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## BOOK REVIEWS

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# Book Reviews

**Michael Lieb, Emma Mason, and Jonathan Roberts, editors. *The Oxford Handbook of the Reception History of the Bible.*** Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. xv + 725 pp. Hardback. ISBN 9780199204540. N. p.

*The Oxford Handbook of the Reception History of the Bible* is presented in form of 44 chapters in two parts. Part I includes 12 chapters on the reception history of the biblical material (contributors' names in parentheses): Genesis (Rachel Havrelock), Job (John F. A. Sawyer), Psalms (Katharine J. Dell), Isaiah (John F. A. Sawyer), Ezekiel (Paul M. Joyce), Daniel (John J. Collins), Judges (David M. Gunn), the Gospel of John (Catrin H. Williams), Romans (Guy J. Williams), 1 Corinthians (Judith L. Kovacs), Galatians (John Riches), and Revelation (Christopher Rowland, who also served as consultant editor of the volume). Part II features the remaining chapters on a variety of topics, such as: The Bible and Iconography (Albert C. Labriola), Linguistic and Cultural Influences on Interpretation in Translations of the Bible (David J. Clark), Memory, Imagination, and the Interpretation of Scripture in the Middle Ages (Mary Carruthers), The Bible and Anti-Semitism (Tobias Nicklas), Dante and the Bible (Piero Boitani), George Friedric Handel and *The Messiah* (John Butt), Elisabeth Cady Stanton's *The Woman's Bible* (Ann Loader), Bob Dylan's Bible (Michael J. Gilmour), and From John's Gospel to Dan Brown: The Magdalene Code (Robin Griffith-Jones).

In recent years, reception history has grown to be an increasingly popular topic. Rather than focusing on the interpretation of the biblical material by way of exegesis, reception history focuses on the history of interpretation of a given biblical book or passage. This new handbook helpfully introduces and illustrates this important discipline by discussing the reception history of 12 key biblical books (though one laments the non-inclusion of the remaining books in the biblical canon) and a series of specially commissioned representative case studies. On the whole, the essays are competently written and informative. Since a comprehensive review of the contents of this volume is beyond the scope of a short review, my brief remarks will focus on an area of special research interest of mine addressed in the volume: John's Gospel. Catrin Williams, who previously published a monograph on "I Am Sayings" in Jewish and early Christian literature, contributed the 12-page chapter on John's Gospel (plus works cited and further reading, from which references to standard evangelical commentators such as Carson, Keener, Morris, and this writer are conspicuously absent).

After a brief introduction, Williams discusses the shape of John's narrative (essentially a very concise content survey) and then treats the Gospel's

theology under four major headings: Jesus' Mission in the World: Contrasts and Conflict," "Symbols, Signs, and Jesus' Offer of Life," "Jesus, the Heavenly Emissary and Son of God," and "The Spirit and 'The Remembering Community." Little in Williams' treatment rises above what is widely known in Johannine studies. It does not appear that the vantage point of the present volume (i.e. reception history) has shaped Williams' presentation to any significant extent. Apart from an opening tipping of the hat to Clement of Alexandria's designation of John's Gospel as the "spiritual Gospel," there is no discussion of the patristic reception of John's Gospel, nor is there any treatment of the use of John's Gospel by the major church councils. The same glaring omission can be detected with regard to medieval and Reformation scholarship on John's Gospel. Tellingly, the oldest works cited by Williams are Raymond Brown's 1966 commentary, J. L. Martyn's *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (1968), and P. Borgen's essay "God's Agent in the Fourth Gospel."

As a result, those interested in the history of interpretation of John's Gospel will need to turn to works such as A. Volfing, *John the Evangelist in Medieval German Writing* (2001), T. E. Pollard, *Johannine Christology and the Early Church* (1970), F.-M. Braun, *Jean le théologien* (1959), A. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition* (1975), J. N. Sanders, *The Fourth Gospel in the Early Church* (1943), and Sean Kealy, *John's Gospel and the History of Biblical Interpretation* (2002), to name but a few. Nevertheless, while the various essays in the volume are somewhat uneven and at times rather brief, there is something for everyone in this volume, including those who are fascinated by the use of the Bible in contemporary culture, whether in Bob Dylan's music or Dan Brown's novels. Where else can you find a treatment of Post-Holocaust Jewish Interpretations of Job, or on Uchimura and the Bible in Japan? With all its flaws and generally critical-leaning tendencies, *The Oxford Handbook of the Reception History of the Bible* shows why reception history is such an intriguing and fascinating field of study in our day.

Andreas J. Köstenberger
Wake Forest, North Carolina

**C.E. Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels? Probing the Great Gospel Conspiracy.*** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. 246 pages + appendix, endnotes and index.

