder is able to point to how God's non-intervention is actually evidence of God's love for those that suffer. While I think she might be on to something here, I think the details will turn on empirical facts about the strength of animal's agency and normative facts about how great a good that agency is for them as individuals.

A further tension comes from Sollereder's use of a Thomistic account of love and Open Theism. She argues in short order that the Thomistic account of love necessitates an Open Theist conception of the God-world relation because of the centrality of freedom in willing the good for the other. Aquinas, of course, didn't see things that way. He and Stump both hold that God loves all things God has made, that God does not contravene the will of free creatures, and at the same time, God is impassible, *a se*, and outside of time. There are plenty of puzzles for Classical theism

about how God can then be responsive to the world, for sure, and interesting ways in which Aquinas, Stump, and many others respond. Classical Theism does not get any airtime in the book, and it would be interesting to see what elements of her model might be available for use by the more classically inclined, especially given the pride of place the author gives to Aquinas/Stump, and Sollereder's concern to avoid too great a revision of divine attributes.

In the end, I find many of the moving parts in Sollereder's model attractive and the breadth of issues she brings together impressive. She engages with the sciences with care and creativity, and her guiding intuitions about the value of animals' lives are refreshingly humane. This is the most comprehensive treatment of the problem of evolutionary suffering on offer, and her presentation of the state of play in theological literature is tremendously helpful. In short, anyone interested in the problem of evolutionary suffering would do well to pay careful attention to this exciting book.

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Leidenhag, Joanna. *Minding Creation: Theological Panpsychism and the Doctrine of Creation*. London: T&T Clark, 2021. 224 pages. $120.00.

Minding Creation is the first full-length treatment of panpsychism for contemporary theological construction. Similar treatments from different perspectives have been published and come to mind that provide similar fruitful discussions. Just consider two recent representative examples: J. T. Turner *On the Resurrection of the Dead* and my *The Soul of Theological Anthropology.* All three provide interesting constructive theological treatments of a particular doctrine by drawing from a particular position within the philosophy of mind. Turner advances a theological construction using a version of hylomorphism and I advance a constructive, and in some ways exploratory, defense of Cartesianism. These represent some of the more recent analytic theological literature that moves beyond philosophy of religion to contemporary constructive theology.

Leidenhag approaches the doctrine of God's relationship to creation through a consideration of panpsychism. Panpsychism is the view that mentality is fundamental to the natural world such that it permeates the whole world. She is clear that panpsychism, which serves as a broad category for a host of nuanced positions about the mind, is compatible with distinct comprehensive ontological theories instead of entailing just one (e.g., process theism, panentheism, pantheism, and other totalizing systems). It is even consistent with versions of Perfect Being Theology and classical theism (see especially pp. 105-37). Her case begins with a state of the art on what she sees as the popular bridge position between science and theology, namely emergentism, which is a kind of *via media* for physicalism and substance dualism. After a survey of the literature, Leidenhag raises concerns with emergentism. Some

versions of emergentism are too weak either to do justice to the nature of minds (e.g., they often amount to a reduction) or results in some rather exotic, and unpalatable, theological ideas (pp. 13-45). This sets up her pivot to a consideration of panpsychism.

According to Leidenhag, we have good reasons for accepting panpsychism, and she sees little to no cost in accepting it (see chapter 2). Taking her cues from the patriarchs of panpsychism (e.g., Nagel, Chalmers, and Strawson), panpsychism's greatest appeal is that it provides a simple explanation of a set of desiderata central to philosophy of mind and theology. First, it provides a monism of mind and matter without buying into the bifurcation of the world found in substance dualism. Second, it takes seriously the mind as a feature of the world (i.e., mental realism) that is unexplainable on materialism. Third, it avoids reductionistic explanations. Fourth, it avoids predicating magical emergent properties to matter, which amount to a version of creation ex-nihilo—an obvious problem for many theists. But, there is an interesting development. Where the patriarchs operate out of a secular framework as birthed from dissatisfaction with the merits of materialism, Leidenhag seeks to kindle the connection between panpsychism and theism (p. 81)—something she believes is quite natural, which she takes as an advantage over substance dualism. Accordingly, panpsychism has two advantages over dualism. First, panpsychism does not require the "radically different origin stories" (pp. 172-3) between the soul and the body. Second, panpsychism supplies a simpler, harmonious explanation of the soul's origins without God's constant and ongoing creation of souls at every moment that embryos come into existence.

Next, Leidenhag considers one historical proponent of panpsychism in Christian theology: Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz. She provides a fascinating discussion based on the principle of sufficient reason. The discussion certainly raises another question worth exploring—namely, what is the difference between panpsychism and idealism? For Leibniz's ontological views have been taken to be a version of idealism, yet panpsychism is often considered a distinct ontology. The views are cousins if not siblings. Fascinating itself, there's more to chew.

The last two chapters are the most constructive. Considering three proposals for divine action, Leidenhag shows how panpsychism can accommodate and deepen differing accounts from interventionist non-compatibilism, process theism, and the doctrine of double agency. Finally, Leidenhag draws out several implications for eco-theology in a way that permits a ground for a sacramental theology because God is able to be present to creation in a way that is impermissible on dualistic and interventionist pictures of the God-world relationship, or so it is commonly argued. In other words, to her lights, what panpsychism gets us is both Divine transcendence and immanence because mentality promotes ontological space for Divine action to permeate the whole world (p. 173).

As with all three works listed above, each places one doctrine under the microscope. The other works focus on the doctrine of personal eschatology and

theological anthropology while Leidenhag's focus is creation more broadly. But what is clear from each systematic analysis is how much all three doctrines so permeate the other that the implications tend to blend under microscopic detection. For this reason, Leidenhag is right to delineate theological anthropology as one natural place to continue panpsychism research. Her work secures several points for fertile reflection (p. 172).

With all that has been said of a positive nature, and there is much more to say beyond the confines of this short review, there are some philosophical and theological concerns. The first is philosophical, and to be fair, Leidenhag calls attention to it early on. It is called the combination problem to panpsychism, which is the problem of lower level consciousness's, or dispositional proprieties, comprising and giving rise to a higher-order consciousness of a singular agent. Similar to the problem from physicalism, how it is that several singular bits could combine to comprise a one individual consciousness is utterly mysterious and likely incoherent. She is aware of this problem and grants that it is a substantive problem to which she offers a couple possible solutions from the literature. What is not clear is whether she places enough weight on this problem. As I see it, unless she were to affirm a form of absolute idealism of which panpsychism were a species, she cannot account for the consciousness of individual subjects. It appears that a version of Creationist Cartesian dualism or idealism, in which subjects of conscious experience are primitive particulars, is necessary to account for consciousness as we know it. That's a more serious consideration, but a less serious one is theological in nature.

Second, it is not clear that panpsychism provides any advantage over idealism, e.g., Berkeley's subject idealism, unless she considers the mind-independent reality of the material something worth preserving, but that is a value that would need some justifying. I have already noted a couple of similarities between the views above, but, it seems to me that all the desiderata mentioned through *Minding Creation* could be satisfied by Berkeley's idealism. Berkeley's idealism, as I understand it, affirms the following propositions: 1. All physical objects are phenomenal products of the Divine mind. 2. Humans are immaterial subjects of consciousness. 3. God communicates physical properties to created minds (i.e., human minds). Berkeley's idealism permits a unified picture of the world where God is both transcendent and immanent. It avoids the bifurcated picture that is posited by radical dualisms. It avoids interventionism because there is no absolute independence between material substances and minds. It avoids incompatibilism. Divine action is compatible with the natural world precisely because the whole world is comprised of phenomenal perceptions, which are Divine communications. Finally, it permits a sacramental understanding of the natural world. God just is present to the world and all events in it.

Leidenhag's *Minding Creation* would serve graduate students and scholars interested in the analytic theology of creation and theological anthropology. It might also serve as a supplementary text in a course on the doctrine of creation because she

covers several up-to-date theories on Divine action. It would be true to say that this is the best treatment of panpsychism in a theological context, yet that is because it is the only book-length defense of the view in a theological context. It is unique in that way, which makes it groundbreaking.

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Migliazzo, Arlin C. *Mother of Modern Evangelicalism: The Life & Legacy of Henrietta Mears*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020. Pp. xviii + 338. $29.99, paperback.

A "human dynamo" for the Lord is how the *Christian Century* described her in 1950 (p. 253). Recounting the most successful church in the Southwest of the time, First Presbyterian of Hollywood, the *Century*'s reporter spent about as much time detailing the senior pastor, as it did enchanted by a 60 year-old, bespectacled, matronly-appearing single woman who headed its renowned Christian education program and had the L.A. youth hooked on Christianity: Henrietta Mears. In this first scholarly biography of Mears (1890-1963), we get to see clearly why. Through a rich and vivid chronicle of Mears's life, Migliazzo, Emeritus Professor of History at Whitworth University in Washington State, offers us deep insight into her personality and an enriched understanding of her multifaceted public ministry. The book deftly and sensitively portrays this remarkable--and previously underappreciated--"architect" (p. 263) at the heart of American Evangelicalism's transformative mid-century moment. If sobriquets are any index of influence, Migliazzo shows us how, from the 1920s to the 1950s, Mears was, quite simply, Evangelical America's "Teacher."