One of the pressing needs regarding Canon studies is to readdress the modern assessment of the early church fathers because the records we have are not likely to be supplemented any time soon with new ground-breaking discoveries. Considering the great span of time, the political and religious upheavals, we are fortunate to have what we do have. Unfortunately, instead of seriously studying Irenaeus and the other second century fathers, modern scholarship prefers to denigrate their work or simply refer to them as the

winners in the war of competing Christianities. Under the template of the Bauer thesis, Irenaeus and his contemporaries are said to have conspired to select the canon of the NT, eliminating now lost gospels and overcoming sects of Christianity now considered heretical. C. E. Hill, in *who chose the gospels*, challenges many of these axiomatic rubrics popular among Canon scholars today.

Hill, professor of NT at Reformed Seminary in Orlando, FL presents evidence for a fourfold Gospel Canon that is about 100 years earlier than usually presented and will suggest how it came to be. In doing so, Hill challenges the popular belief among evangelicals and non-evangelicals alike that around AD 200 the NT Canon had just about been recognized and all that was left was some "mopping up" around the edges of the Canon. This was achieved by the fourth century councils. The Gospels are usually considered "ratified" in the mid-to late second century (particularly under Irenaeus' influence).

Hill begins in the garbage dumps of Egypt, specifically the Oxyrhynchus finds. The claims that other gospels were as popular in the 2nd century as the four canonical Gospels are simply not the case. To date, pre-website, including non-Oxyrhynchus finds they have only discovered three fragments of non-canonical gospels and seven to thirteen canonical Gospel fragments.

In recent news, Oxford University uploaded 200,000 segments of Oxyrhynchus papyri to the website www.ancientlives.org to get laymen to help transcribe them in hope of finding more lost gospels. Given that the ratio is overwhelming in favor of the canonical Gospels, the "lost gospels" have a lot of ground to make up. It is unlikely that this search-Sarah-Palin's-e-mails approach will do so. Furthermore, one of the gospels they have found (P.Egerton 2) is likely dependent on the canonical Gospels (especially John). This suggests that in spite of the recent efforts, Hill will remain correct. The papyrus finds "do not show that non-canonical Gospels were 'about as popular' as the canonical ones" (32). He then turns to other kinds of evidence, the literary evidence from the church fathers.

Irenaeus and the modern interpretation of him is handled in two parts. The first is "Silencing the Bishop, Part I: The Lonely Irenaeus." The picture of Irenaeus choosing the Gospels and giving his lonely opinion to the church is refuted by 1) reading his work; and 2) showing those around him were also of the same conclusion. Hill notes, "The problem with Irenaeus is that he simply wrecks the popular paradigm. His views about the emerging New Testament Canon, and about the four Gospels in particular, are simply too well-developed, too mature, to fit the scheme that many have invested themselves in today" (41). The other problem moderns have with Irenaeus is that his rhetoric is unpleasant and intolerant. To expect him to be so is an anachronism that obscures the facts. It turns out he was neither alone in his opinion and that's what really matters.

Next, Hill looks at Irenaeus' co-conspirators: Clement of Alexandria; Serapion, Bishop of Antioch; and the Muratorian canon (a teacher, a preacher, and a canon-list maker). Clement of Alexandria did not cite non-canonical gospels on an equal plane with the canonical ones (contra Lee McDonald). Serapion of Antioch was not advocating the gospel of Peter to be read in the churches as Scripture (it is unthinkable that a bishop would allow a book to be read such without reading it himself!). Instead the books 'handed down to us' from the apostles are to be received (i.e., the Canon). Hill also devastates the mistaken idea that the Muratorian canon belongs to the fourth century. It is more likely to be from the second century.

In Chapter 5, Hill handles the packaging of the Gospels. This deals with the phenomena of why there are only four in the diatessaron, Ammonius' synopsis, and in Gospel codices. Of note in this chapter is the refutation that Tatian used more than four Gospels in his diatessaron. What he does use is the four with a few phrases, most likely composed by himself, to stitch the narratives together.

In subsequent chapters, the same sort of precision is given to Justin Martyr who probably had a complete four-Gospel codex. Chapter 7 shows that the unbelievers show knowledge of the church's Gospel Canon. Chapter 8 describes three works from before AD 150 that show knowledge of the four Gospels. For example, the *Apocryphon of James* and the *Epistula Apostolorum* draw heavily on the four Gospels one wants to add to them, the other wants to supersede them. Both are dependent on their existence and popularity. The same is true of Marcion's canon. These and more show that in the first half of the second century there was a "normative influence already being exercised buy the four canonical Gospels both inside and outside the mainstream church" (182).

Chapter 9 is Hill's discussion of the Apostolic Fathers (the successors of the apostles). Hill concludes that, "all hold to the belief that the saving gospel of Jesus Christ had been authoritatively delivered to Jesus' apostles, whose responsibility it was to teach and hand down that Gospel to the continuing church. The mechanism for receiving those Gospels which were received was in place" (204). Hill contends that mechanism came from the apostles themselves.

Chapters 10 and 11 pull together the drawstring of Hill's theory. Papias is noted to be the earliest witness to the fourfold Gospel Canon (around AD 120 at the latest). Yet he is still dependent on an earlier source, the elder, around the turn of the second-century. Still earlier, (Hill seems to reject that these were the same person) John the apostle is said to have consented the truth of the canonical Gospels. Hill, here, steps off the train and concludes that the fourfold Gospel codex comes at this period, around AD 100, but we cannot tell if someone chose them. His view is fleshed out in Chapter 11 where he suggests that the Gospels imposed themselves as the witness of the apostles. The early church simply did not believe they had a choice in the

matter (231). These Gospels show evidence of God's Spirit but nobody had the right to choose, these were handed down from the apostles (246).

At the conclusion I really only have two complaints. The first regards the transmission of the Gospels: much more regarding the empirical evidence needs to be said. The fourfold Gospel Canon is a published book from the early 2nd century late first century. Virtually all our manuscripts are descendants of this codex. This kind of reception must have had some religious gravitas behind it. At the time it surfaces, there is no ecclesiastical machinery or structure that could have done so. It apparently is the responsibility of an individual or group of individuals that had great respect. It is unlikely to be Polycarp (as Trobisch suggests) for he apparently did not have that kind of religious power. He was unsuccessful in getting the western church to celebrate Easter at Passover, yet imposed his fourfold Canon on the church? not very likely. Hill addresses when the codex was produced (early 100s at the latest) but does not address who produced it and why it was the runaway bestseller of the century. That Hill did not touch Trobisch's theory pro or con is a disappointment.

I am also disappointed that Hill does not address the Sundberg thesis more than he does. Sundberg places the canonization into the fourth century and bends the knee to the church councils (including accepting an expanded OT Canon). Sundberg is the foundation for much of canonical understanding today and is the major influence on McDonald. Hill's work can and should be used to address the thesis. That he doesn't directly is disappointing.

Nevertheless, Hill's treatment of the literary and documentary evidence is impressive and, in my mind, devastating to the contrary theses current today. This work, like his *Johannine Corpus in the Early Church*, is a scholarly and gracious shot across the bow to modern Canon scholarship (represented by Lee McDonald and Albert Sundberg). His command of the pre-AD 200 literature is astounding and refreshing. I, for one, am exhausted by misquotes and poor reading of the church fathers being forever recycled like extra-biblical prooftexts. Hill's work addresses many of these head on. I would highly endorse the present work. All those investigating the Canon of Scripture must read this book for not only the conclusion that it reaches but also for a reasoned and well-read approach to the Early Church Fathers.

Scott Kellum
Wake Forest, North Carolina

**D. A. Carson. *Collected Writings on Scripture***. Compiled by Andrew David Naselli. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010. 335 pages. $27.99, hardback.

Periodically, North American evangelicals experience doubts concerning the full authority and/or truthfulness of Scripture. In the early twentieth century, modernists influenced by a Darwinist appropriation of the historical-critical method gradually departed from the evangelical fold as they re-

jected the supernatural elements of Scripture. This led in part to the fundamentalist-modernist controversies of the 1920s and 1930s. A generation later, many evangelicals became convinced that, though the Bible was infallible in respect to its spiritual message, it contained historical and scientific errors. This resulted in the battles for the Bible in the 1970s and 1980s. In the past five years, a small but vocal cadre of evangelicals have either rejected the doctrine of inerrancy or advocated positions that seem to many to be incompatible with biblical inerrancy. As in the previous eras, these recent errantist eruptions have resulted in forced terminations, strained friendships, and scholarly polemics.

In the past generation, few evangelical scholars have been as sure a guide in the debates over the doctrine of Scripture as D.A. Carson, Research Professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. Over the years, Carson has penned a number of significant essays related to the inspiration, authority, and interpretation of the Bible. Some of these articles have been scholarly salvos aimed at evangelical revisionists. Others have been substantive reference articles written for students and clergy. Still others have been piercing reviews of important works written by various scholars. With the assistance of his research assistant Andy Naselli, an excellent younger scholar in his own right. Carson has assembled many of his most important essays in his *Collected Writings on Scripture*. In light of the current evangelical fracases over Scripture, this book has appeared at just the right time.