The book's journey begins with a thoughtful survey of Mears's upbringing: from her birth in Fargo, SD, to her family's travels across the upper midwest, to her formation at fundamentalist headquarters First Baptist in Minneapolis, MN, pastored by the legendary William Bell Riley. Especially influenced in her spiritual life by her mother, Mears found her "solace and stability" in the bedrock Christian message and her church community (p. 29). Her intellectual talents carried to the University of Minnesota, where she majored in chemistry and defined a lifelong positive and creative "relationship between Christian faith and the world's wisdom" (p. 35). Inspired by the evangelistic radio of Paul Rader and the Keswick deeper Christian life spirituality, Mears still strove to conform her life to the maxim, "If He is not Lord *of* all, He is not Lord *at* all" (p. 264). Discovering her true calling as an educator, she launched a career as a public school teacher. A pedagogical innovator and popular mentor, she saw holistic learning as the "dynamic development of the conduct and character of the pupil" (p. 37) and demonstrated special talent for coalescing vibrant communal cultures and motivating notable generosity (p. 49). As

she grew in renown for administrative acumen, pedagogical ingenuity, and cultural savvy, Mears was recruited to become Director of Christian Education at the massive First Presbyterian in California, where she moved in 1928.

From here, Migliazzo's biography turns thematic, cataloguing the striking success, multiple elements, and dense networks of influence radiating out from that role. Initially, she vivified the Sunday School, which boomed in zeal and attendance (pp. 280-82). From there, she developed a compelling Christian educational program for all ages, but especially college students. Her program amalgamated a confident exposition of the Bible; a highly relational approach to ministry; an exacting work ethic for Christian leadership and training; elaborate programming; and a "winsome" engagement with the intellectual and cultural questions of the day (pp. 86, 8). Overflowing from stunning success in the local congregation, Mears pioneered wider ministries: Gospel Light Publications distributed Christian educational curricula and resources to a voracious readership around the world (pp. 122-28). Forest Home Retreat Center served as an epicenter for faith-based conferences. All the while, she penned books on spirituality and captivated vast audiences with lectures on how to reach young people with the gospel message. Her classic orientation to the grand scope of the scriptures, *What the Bible is All About* (1953), sold an estimated 2 million copies by the 1960s in multiple printings.

The crucial argument of Migliazzo's book is that Mears should be considered at the center of the "evangelical reconfiguration" (p. 10) of mid-century, due to her role in forging extensive coalitions and her ethos in merging an ardently orthodox Christianity with an ecumenical cultural openness. If we see this era's Evangelicalism as characterized by its delicate balance of a traditional Christian message, call to personal transformation, and its renewed missional impulse to cross boundaries and address new contexts, then surely this major claim is correct. Even when relatively more diffuse, Mears's wider circle of influence was an astonishing omnibus of crucial, influential Evangelical figures and institutions, demonstrating the seductive pull of elite power in this phase of Evangelical outreach. Mears formatively influenced those from Billy Graham to Campus Crusade for Christ's Bill Bright to Young Life's Jim Rayburn to The Navigators' Dawson Trotman to "Mears's boys" around the country who became pastors, parachurch ministry leaders, and U. S. Capitol Chaplains. Adding to Migliazzo's explicit list, she would even be responsible for hiring one of the pastors who helped launch the Jesus People movement.

The book brims with vivid detail and lavish primary textual sources, drawing from an impressive array of archival sources and print publications. Migliazzo has an astute eye for the earthy, granular, and gritty realism of social history: this is a book delightfully chock-full of spitwads, class pennants, chemistry lab explosions, and Bible flannelgraphs. At the same time, he shows an admirable humility in the limitations and parameters of historical epistemology, and what can and can't be honestly extracted from primary source material. This all leads to a book highly

attentive to the idiosyncrasies of its figure and careful about fitting her into any hasty generalizations or tidy narratives. That said, the book can be read as making substantial contributions to two of the more recent, prominent trends in Evangelical historiography: the gender and business paradigms, respectively, even while it challenges the reductionist temptations of both that can flatten Evangelical religious culture to one dimension.

The book overflows from a cascade of impressive studies on Evangelical women: first with the pioneering work of Nancy Hardesty, then into Margaret Bendroth's *Fundamentalism and Gender*, Marie Griffith's *God's Daughters*; Julie Ingersoll's *Evangelical Christian Women*, Emily Johnson's *This is Our Message*, and Kate Bowler's *The Preacher's Wife*. And it is situated within a splendid roll call of biographies that enlarge and enrich the genre, for example, Edith Blumhofer on Aimee Semple MacPherson, Jennifer Miskov on Carried Judd Montgomery, Catherine Brekus on Sarah Osborn, and Amy Collier Artman on Kathryn Kuhlman. These all detail strong Evangelical women who pushed the boundaries of spiritual power, influence, and leadership, even while precariously navigating and deftly negotiating traditional gender roles, restrictions, and expectations. As Migliazzo concludes, "For a theologically conservative female to exert such power seems to fly in the face of conventional wisdom regarding the role of women in the twentieth-century church" (p. 272).

Mears herself exercised immense amounts of power and influence in Evangelical networks, even while adhering to a complementarian, conservative theology about men's preaching and ordination and while restricting the presidency of her college ministry to men. Migliazzo's book can be read beneficially in tandem with another of this year's key Evangelical histories: Kristin Kobes du Mez's excruciatingly necessary *Jesus and John Wayne*. While du Mez's analysis is essential, it will also be important going forward to note that an exclusive focus on aggressive and destructive masculinity does not exhaust the Evangelical gender story or give a full account of the historical record.

So, Migliazzo's book exhibits a plethora of merits. There could be some quibbles, nevertheless. Seemingly confining the critical edges to a single chapter of "paradoxes and limitations" towards the end (pp. 221-51) had the downside of giving large swaths of the early parts of the book an impression of potential imbalance. That material could have been beneficially interspersed throughout the narrative. In the chapter, Migliazzo does detail Mears's human edges of character, habit, and circumstance. But some of these appear meager assessments by that point in the text. The account of race, in particular, is strikingly underwhelming. While, yes, Migliazzo does briefly detail Mears's problematic views on the subject (pp. 243-47), overall this was analytically anemic. More contextualization could have situated this in the crucial role that racial dynamics have played in Evangelicalism's relationship to American culture.

At a number of points, Migliazzo tries to sympathize with Mears's oversights on social issues as pragmatic and lauds her refusal to "politicize the gospel" (p. 264). There is both an aspect of hermeneutical holism to that approach and an encouraging contrast to the emergence of the Religious Right's combatively political gospel. At the same time, there is an interpretive neglect here of the politics of becoming political and the politics involved in political avoidance. Lastly, Migliazzo might have given more attention to Mears's singleness. There is a flash of commentary on it (p. 41), but given the primacy of marriage and family values in Evangelical circles, the importance of the single vocation has often been diminished. Mears exemplifies a vibrant single life dedicated to Christian life and ministry, while many singles have struggled with an awkward status and enigmatic roles given them by the church.

On the whole, still, this is a superb and captivating biography of a crucial figure in the history of American Evangelicalism. It will be essential reading for all students of American church history and religious culture, as well as anyone interested in what a vibrant and influential Christian ministry looked like in the mid-century context.

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Pettegree, Andrew. *Brand Luther: How an Unheralded Monk Turned His Small Town into a Center of Publishing, Made Himself the Most Famous Man in Europe—and Started the Protestant Reformation.* New York, NY: Penguin Random House, 2016, pp. 400, $18, paperback.

Andrew Pettegree is Professor of Modern History at the University of St. Andrews and Founder of the university's esteemed Reformation Studies Institute. His recent monograph, *Brand Luther: How an Unheralded Monk Turned His Small Town into a Center of Publishing, Made Himself the Most Famous Man in Europe—and Started the Protestant Reformation,* was warmly welcomed by Reformation scholars and, given its release by a popular rather than academic press, interested lay people across the world in anticipation of the Reformation's 500th anniversary.

As its long subtitle suggests, this book tells two complementary stories—Luther's personal journey and Wittenberg's journey from relative insignificance to international fame in only a few short decades. These two stories are woven together by the printing press. According to Pettegree, without Luther's pen Wittenberg would have continued to exist in obscurity during the sixteenth century. Yet without Wittenberg's assets, Luther's voice would have been lost in the academic debates of his time. Pettegree examines how a localized theological spat became a public event by focusing on Luther's talents as a vernacular writer. To that end, Pettegree analyzes the economic and theological factors which drove the Luther phenomenon. These strong forces resulted in a nation-wide Lutheran movement, an instant boost to the local urban economy, and a refined printing industry over a few short decades.

Chapters 5 and 6 show how at the core of this success story lies the quality of the new product – Luther's theology published for the laity in the German vernacular and decorated with signature, appropriate artwork created by local artist Lucas Cranach. Pettegree reiterates that the product's content was as important as its packaging. Luther's theology was worthy of beautiful woodcutting techniques; together, they comprised "Brand Luther," an unmistakable image that generated great interest and profit. This is not to say that the Reformation was simply an economic success story of bestselling books with eye-catching covers. Rather, the sales reflected laity's desire for fresh theology and practice, in which they could directly participate, based on the universality of the priesthood.

Chapter 7 shows how Luther was always mindful of the cost of production and the final price of his books. His pamphlets were published in a convenient, pocket-sized format, which was easy to produce and cheap to sell. Luther was also sensible about the cost of larger works, such as the vernacular Bible. For instance, when translating the Old Testament into vernacular German, Luther decided to publish it in three chunks, so that his audience could afford to purchase it progressively over a longer period of time. The final product took much longer than intended—twelve years—but in the end the delay proved to be very profitable to the printing industry. Pettegree avers that the translation of the Bible was at the heart of the Wittenberg Reformation, not only for economic purposes, but mostly for theological purposes and for the gospel to be read and preached in German.

Luther acquired a new audience outside the Latin-based academy, as he translated serious theology into a most elegant German, his popularity helping him withstand Catholic counter-attacks. Moreover, Cranach understood the power of Luther's own name, which, over time, emerged from cluttered title pages and received its own center line. It is important to note that until the sixteenth century, original authorship was disregarded, because printers focused upon reproducing classic texts such as writings by Seneca or Aristotle. With the rise of the Reformation, Luther's identity became a selling point in itself, and thus his name became one of the most powerful logos of the movement.

Pettegree spends much deserved time on Cranach's artistry. The packaging of Luther's product was an important aspect of promotion, for it visually communicated the content and the author of the published works. Drawing upon his knowledge of art history, Pettegree draws our attention to the stylistic conventions Cranach worked with to promote Luther's books. For instance, popular paintings of the era were often done in landscape format but books, by default, were in portrait format. In addition, the standard illustration for a title page left a large, empty block in the center for the title, author, and city of publishing. This formatting created obvious obstacles for sixteenth-century artists, yet Cranach rose to the challenge and created a distinctive look for "Brand Luther," one that was bold, clear, and widely recognizable.

As Pettegree shows, it is notable that the majority of Wittenberg's publishing houses came to support the evangelical cause after 1517, given that their previous client was the pope. Indulgences, in fact, had been a lucrative product, given their convenient one-sided, single-sheet format. At first, Luther's attack on indulgences threatened the printing industry but, shortly afterwards, the printers realized Brand Luther's potential. For instance, the printing of the 95 theses into the vernacular had carried them outside academia into German public life. This disputation called for many responses for and against the Lutheran movement, and so the printers remained in business. Thus, theology became a public matter. Through his writings, Luther called the German people to realize their role as a "priesthood" by engaging with deep theological issues, and the people responded in large numbers. According to Pettegree, these sales testified to the Reformation's success in Wittenberg. The people's own interest in theology, the increase in demand for Luther works, and his own survival against the Catholic threat all contributed to the long term success of Brand Luther.

By employing an economic-theological framework, Pettegree successfully shows how both Luther and Wittenberg rose from their obscure beginnings to international fame. This book is an excellent example of giving new life to the old narrative of the Reformation as an economic phenomenon. One topic perhaps deserving more analysis is Luther's contribution to musical print culture. Pettegree touches on this subject briefly in his last chapter, yet there could be more attention to Luther's emphasis on music education and the success of his hymnals as powerful elements in the success of the Reformation. Regardless, Pettegree's monograph should prove to be one of the more memorable entries in the spate of scholarship commemorating the Reformation quincentenary. His language is very accessible, and he interacts with secondary literature only in his endnotes, thus making for a very smooth, informative, and enjoyable narrative. The same way Luther's message stirred the hearts of laymen and scholars across the German lands, so will Pettegree's monograph stir a renewed love for the Reformation story in the hearts of all his readers.

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Pedersen, Daniel James. *The Eternal Covenant: Schleiermacher on God and Natural Science*. Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2017, pp.xli+187, $114.99, hardback.

The focus of this work is the "eternal covenant" between the Christian faith and natural science that is commended in the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher. As the introduction rehearses, two interpretations of this proposal have dominated the literature: a "separationist model", in which there is a rigid demarcation of the disciplines, and an "accommodation model", in which the Christian faith always has

to accommodate advances in natural science. But Pedersen considers both models flawed: not only do they fail to account for the terms "eternal" and "covenant"; they also fail to consider that the "eternal covenant" is not so much a methodological proposal as a carefully argued conclusion, undergirded by "a host of claims and commitments supported by argumentation" (p. 12). To demonstrate this latter position is the principal task which this book sets itself, and its proving ground is Schleiermacher's major work in Christian dogmatics, *Christian Faith*.

The ultimate starting-point for all Schleiermacher's claims and commitments in *Christian Faith* is, famously, the feeling of absolute dependence. Crucially, however, Pedersen observes that these claims and commitments can be held on alternative grounds, meaning that Schleiermacher can adopt and invoke arguments from other sources which share these same premises, even where they do not share Schleiermacher's starting-point. And on this basis, Pedersen highlights that Schleiermacher's presuppositions were far from his alone, but were in truth shared by some of the finest philosophers and scientists of the day.

The case begins in the second chapter, which illuminates the scientific commitments explicitly on display in *Christian Faith*, with particular reference to Schleiermacher's views concerning the duration, extent, and evolution of the cosmos, and of the evolution of life. In each case, Pedersen underlines the ways in which his arguments parallel the most innovative scientific and philosophical theories of his day, as advanced by figures such as William Herschel, Pierre-Simon Laplace, and Erasmus Darwin. At the same time, Pedersen also demonstrates that the cosmological debates of the time "made heavy use of non-empirical beliefs, many of which were explicitly theological in nature" (p. 31). Natural science and Christian theology were thus organically related and mutually accountable at the time, and no clear demarcation or hierarchy between the disciplines was available or intelligible.

The central chapters of this book all serve to evidence two points: first, that at various points in *Christian Faith* Schleiermacher deploys metaphysical principles in support of his theological argumentation; and second, that these principles were common both to the philosophers *and* to the natural scientists who were writing around the same time. The third chapter unfolds the shared commitment of Schleiermacher and Leibniz to the perfection of nature, in so far as the divine power as informed by the divine wisdom necessarily creates a world that does not require further divine intervention, as the divinely created means perfectly serve the divinely purposed ends. Both figures thus reject absolute miracles; as Pedersen writes, "the less God *discretely* acts in history, the greater the corresponding perfection of God's creation" (p. 49). Instead, both figures affirm the continuity and integrity of the natural order as distinct from (yet dependent upon) God, an affirmation grounded in a particular construal of God as perfectly wise and good. Schleiermacher's construal of the natural order is further explored in the fourth chapter. Again, his account of the nature

system, far from being a methodological assumption, is the conclusion of careful argumentation that shares numerous features with the works of Leibniz and Spinoza.

The fifth chapter recounts Schleiermacher's rejection of Leibniz's account of hypothetical necessity in favour of Spinoza's view that the world is as it is of absolute necessity. This move further bolsters his case for the rejection of miracles, but more crucially posits that divine freedom and divine necessity are not mutually contradictory. The sixth chapter finally shows how Schleiermacher insists with Leibniz and against Spinoza in the validity of final causes. Unifying Leibnizian teleology with Spinozan necessity allows Schleiermacher to posit that the world has the love of God as the world's necessary end and the wisdom of God as the world's necessary order. This renders the world as—in Pedersen's words—"the artwork of God, the perfect work of the perfect artist, and so the absolute revelation of God" (p. 129). And this in turn means that to investigate the world, as natural science does, is to investigate the means and order of God, and thus to investigate the essence of God itself.

The result, as Pedersen recounts in his conclusion, is that "Theology and natural science *need* each other to offer the complete account that the unity of the world demands" (p. 154). They remain distinct disciplines, with their own proximate aims, procedural methods, and normative standards, but they are distinct only in relative and not absolute terms. Either one, indeed any discipline, in isolation is "*necessarily* incomplete" (p. 179).

Pedersen's work succeeds on multiple levels. Stylistically, despite its traversing of some deeply complex subject matter, the writing is precise and lucid. The structure is rather unintuitive, and requires patience, but is seen at the end to have been heuristically helpful. Materially, the work succeeds in its stated desire to demonstrate that Schleiermacher's recommendation of an eternal covenant is not a methodological proposal but an argued conclusion, grounded in the view that the world is a self-revelation of the divine being.

But the work also makes several other contributions: it demonstrates Schleiermacher to be more attentive and more indebted to the latest scientific theories of his day than has previously been observed; it evidences the natural scientists of the day to be more attentive and more indebted to theological principles than has often been appreciated; and it shows Schleiermacher to be more influenced by Leibniz, less enthralled to Kant, and more aligned with highly orthodox theological positions than has generally been recognised.

There are points at which the reader might wish for more, or plausibly demur. In respect of the former, though Pedersen sketches out plausible ways in which Schleiermacher's position might defend itself from critiques drawing on the absurdity of human sin (pp. 142–150) or the indeterminacy of quantum physics (pp. 178–179), there would be room for lengthier reflections. In respect of the latter, the absolute resistance to theological paradox evident throughout might encounter some

resistance, particularly in more dialectically inclined circles, while the account of the incarnation as "explicable by the system of nature" (p. 90) might cause some interpreters of Schleiermacher to hesitate and ultimately dissent.

In terms of the ongoing conversation between religion and science, Pedersen indicates the perhaps unexpected way in which the work of Schleiermacher poses a number of tantalising challenges even today. Schleiermacher posits the idea that the divine freedom and the divine necessity, far from being antithetical, are in truth identical. He offers a view of divine action upon the world that relies upon a very traditional account of the divine being yet resists divine intervention and divine miracles. And he articulates the contention that the scientific investigation of the 'how' of the world cannot be divorced from the theological investigation of the 'that' and 'why' of the world, on the grounds that both are in truth investigating aspects of one and the same divine essence. As this very fine book insightfully suggests, there is much here for both scientists and theologians to continue to ponder.

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Wilcoxen, Matthew A. *Divine Humility: God Morally Perfect Being*. Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2019, pp. 227, $39.95, hardback.

Matthew A. Wilcoxen is an Associate Rector at Church of the Resurrection in Washington DC. He earned his PhD in Systematic Theology from Charles Sturt University, Australia.

In *Divine Humility*, Matthew A. Wilcoxen asks why humility has not always firmly been considered one of God's eternal attributes in the Christian tradition. Honouring their theological achievements, this book visits the work of St. Augustine, Karl Barth and Katherine Sonderegger and puts them to work answering some of the tradition's oldest and newest questions.

Chapter 1 introduces the task at hand through the question of how (or if) the metaphysical attributes of the divine being can relate to his divine subjective moral attributes. It begins with a concise critique of Heidegger's Onto-theology and his influence in certain strains of contemporary theology. Wilcoxen highlights existentialism's dependence on the very enlightenment principles it tried to rebel against while preparing for itself a "conflict of traditions" (p. 10), which additionally estranged it in part from its "rival tradition of inquiry, Christian Theology" (p. 11). Instead, Wilcoxen takes an analytic approach to be more conducive for returning to a contemplation of God in which the moral and metaphysical are not philosophically split apart from the outset.

Chapter 2 presses toward an analytic definition of humility. With the help of analytic philosopher James Kellenberger, Wilcoxen rethinks common assumptions about the meaning of humility; for example, that one must have a low opinion of oneself

or that it is the "absence of self-assertion" (p. 46). By rejecting these assumptions, Wilcoxen is able to do at least two important things. Firstly, he reframes the contrast between pride and humility towards a pride and shame continuum, both of which depend on self-concern. With this, he frees humility from being defined negatively: solely as pride's opposite. This move will allow him to do ontological work later by defining humility as "a different way of one being oriented toward the self altogether" (p. 48). After a fruitful discussion with the fathers of the Christian tradition on these new terms, this positive definition of humility anticipates St. Augustine's doctrine of God. One cannot help but sense a rushed definition of virtue at the beginning of this chapter, which is discussed later through the dialogue with tradition, but not further defined. This leaves an explanatory gap between "virtues" as they are understood in ethical terms and the divine attributes and one wonders how or if they bear upon each other conceptually.

Chapter 3 is an example of Wilcoxen's aptitude for clear exposition of classical and biblical material. He introduces the "generative tension" (p. 82) in Augustine's understanding of God *in se* (immanent trinity) and *pro nobis* (economic trinity) by asking how humility can be conceived within the nature of God. Problematising this further, Augustine must ask the question of how God shares his life with contingent creatures whilst remaining God. Tracing the doctrine of incarnation through Augustine's exegesis of John 5:19-30 and Philippians 2:6-7, Wilcoxen challenges certain readings of scripture that posit God as "essentially cruciform or vulnerable" (p. 96) *in se* or *forma dei* because this risks making the nature of God the Son (*forma dei*), dependent to some extent on Christ's *human* nature (*forma servi*). Instead of blending the two without caution, Wilcoxen perceives how communication and participation mark Augustine's approach: He resolves "that the divine nature communicates to the human nature of Christ at the level of moral character but not immutable being" (p. 99). Wilcoxen perceptively explains that in Augustinian thought, humility (rather ambiguously) *is the tension* that allows God-to-remain-God and humanity-to-remain-humanity while bringing the two into fellowship.

More than Barth's radically Christological outlook, it is Barth's stubborn theological conviction that humility is an attribute of God *in se* that captures Wilcoxen's attention in Chapter 4. Regrettably, Barth is only able to secure this by defining divine humility as the utmost obedience of the Son to the Father. It is left unclear whether the submissiveness or the obedience is the mark of humility here leaving much to speculation. Furthermore, without clearly distinguishing between Christ's obedience in his human nature from obedience in his divine nature, Barth strays dangerously close to positing that Jesus had only one will. Wilcoxen observes that Barth 'mirrored' the historical life of Jesus into the divine life with such a Christocentric fervency that his accordance with conciliar tradition was put in jeopardy. Drawing helpfully from Maximus the Confessor to correct Barth's insights, Wilcoxen wisely warns that Barth's approach does not allow us to work from the

prior doctrine of divine simplicity (God *a se*) towards an understanding of the work of Christ-for-us (*ad extra*). This ironically leaves the latter rather un-submissive to the former. Thus, his equation of humility and obedience betrays his obstinate conviction that God must be somehow humble in his own inner life, a position for which Wilcoxen gives him credit even if Barth fails to earn it theologically. Here, Wilcoxen is a model, to theologians and students, of how to read charitably without becoming slack in criticism. Students may also learn here how to think within the context of tradition, trusting in the resources of an older community.

Wilcoxen's fifth chapter takes a final shot at locating humility in the divine being relying on Sonderegger's biblical impulse to meditate on God's unicity and omnipresence. She is thus able to argue that humility is an attribute of the morally perfect being, by assuming from the outset that 'God's moral character' *is* his 'perfect being' contrary to Barth and Augustine who deemed it necessary to observe a kind a tension between the two. Sonderegger treats the unicity of God as metaphysical and thus that God's being *is* his relation to creation. This relation is a real, dynamic and objective presence disclosed in his hiddenness. God's holy humility is then approached through a contemplation of his omnipotence reframed in terms of the concept of 'energy'. Here, Sonderegger gets behind the logical hurdles which arise in traditional modes of reasoning about whether God's relation to creation is one of primarily will or cause exclusively. Her innovative method (*via eminentae*) surpasses Barth's because she reasons from God's internal life *a se* towards his life *ad extra* casting a view back to God as the radiant and eternal source. Sonderegger proves hugely helpful to Wilcoxen's fascinating project though it is still an open question whether there are existing contributions in the history of the Church which may retain the traditional language of will, cause and substance and yet accomplish what Sonderegger has without the language of energy.

In this book, one can sense Wilcoxen's conviction that the task of systematic theology is best fulfilled under the guidance of the scriptures, interpreted within the Christian tradition and community of faith. Rather reservedly, this work also implies a tangible proximity between systematic theology and ethics. It is therefore no surprise that his presentation examples attention to God's own involvement in the history of the church. Wilcoxen also secures a firm place for the generative value of mystery within systematic theology to inspire awe in the one who contemplates God.

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Macaskill, Grant. ***Autism and the Church: Bible, Theology, and Community*****. Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2019, pp. 236, $34.95, hardback.**

Grant Macaskill is Kirby Laing Chair of New Testament Exegesis since 2015. Prior to this, he had taught as Senior Lecturer in New Testament at the University of St Andrews. His research engages with the New Testament as a coherent body of theological literature emerging from the diverse contexts of late Second Temple Judaism. His publications have included extensive treatments of theological issues in the New Testament, notably "Union with Christ".

In many ecclesial settings, it goes unnoticed that the church's autistic members are a gift. In his book, Grant Macaskill has written in a tone of faithful hope about *Autism and the Church* within an awareness of the sorrow that can accompany being overlooked in such contexts. This book is an example of a biblical theology which dispenses neither of the participatory nature of the church in its reading practices nor the social and scientific research required to write informatively about autism. Macaskill submits the rigour of theological scholarship to its pastoral significance making serious reflection accessible to a larger range of readers than simply those inside the university.

The first chapter presents a brief historical survey of research into autism which ends by guiding the reader to take the experiential element of autism as seriously as the scientific information offered. This sensitivity is a feature which sets the tone for chapter 2. Given that the Bible does not mention autism, Macaskill outlines some proposed conditions for reading scripture responsibly, "in relation to the Gospel of Jesus Christ" (p. 44). Unmasking some common misuses of the Bible, he argues that a responsible reading of scripture is achieved within the communion of the church under the rule of faith. In light of her salvation story, she must humbly read the whole bible in prayer with the Holy Spirit who illumines. Macaskill presents these conditions as six principles, none of which function as values with which to trump other 'Christian' or societal values. Rather, he trusts the sufficiency of the scriptures to undo our instinctive value-tendencies as Christ is revealed to us in the text. Thus, with clear emphasis on the doctrine of the incarnation one observes that participation in Christ and providence are chiefly operative in Macaskill's biblical ethics.

This is witnessed in the argument of chapter 3 in which Macaskill calls out the sinful ways in which we tend to ascribe social worth to those who are cool, hip and charismatic: in other words, 'normal'. Situating his discussion of this issue around the grace of the cross and the resurrection of Christ our attention is turned towards the triumph of the Holy Spirit over our sinful rejection of grace. Macaskill underlines that we must recognise the autistic members of the body as gifts and he concurrently warns against accepting such members (or any members) because of what social capital they can bring to the group. Recognising that churches are social and sensory

spaces, chapter 4 offers practical suggestions for churches to accommodate the sensory needs of people with autism. As the church learns how to be a body which suffers and rejoices together in worship, Macaskill cautions that mistakes must not lead us to despair.

Chapter 5 examines some of the typical weaknesses among some people with autism. In view of the failures of the whole church body, he argues for a "theology of weakness" through exegesis of 2 Corinthians 3-4 and passages from Hebrews 1, 3, 9 & 10. His major theological move here is to re-examine the word 'flesh' as used by Paul in the New Testament which can refer either to the sinful nature or physical frailty. He reassures that in *both* uses of the word, the scriptures underline that "our flesh is weak" (p. 143) and that this weakness is the medium through which God's strength is manifested. Reading weakness as the hermeneutic brackets surrounding the sinful nature and physical frailty, Macaskill recaptures this common biblical motif. Thus, the New Testament texts prompt Macaskill to accentuate the providence of suffering and the redemptive repurposing of even the sinful nature for the good of the Christian. Though he does not use this word, this aspect of the discussion about autism might offer fresh insight into the doctrine of sanctification, uncoupling the doctrine from the idea of "becoming better versions of ourselves" (p. 157). Macaskill, rather discusses the challenges of personal formation and virtue, highlighting that change is typically more difficult for those with autism but not impossible. To invite further reflection, it might be worth investigating the relationship between his "theology of weakness" and Luther's *theologia crucis*.

The final chapter exegetically grounds how weakness can be read redemptively, by emphasising the efficacy of the Holy Spirit to co-assist us. Macaskill's exegesis of Romans 8:26-27 also briefly navigates larger questions about the role of cognition/ cognitive disability in autism in the context of church practices. Reflecting on verbal ability, prayer and sexuality, Macaskill's main encouragement here is to re-affirm our participation-in and union-with Christ. For example, certain traditions who may not baptise individuals until a verbal profession of faith is made, are encouraged to re-examine the work that the Holy Spirit might achieve in individuals non-cognitively but still within the context of the body. This raises several interesting questions about where Paul and the early church fathers located cognitive capability with in the traditional anthropological language of 'body and soul and spirit'. One could ask whether Paul's theology of weakness makes room for a pneumatology of intellectual disability focussing on what the Holy Spirit is able to do.

Macaskill's book invites such questions, leaving ample room for discussion. In this book, students are offered a gentle—no less cutting-edge—introduction to disability theology and New Testament hermeneutics. In addition, I suspect that this book could offer church study groups the opportunity to engage afresh with scripture on a level which takes both scripture and church experience seriously. Aside from neurodevelopmental conditions, this work might also serve a role in equipping the

church to listen carefully to others who are overlooked, socially disadvantaged or struggling with mental ill health. Thus, requiring no prior knowledge in Autism Studies or New Testament Scholarship this book is capable of effectively addressing congregations, pastors, students and their teachers alike.

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Marrs, Rick W. *Making Christian Counseling More Christ Centered.* Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2019, pp.260, $19.95, softcover.

"Believe more." "Pray more." "Do more." Law-centered counseling can accidentally burden the counselee with more guilt, shame, and depression. Christ-centered counseling, on the other hand, mitigates tribulation and motivates sanctification by centering the counselee in the forgiveness, love, and grace of Jesus Christ. By presenting a primer in the Christ-centered theology of Martin Luther and suggesting soul-care strategies that flow from that theology, Rick Marrs, Christian counselor, licensed psychologist, and professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, aims to make Christian counseling more Christ-centered.

Luther's Christ-centered theology comes packed in orthodox paradox. In Marrs's manual, three of Luther's paradoxes are especially unpacked and employed to help make Christian counseling more Christ-centered: (1) the bane and blessing of *Anfechtung*, (2) the distinction of Law and Gospel, and (3) the saint and sinner-hood of the Christian.

First, Marrs shines a needed light on *Anfechtung*, the lost locus of Luther. Whether we like it or not, human beings are creatures afflicted with *Anfechtung*, Luther's favorite German word for temptation, trial and tribulation, guilt and shame, suffering and sorrow. Against a theology of glory or prosperity gospel, the devil, the world, and our sinful nature are constantly assaulting not only non-Christians but also Christians in both body and soul, consuming us in fear for both our lives and salvation (p. 26). *Anfechtung* is a bane. And yet *Anfechtung* is a blessing. *Anfechtung* not only drives human creatures to look for answers, meaning, and purpose (p. 27), but God also uses *Anfechtung* to drive us to Christ's cross of forgiveness, life, and salvation (p. 58). One of the strategies Marrs recommends for counseling someone well-struggling with *Anfechtung* is well-chosen bibliotherapy. Marrs's favorite is *Luther's Letters of Spiritual Counsel*, edited by Theodore Tappert (1960). Luther himself, "arguably Christianity's most famous depressive," suffered life-long with melancholia, and Marrs reports about some counselees: "They found Luther's descriptions of his own suffering, weaknesses, and struggles were similar to theirs, and they found his spiritual insights of the depressive struggle very edifying. They sometimes reported that Luther's letters were more helpful than talking to their

counselor" (p. 117). *Anfechtung*, with which all of us are infected, can paradoxically be both bane and blessing.

Second, Marrs remarks that many Christians are confused about Law and Gospel. The Gospel, we misjudge, is a given, "something we needed to know only when we first became Christian" (p. 65). Once the Gospel has converted us, now the Law is lord of us: "Yes, you've accepted Jesus as your Savior, but is He now Lord of your life?" (p. 76). Now that the Gospel has done its job, now it's your job to keep the Law to be good enough for God. Dominated by the Law, Christian life runs the hamster wheel of legalism and rides the roller coaster of perfectionism, weighted and frustrated with never being good enough for God (p. 77). Yes, Luther concedes, the primary purpose of the Law is to show us our sins, but the primary purpose of the Gospel, Luther decrees, is to show us our Savior, not just at the beginning of Christian life but every day of Christian life. Not just at altar calls and Good Friday sermons, *Anfechtung*-infected Christians require "constant exposure to God's healing message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ" (p. 46). Marrs asks Christian counselors to ask themselves, "What verses do I most commonly use with my counselees? Are they verses that directly (or subtly) point them to themselves, their own abilities, their own faith, their own inner strength?" (p. 128). One of the strategies Marrs recommends for counseling someone confused about Law and Gospel is to point him or her to explicit Gospel in the Bible and to even insert the person's name into the verse: Ephesians 2:8–9: "For by grace (Steve has) been saved through faith. And this is not (Steve's) own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of (Steve's) works, so that (Steve) may (not) boast" (p. 129). The Gospel does not nullify the Law; instead, fully forgiven in the name of Him who fulfilled the Law in our place, the Gospel fulfills the Law. Yes, Christians should keep the Law, but keeping the Law to be good enough for God is keeping the Law with the wrong motivation. Christ not only fulfills the Law for Christians but also gives Christians the gumption to keep the Law with the right motivation: Ephesians 2:10: "For (Steve is) God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that (Steve) should walk in them" (p. 130). The Law does not fulfill the Gospel; the Gospel fulfills the Law.

Third, the saint and sinner-hood of the Christian piggybacks on the distinction of Law and Gospel. Christians wish they were always and only motivated by the Gospel, but Luther reminds us that we are with St. Paul "Romans 7 Sinners with a Romans 8 God," simultaneously holy saints but nevertheless still sinners—"*simul iustus et peccator*," as Luther liked to say in Latin (p. 85). Marrs finds that "too many pastors teach their people, either implicitly or explicitly, that they can become perfect in this world, free from all outward sin. … This false teaching leads many Christians into a dark level of guilt because they realize their own inability to achieve that perfection" (p. 89). But Luther counsels, "We will never rid ourselves of our sinfulness until death (or Christ's return); nevertheless, God the Father does not look upon our sinfulness because we have been united with Christ in His cross, death,

and resurrection" (p. 48). One of the strategies Marrs recommends for counseling someone worried with the *Anfechtung* that they do not have enough faith or are not good enough for God is the "Gospel Empty Chair Technique" (p. 122). The counselor/ soul-care giver points the counselee to an empty chair: "Do you think that chair is strong enough to hold you up?" After a little conversation the counselor directs, "Now, I'd like you to get up and sit in that chair." After sitting in the chair, the counselor asks, "Which was more important, the strength of your faith in the chair or the strength of the chair itself?" Then the counselor asks, "Which is more important, the strength of your faith in Jesus Christ or the strength of Jesus Christ Himself?" Christ-centered counseling centers the saint-and-sinner counselee not in her fragility or futility but in the stability and security of Jesus Christ.

More than just the three above, in this humble primer and manual Marrs imparts many more insights into Luther's theology and strategies for its soul-care application. Not only will Lutheran seminarians, pastors, and counselors benefit but also non-Lutheran seminarians, pastors, and counselors who are looking to make Christ's grace more explicit in their counseling sessions. Even non-Christian counselors may learn more about the faith of their Christian counselees and ask, "I thought the Christian faith was more about Jesus forgiving you," or "I thought that Christians believed God loves them more than God expects them to be perfect" (p. 3). The only imperfection I find with the text is that it sometimes reads, like Luther, a little haphazardly, rather than systematically. This miniscule imperfection nowhere near overshadows the perfection of Marrs's mighty subject, Jesus Christ and the application of His forgiveness, love, and grace. Pick up a copy and get ready to make your Christian counseling and, God-willing, your counselees more Christ-centered.

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Hardwick, Lamar. *Disability and The Church: A Vision for Diversity and Inclusion*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2021, pp. 199, $12.99, paperback.

Lamar Hardwick, known as "the autism pastor," is a strong advocate for people with disabilities. Hardwick is the lead pastor of at Tri-Cities Church in East Point, GA and the author of *Epic Church* and *I Am Strong: The Life and Journey of an Autistic Pastor*. Lamar has not always had his current reputation as "the autism pastor." For many years, Lamar struggled with interpersonal relationships and social anxiety. At the age of thirty-six, doctors diagnosed Hardwick with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

In *Disability and the Church*, Hardwick includes eight chapters devoted to creating an inviting atmosphere for people struggling with a disability. According to Hardwick, the disabled community is the largest minority in the world (p. 12).

For Hardwick, many churches are failing at their responsibility to be an inclusive Christian institution. Hardwick explores various avenues through which the church should implement diversity and disability strategies in the body of Christ. If the church wants to make a kingdom impact, Christians must recapture God's intent of inclusion and access into God's kingdom (p. 18).

In the opening chapter, Hardwick confronts the set of circumstances that keeps the church from ministering to the disabled community. Due to sin, the church struggles with diversity. Pastors and congregation members must realize that making disciples means creating a culture of diversity (p. 39). Another hindrance regarding diversity is the issue of outward appearance. Hardwick makes a strong indictment that some churches do not value the disabled because of pride (58). Hardwick uses Jesus' teaching of the wedding banquet (Luke 14:8) to challenge contemporary culture to rethink symbols of power and prestige. The church acts in a prideful manner when it places more value on the able-bodied rather than on those with disabilities.

If churches want to have strong and vibrant ministries regarding the disabled community, the leadership of the church must teach and foster a culture of including people with disabilities. Therefore, the church must change their theology and structure regarding disabilities. Pastors and congregation members must discuss issues relating to the disabled community, and change church policies, processes, and programs that might restrict fruitful church membership (p. 99).

After mentioning the hindrances to diversity and inclusivity, Hardwick spends three chapters devoted to changing the church culture and its relationship to the disabled. First, churches must create a learning culture that focuses on the experience of people with disabilities. Hardwick asserts that preaching is the primary tool for building a learning culture (p. 112). Second, churches must build a linking culture that provides a root system for families with special needs and disabilities. Small groups, community groups, and a personal invitation to church are great ways to establish a viable rooting system that attracts families to the local church (136-137). Finally, churches must build a leadership culture that supports disabled persons. According to Hardwick, creating a leadership culture that supports disabled person in leadership begins with examining and removing the barriers to leadership in the church (p. 150).

In the final two chapters, Hardwick calls for churches to synchronize with heaven. In other words, churches must cast a compelling vision of church life which includes persons with disabilities and special needs (p. 164). If churches want to have meaningful kingdom impact, pastors and church members must affirm the disabled by giving them leadership opportunities and responsibilities that matter (p. 176). For Hardwick, the church must learn how to do ministry *with* persons with disabilities rather than doing ministry *for* persons with disabilities (pp. 189-190).

In chapter five, Hardwick makes a strong assertion that the Apostle Paul had a disability according to Galatians 4:12-13 (pp. 110-111). As a student of biblical and

theological studies, this reviewer had a hard time understanding Hardwick's broad use of labeling certain biblical persons with a disability. For instance. This reviewer believes that Hardwick's assessment makes too quick of a theological leap from Paul's personal situation to a disability. The Bible does not provide the exact nature of Paul's illness. While a certain illness or malady may have hindered Paul from traveling at the time, the illness did not totally hinder the Apostle from all travel or future ministry.

For churches that struggle with diversity and inclusion, there are three reasons why pastors and congregation members should read Hardwick's book. First, Hardwick provides his readers with encouragement and motivation to change the existing church culture. While there are parts of the book that focus on negative aspects of church life and ministry, Hardwick devotes much of his writing to positive words of encouragement and motivation. Churches often struggle with change and implementing new ministry strategies, but this volume provides readers with the theological resources to motivate change within the church. Ultimately, the church should include persons with disabilities because God's kingdom includes persons with disabilities.

Second, pastors and teachers within the church can find practical resources for implementing a church culture that includes persons with disabilities. The first practical tool for changing the church culture is a vibrant preaching ministry. This reviewer believes that Hardwick is right when he states that preaching is the primary tool for building a culture that includes the disabled community. The first step in changing the church culture involves teaching the church about what God requires regarding the church's relationship and responsibility to persons with disabilities.

The second practical tool for changing the church culture concerns the structure of the church's discipleship ministry. Churches should implement small groups or community groups that include the disabled community. Small groups and community groups could act as a safe environment which provides comfort and care for persons with disabilities and their caregivers. Also, small groups and community groups provide a safe environment for the disabled community to voice their concerns regarding ministry opportunities within the local church.

Third, pastors and church members should read Hardwick's book because of its unique characteristic. First, Hardwick's book is unique because there are not a lot of books regarding persons with disabilities. Second, Hardwick's book is unique because he struggles with a disability. Therefore, pastors and lay leaders can get a better understanding of the disabled community because Hardwick's book focuses on the church and his experience as a pastor with autism.

Hardwick's book is right on cue regarding the current topics of inclusion and diversity. Pastors, lay leaders, and church members should read *Disability and the Church* if interested in developing a ministry of inclusion regarding persons with disabilities. *Disability and the Church* is a relatively easy book to read for the active

pastor or lay leader. Therefore, it is possible to make Hardwick's book a primer regarding the church's ministry to persons with disabilities. Once the church has fully embraced the inclusion of the disabled community, pastors and lay leaders can finally do meaningful ministry with persons with disabilities rather than doing ministry for persons with disabilities.

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MacBride, Tim. *To Aliens and Exiles: Preaching the New Testament as Minority-Group Rhetoric in a Post-Christendom World.* Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2020. pp. 254, $51, hardcover.

Tim MacBride (ThD, Australian College of Theology) serves as Head of the Faculty of Bible and Theology at Morling College in Sydney, Australia. At Morling, MacBride teaches New Testament and Homiletics. Prior to joining the faculty, MacBride pastored a church in Sydney's south suburbs for twelve years. *To Aliens and Exiles* is MacBride's third book on preaching New Testament rhetoric. MacBride's two previous books on preaching include his doctoral thesis, *Preaching the New Testament as Rhetoric* (Wipf & Stock, 2014), and *Catching the Wave: Preaching the New Testament as Rhetoric* (InterVaristy Press, 2016), in which he simplified his doctoral thesis for a non-academic audience. MacBride has also written several articles on preaching and a book on patronage in John's Gospel.

In *To Aliens and Exiles,* MacBride offers Christians a lens to understand how to articulate the faith from a minority group position. Such a minority position was the context in which the New Testament was written. Indeed, MacBride posits, Christians have always been a minority. How to instruct the Church to interact with the majority culture is the question of the hour. In the book's introduction, MacBride highlights three possible trajectories for answering this question: (1) minimize the distance between the Church and the world, (2) take a defensive, us vs. them stance, or (3) become "attractively different" (p. xiii). An "attractively different" community neither conforms to the majority culture nor isolates itself from it. Instead, it retains distinctive doctrinal and ethical boundaries that are simultaneously transparent (allowing outsiders to see what is truly happening) and permeable (encouraging outsiders to join the minority community).

The book is divided into five parts. Part 1 develops the theory behind using NT minority group rhetoric in preaching. With the embrace of social media, Western culture in the Twenty-First Century feels remarkably like the honor and shame cultures of the Mediterranean in the First Century. A person's "court of reputation" has become collectivist in nature, as Facebook "likes" (and their counterparts on other social media platforms) have become the new social currency. For Christians taking minority doctrinal and social stances, chances for public shaming are on the

rise. MacBride, writing from post-Christian Australia, has seen multiple cases of this firsthand. For readers in the US, then, who are just beginning to feel such effects of going against majority opinion, it is as if MacBride is writing from the future (except for the multiple veiled and outright attacks against US President Trump).

Parts 2 through 4 look at NT books specifically. Part 2 considers the General Epistles. According to MacBride, 1 Peter is "the most prototypical example of minority group rhetoric in NT" since it addresses myriad interactions between the minority and majority groups (p. 45). Part 3 analyzes Paul's epistles, noting how Paul's subverted language was common in the Roman Empire, adding a Christian interpretation. For example, in his discussion of Philippians, MacBride notes how Paul urged believers to be good citizens of the empire, yet ultimately encouraged them to remember that their citizenship was in heaven. Part 4 discusses the Gospels and Acts. One fascinating point MacBride's rhetorical analysis reveals is that, whereas Matthew and John appear especially concerned with the fledgling Christian movements minority status, the two-part Luke-Acts emphasizes the group's permeability among elite and lowly sinners.

The book concludes in Part 5 by considering how one minority group, African Americans, have preached the NT text. Based on conversations with three African American evangelicals – two professors and a pastor – MacBride notes how African American preaching uses its history as a minority to both identify with biblical characters and "experience the text" (p. 220).

To Aliens and Exiles possesses several strengths, although two are especially helpful. First, as noted above, MacBride's overall idea that Western culture is pushing confessional Christians into a minority position where they will be shamed into conformity is correct. MacBride is clearly familiar with the honor and shame literature, so his is a helpful voice in knowing how such a value system operates. Second, MacBride's analysis of the NT books in each chapter is thorough and engaging. As a preaching professor familiar with crafting memorable rhetoric, each chapter begins with an anecdote for the reader to recall the big idea.

One weakness is MacBride's decision not to include any of the Pastoral Epistles. A single footnote describes why this is so, claiming that those letters deal mainly with "in-house" matters and not with Christians' relations to the outside world (p. 120). Such reasoning is odd since the book's primary audience is preachers and pastors. Further, if it is the case that minority rhetoric helps members identify doctrinal and ethical boundaries, MacBride could further his argument by including Paul's instructions for Timothy and Titus' preaching content. Certainly, MacBride did not have space to include an analysis of all 27 NT books. Nevertheless, a book on preaching that does not address the Pastoral Epistles seems unfinished.

This critique aside, MacBride has done the Church a great service through this book. Since all Christians at some level engage culture, all Christians will find assistance in these pages. Those Christians called to stand before fellow believers

and preach God's words should consider MacBride's warnings and encouragements. As the global Church moves into a further marginalized, dishonored position, the words of the NT will become strikingly relevant.

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Greenaway, Jonathan. *Theology, Horror and Fiction: A Reading of the Gothic Nineteenth Century*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2021, 198pp, £80, Hardback.

Dr Jonathan Greenaway is currently a Researcher in Theology and Horror at the University of Chester. He is working on a Templeton Religion Trust-funded project to explore the theological importance of all forms of horror media. His background in literary studies, and Gothic fiction in particular, appropriately underpins the conceptual framework for this book, which arises from his doctoral studies at the Manchester Centre for Gothic Studies.

The book is made up of five substantive chapters plus an introduction to 'Gothic and Theology' (as opposed to 'Religion') and a brief conclusion. Greenaway's aim is to reposition critical understandings of the role of theology in Nineteenth Century Gothic writing, which in his view have been neglected in recent literary studies. He suggests that Gothic fiction may be read as engaging with theological positions in a variety of ways which are generative of new ideas in the fields of both theology and Gothic studies. Greenaway argues that taking an approach of 'theological hospitality' towards these texts opens up a productive dialogue, contributing to an understanding of their contexts as well as informing theological issues of significance today.

In Chapter 1, Greenaway considers the relationship between Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. He suggests that Shelley's focus on the key themes of evil and salvation, when considered theologically through the intertextual lens of *Paradise Lost*, indicates the novel offers a critique of the notion of the creative impulse of the Romantic genius. The novel offers new ways to think about the 'Other' in the self-understandings of Victor and his creature. It is because Victor refuses to accept his responsibility as creator that his creature becomes monstrous, alienated from the community which would fulfil his subjective needs. The Romantic search for transcendence in the sublime is shown to be creative but dangerous when distanced from the grounding offered by a theology of creation.

In Chapter 2, the significance of the Calvinist theology at the heart of James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* is reassessed, in light of recent critical studies which focus on the psychological rather than the theological in the novel. It is suggested that a Calvinist understanding of divine revelation, focused on a fixed view of the Word, is shown to provoke terror when

confronted with the instabilities and dangers expressed in such Gothic literature. For Greenaway, ignoring the theological dimension of the text's shifting presentation of Robert Wringhim's experience is to lose a profoundly significant aspect of the novel.

Chapter 3 considers the novels *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*, with a focus on the theological perspectives offered in each, unorthodox though they may be. In the first of these novels, the fallen nature of material existence is presented and within that, radical alternatives to a Christian 'heaven' and 'hell' are explored. Greenaway suggests that Hareton and the young Cathy ultimately offer a hope for the future which is theologically aware of the fragility of the boundaries between the profane and the sacred, and the past and the present. In the second novel, the generic Gothic image of the trapped woman is presented in the narrative of Jane Eyre's life. When read for its theological meaning, a variety of theological positions are challenged and found wanting (such as that of the Rev Brocklehurst), but the resolution is one in which liberation through sacramental marriage is possible for Jane. Crucially, Greenaway suggests that the concerns of these novels go beyond the purely material or psychological, and that their engagement with theological ideas speaks to the modern as much as to the original reader.

The Victorian Gothic ghost story is the focus of chapter 4, the shortest in the book. Greenaway offers readings from a sample of stories from across the period, and argues that a space for theological reflection is opened up when the presence of ghosts in a narrative creates supernatural uncertainty.

Finally, in chapter 5, three key texts from the *fin de siècle* period are considered: Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Jekyll and Hyde*, Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and Stoker's *Dracula*. Greenaway interrogates the value of reading degeneracy in evolutionary terms as the underlying philosophical category in these texts, as a response to growing secularism in society. In each case, Greenaway presents theological language and ideas as having valence and significance, even if only, as in Wilde's text, to be shown to be unfulfilling and inadequate. For Stevenson, tentative hope is offered in the Pauline understanding of the human condition which Jekyll rejects, with fatal consequences. For Stoker, the eclectic drawing together of dispirit theological ideas suggests that materialism alone is not sufficient to overcome evil. However, here the possibility that religion may be complicit in violence is also stressed in a way which speaks to readers today as well as at the time.

Greenaway's book is impressive in its scope and engagement with the literary texts it interrogates. Throughout, the work of significant contemporary theologians, such as David Brown and Rowan Williams, is brought into productive dialogue with the texts and with literary critics. This is a truly interdisciplinary thesis, and offers a powerful counter-voice to those readings of literature which deny or ignore theology as a hermeneutical approach or category of meaning. Often, this is born out of ignorance about theological perspectives such as Calvinism, or Augustinian

theology, but here Greenaway proves himself to be well-qualified to discuss and apply these theological frameworks.

In some of the chapters, there is strong dependence on the work of others, such as that of Alison Milbank in the chapter on Hogg's *Confessions*. The claim that theological concerns have been side-lined is perhaps less well-established here than in other chapters. A psychological approach is certainly present in much recent work on Hogg, but the centrality of Calvinist theology remains a strong area of academic interest. The decision to focus on the works of Calvin, rather than on later developments in Calvinism, is understandable in light of the pressure of the limits of the chapter, but it does lead to a slightly skewed view of the unwavering significance of the uninterpreted divine Word in the Reformed Church. A Reformed belief in the presence of the Word of God in the act of preaching, for example, or of the role of the Holy Spirit in the understanding and application of Scripture, is rather underplayed here in order to highlight the fear-inducing role of the unmediated Word. The fierce debates around antinomianism in the Church of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century reveal both the contingency and the importance of biblical interpretation itself in Reformed theology, which the novel might also be read as exploring (as many critics have).

One of the book's strengths is its engagement with David Brown's work on natural theology and the arts. Brown's emphasis on the interdependence between the two, which envisages art as revealing something of God for the age, to which the church responds and adapts, is powerful and positive. Gothic literature in particular is shown to have much to offer the church in this sense, through its challenges to established beliefs as well as to the way it leaves open the possibility of the supernatural. If Greenaway had more often offered examples of this process at work, in the church and in individuals, the thesis would have been even more convincing. His drawing back from identifying 'church' in this debate with any specific denomination might be viewed as a missing link in an otherwise theologically confident argument.

The book makes a strong contribution to literary and theological studies of the Nineteenth Century, and to the study of Gothic across the period. Its emphasis on the pervasive influence of the language and perspectives of theology is an important corrective to some recent readings of these texts. Some readers from outside the field of theology and biblical studies might find its strongly apologetic tone somewhat overplayed and unconvincing. However, it offers a detailed introduction to Gothic literature for those whose knowledge is limited, through its readings of key texts in the field such as *Frankenstein*, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, and Wuthering Heights*. It also introduces theology students to scholars working in the interdisciplinary field of literature and religion/theology, such as Alison Milbank, Malcolm Guite, Paul Fiddes and Terry Eagleton, while offering those more familiar and specialised in the field a sustained and developed argument to consider. The bibliography does not include all

of the texts referred to in the body of the text, which is somewhat disappointing and to be noted, particularly if a reference within the text is of further interest.

Overall, Greenaway's monograph is a model of interdisciplinary scholarship which will enlighten those working in a variety of fields. But its particular strength lies in its application of theological categories to the literary criticism of Gothic texts which may open up new areas of interest for theologians of the Nineteenth Century.

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Heinrichs, Steve, ed. *Unsettling the Word: Biblical Experiments in Decolonization*. Orbis, 2019. pp. 303, $25, paperback.

Steve Heinrichs, editor and contributor of *Unsettling the Word,* is the Director of Indigenous-Settler Relations for the Mennonite Church of Canada. He is an ardent activist for Indigenous peoples and passionate about what he sees as the church's call to solidarity and reconciliation with this oppressed community. As evidence of such passion, Heinrich was a faith leader who was arrested and served seven days in prison for being with the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples. Along with them, he was protesting the expansion of Kinder Morgan's Trans-Mountain pipeline in Burnaby, B.C.

His book, *Unsettling the Word,* is a timely and conscience-stirring work that seeks to liberate scripture from the traditional lens of settler colonial societies. The book is not an orthodox monograph, but a compilation of 68 independent interpretive stories and poems by a diverse group of scholars, poets, artists, and activists who desire to free scripture from those who have utilized the Bible as a "weapon to dispossess Indigenous and racialized peoples of their lands, culture, and spiritualties" (p. iii). It wrestles with scripture, both "re-imagining and re-interpreting the ancient text for the sake of reparative futures" (p. iii). Each chapter begins with approximately one to three verses beginning with the Genesis creation story and moving through to the Book of Revelation. The selected verses are then followed by a two to three-page story, either non-fictional or fictional or a poem that "boldly re-imagines the old stories," seeks to "expose the violence of specific texts," provides "radical commentary with pointed calls to action," or does "nothing, but pray the text back to us, to the land, and to God" (p. xv). The topics discussed include, but are not limited to, the plight of the immigrant, the injustices of Indigenous peoples, the abuse of creation, and the empowerment of the "weak." Many of the interpretations are impactful, but too numerous to mention in the parameters of this review. Therefore, only three impressionable interpretations will be mentioned.

The first is Vivian Ketchum's interpretation of Ruth 1:15-16 titled, "What about Orpah?" This interpretation captures the plight of the immigrant child who knows nothing else than the land she was raised. It is reminiscent of the many children we

call “Dreamers” in the United States, who though were born in a foreign land, are in every practical sense, “American.” Ketchum’s poignant words demonstrate this reality, “Why should I return to a land that’s a stranger to me? I’ve lost the language of my people. Lost the customs. Lost the traditions.”

A second contribution is titled “The Foolish of Petropolis” by Heinrichs. He compares the Tower of Babel to the Alberta oil sands in a provocation to the ones who are constructing pipelines and cities that are damaging, and even completely destroying, parts of the natural world in the name of advancement and natural resources. Strong language is employed (pp. 12-15) which is arguably inappropriate for a faith-based book such as this. However, the use of such language seeks to demonstrate the frustration and indignation of the author against the injustices that both Indigenous lands and lifeforms have endured at the hands of the dominant colonizing culture.

And lastly, “Economies of Enough” by Carmen Lansdowne reinterprets Exodus 16:4 highlighting North America’s overconsumption, greed, and distrust in our creator, provider, and sustainer. Lansdowne notes that these behaviors that plague Canada, much like the United States, are inconsistent with the “lessons taught to the Israelites through God’s gracious, daily provision of manna and quail and Indigenous traditional ways” (p. 28).

The strength of this work lies in its ability to provoke thought, convict the conscience, and challenge old held beliefs and interpretations of scripture. There was a stirring of the conscience that occurred with many of the stories and poems in the text, leaving the reader indignant, remorseful, frustrated and/or melancholic from interpretation to interpretation. There is a call to action embedded within each story and poem. But are there instances where the contributor went too far? Does this volume include passages that misrepresent the text, stretching it to fit their agenda? Despite the many strengths of the book, there was a sense that some of the interpretations stretched the confines of solid scholarship, crossing the border into impassioned pleas and bold political statements. This is evident in Mitzi J. Smith’s contribution titled, “Resisting the Great Co-Mission” and “Beyond the Strong Man” by Ralph Armbruster-Sandoval, where brazen language and political statements respectively are used to support their interpretations of scripture. Is this type of reading justifiable? Considering that the goal of the book, which is to offer “gritty, experimental reflections that can be used in pulpit and street to surprise, stir, and startle us into seeing the prophetic word new and strange,” these examples aided in accomplishing this aim (p. xiv).

Heinrich’s two main sources of inspiration, James Cone and W.E.B. Du Bois, who co-founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People that he shares in his Preface, demonstrate the influence and importance of Liberation Theology in the creation of this project. Liberation Theology employs action-reflection (praxis-oriented) methodologies in response to particular forms of

oppression. Indeed, *Unsettling the Word* is successful in employing praxis-oriented methods as a response to the oppression of Indigenous communities who have been treated as subservient to the dominant culture. Therefore, a student desiring to understand Liberation Theology would benefit from this compilation of interpretive stories and poems.

The nature in which the book is structured lends itself to short studies both in an academic or church setting. In addition, though the text wrestles with difficult issues, it is not exceptionally erudite, making it more accessible to a broader audience. Therefore, *Unsettling the Word* would appeal and be beneficial to individuals ranging from serious students of theology, to activists for Indigenous peoples and other oppressed communities, to lay people in the church desiring to expand their purview of biblical interpretation.

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Rosendahl, Sheri Faye. *Not Your White Jesus: Following a Radical, Refugee Messiah*. Westminster John Knox Press, 2019. pp. 204, $16.00, paperback.

What would it look like to rediscover the power behind the "red letters" in the gospels during an era of rampant racism, hatred, and division? In Rosendahl's *Not Your White Jesus: Following a Radical, Refugee Messiah*, she encourages us to step out of our institutional thinking about the church and challenges the image and ideals of the Americanized, blond-haired, and blue-eyed Jesus. She puts forth the invitation to become followers of a radical, Palestinian, brown-skinned Jew—Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Rosendahl's work is a bold critique on the Christian church in the United States, arguing that American cultural and nationalistic identity has deeply influenced and warped Christianity that it is currently unrecognizable to the way of life that the Jesus of the gospels taught and lived (pp. 16-17). She addresses the election of Donald Trump, writing with candor to a Christian audience that, as she believes, has forgotten Jesus' original message (pp. 100-101). Divided into two parts, part one focuses on the profile of the radical, refugee Messiah, while part two examines current issues such as war, racism, nationalism, consumerism, violence, and misogyny. She examines these aspects by focusing on the teachings of Jesus, which she describes as the red letters of scripture.

In part one, Rosendahl focuses on the identity of Jesus Christ and contends that he is primarily a radical refugee Messiah. This exploration also includes a personal memoir of her encounter with the risen Christ. By focusing on this identity of Jesus, it is contrasted to what she describes as the "White American Jesus" that is later explained throughout the book. She narrates her shock when she realizes that the American Jesus she learned of in her youth did not, in fact, prefer American citizens

over other people. Nor did this Jesus champion America's greatness in relation to the rest of the world. Instead, she realizes how deeply "whitewashed" the Americanized Jesus had become, a beacon of conservative ideology controlled by a powerful group of men (p. 5). This Americanized Jesus, Rosendahl contends, cares little about health care for the vulnerable, but applauds tax breaks for big business and millions allocated to the nation's war machine. As she argues, it suggests that this portrayal of Jesus crusades for "life," but routinely deports father and mothers back to their countries, thus ripping families apart, which is antithetical to life.

Thus, Rosendahl puts forth a major reason why the historical Jesus is crucial for understanding Christianity's original teachings, naming the fact that Jesus was both a Jew and a Palestinian (p. 19). She provides a quick and well-researched overview of the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict, pointing to the American church with its "weird Christian Zionist ideals" as the funders of an essentially apartheid state in the Middle East today (pp. 20-21). Rosendahl challenges readers to ask what the world would look like if Christian churches actually lived out the teachings of Jesus. She believes that this would create a society that is generous toward the poor, allocates budgetary funds toward humanitarian causes, and pulls the most vulnerable out of poverty (p. 7).

Rosendahl finds the solution, and implicitly a rejection of the American Jesus, in the "red letters"—the words attributed directly to Jesus. She introduces the reader to the Jesus of the gospels. A Jesus, as she summarizes, is a Middle Eastern Jewish man who was born of an unwed teenage mother, fled from an oppressive king, amazed scholars and educated folk of his day, lived a radically minimalistic lifestyle, and kept company with the marginalized of society while displaying a lifestyle of love in action (p. 6). Rosendahl ends part one of her book by exhorting readers to be willing to see the hurt and pain around us and in this way. If we would do so, she believes that this would lead to an ethical response of compassion. She argues that love is not passive but speaks boldly as we advocate for those in need.

The second part of the book tackles the issues of racism, nationalism, refugees, violence, consumerism, misogyny and the marginalized. As she outlines the major issues within American Christianity, Rosendahl frequently points the reader back to Jesus in order to display the disturbing ways that American Christianity has rallied behind causes that often contradict his teachings. For example, she mentions the United States' current exclusivist foreign policy as a complete indictment on the Christian faith; as the U.S. shuts out, bans, and deports, Jesus Christ inclusively welcomes, accepts, and validates the foreigner. Rosendahl also cites the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who said, "In the end, we will not remember the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends" (p. 96). She asserts that the red-letter Jesus of the gospels would have not stayed silent on the sidelines, but would have fearlessly joined the fight against oppression with his brother and sisters of color, because the way of Jesus is always the way of bold and risky love. Thus, Rosendahl concludes

her book by encouraging readers to re-examine deeply our stances on current social issues in light of the red letters of the gospel, especially if we are going to take the gospel seriously. She proposes that the world will only change once Christians take up the cause of love initiated by the Middle Eastern, Jewish refugee Messiah, who is also known as Jesus Christ.

Throughout her book, Rosendahl's occasional sarcasm and humor allows readers to feel included in a dialogue. As she recounts personal experience coupled with research and facts about real world events and current issues, she invites readers to think about all the different positions the American Christian church has taken, which often, as she proposes, stand in direct contradiction to what Jesus exemplified in his life. She continuously points the readers to the radical Messiah of the gospels, asking us to think differently about our faith and the way we live it out, both individually and collectively. Due to Rosendahl's candor, this book is easily accessible to those not as familiar with the faith or those who may be discouraged by terrible displays of Christianity around them. It also may attract disillusioned Christians, seeking for a different understanding of Christianity. This book will also challenge and shock those who may identify with the Christianity that she distinguishes as an American version of the faith. This book is not for the faint of heart. Thus, *Not Your White Jesus* is a bold critique of American Christianity that compels Christians of all denominational backgrounds to honestly reexamine the ways the church often fails to live up to the teachings of Jesus in the red letters of the Gospels.

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