Though the essays included in *Collected Writings on Scripture* were originally penned over a thirty-year period, Carson has born witness to a remarkably consistent doctrine of Scripture. Several themes emerge throughout the volume. First, Scripture is the written word of God, authored by men under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, fully trustworthy in all matters to which it speaks and sufficient for all matters related to life and godliness. Second, the Bible can be properly interpreted by Spirit-led individuals, using the best tools available, within the context of the community of faith, in submission to the Lord who reveals himself through his word. Third, interpretive strategies that venture too far afield from the biblical text itself are ultimately unsatisfactory. Fourth, clever and not-so-clever attempts to revise the doctrine of Scripture are logically fallacious, historically suspect, and biblical unsustainable.

One's context will largely determine which chapters are most beneficial to which readers. Students will benefit from the slightly dated, but still imminently helpful essay dedicated to recent scholarly developments among theologians and biblical scholars and the judicious chapter on the usefulness of redaction criticism. Pastors and other Bible teachers will resonate with Carson's brief introduction to the doctrine of Scripture and his excellent treatment of Scripture's clarity. (I found this material very helpful as I was preparing lectures on the doctrine of Scripture for an adult Sunday School class in

my local church.) Scholars will find his insightful book review essays very helpful, especially his critiques of important works published in the last decade. Any reader interested in the ongoing debates over evangelical hermeneutics and theological method will find much to appreciate in Carson's essay on unity and diversity within the New Testament and its ramifications for systematic theology. Even those who have read some of this material before (I had previously read about a third of the essays) will profit from a fresh perusal of Carson's thoughts on Scripture.

The book's overall coherence allows for it to be easily read through as a helpful evangelical introduction to the doctrine of Scripture. This, in itself, seems quite remarkable for a collection of essays—even essays written by a single author. Yet, this book's true genesis was in the various essays themselves, which were published in numerous books, dictionaries, journals, and *festschriften*. Because of the unique provenance of each chapter, *Collected Writings on Scripture* can also be read in bits and pieces with great profit. Carson's book deserves widespread adoption in college and seminary classes and universal inclusion in pastoral and even local church libraries. It is that good. Whether read in its totality or spot-read along and along, *Collected Writings on Scripture* is that rare volume that is essential to any minister's bookshelf. I give it my highest recommendation.

Nathan A. Finn
Wake Forest, North Carolina

**Peter J. Leithart. *Athanasius. Foundations of Theological Exegesis and Christian Spirituality*.** Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011. xviii + 206 pp. Paperback. ISBN 9780801039423. $27.99 Paperback.

Christ is the center of all things metaphysical and Scriptural. So argues Peter Leithart in *Athanasius*, the first volume in the Foundations of Theological Exegesis and Christian Spirituality series. This series intends to "explore the patristic witness to our common Nicene faith" by examining "how biblical exegesis, dogmatic theology, and participatory metaphysics relate in the thought of a particular church father" (ix). Leithart's contribution in this first volume focuses on Athanasius' unwavering conviction that Christ unites Scripture and all things, including creation, history, and metaphysics (xvii).

Leithart begins to demonstrate this thesis in chapter one by giving an overview of the Arian controversy. Leithart's purpose here is not so much to argue over historical detail as it is to show that Athanasius' primary argument with Arius and his followers lay in his belief that his own position was derived from Scripture and honored God in Christ, while Arius' and his followers' position(s) was derived from Hellenistic philosophy and dishonored God the Father by separating him from his Son.

In chapter two, Leithart shows how Athanasius fundamentally disagreed not only with Arius' and his followers' arguments, but also more foundation-

ally with their exegesis of Scripture. Leithart contends that Athanasius believed his method of interpretation placed the scriptural text, read through Christological lenses, as primary, while Arius' method placed Hellenistic metaphysics at the forefront. Leithart then argues that Athanasius' basic method of interpretationconsisted of three major tools: the *skopos* of Scripture (akin to the *regula fidei*)and the "tripartite rule" (attending to the person, time, and circumstance of a passage); *paradeigmata* (recognizing major or privileged biblical images and Christ as Paradigm); and the use of theologically proper words that convey the distinction between Creator and creature. These tools allowed Athanasius to consistently see Christ as "both the substance of Scripture and the criterion of right interpretation" (53), something he believed Arius failed to do or understand.

Chapters three, four, and five deal with the metaphysical questions of the nature of the Trinity, the relationship of God with creation, and the incarnation respectively. Leithart here strives to demonstrate Athanasius' metaphysical convictions, such as the fact that God the Son is co-eternal with God the Father, that creation is distinct from God as Creator, that God is impassible even in the passible event of Christ swallowing death in his death and resurrection, and that the Incarnate Christ was fully God and fully man. In each of these and in other areas Leithart shows where Athanasius disagrees with Arius. But Leithart's more fundamental point is that Athanasius' metaphysical convictions are consistently and always Christological. This serves as both an example for current theologians in doing theology and also as an explanation for why Athanasius so fundamentally disagreed with Arius. Arius' problem, and perhaps implicitly contemporary theology's problem, is that Patrology and the Doctrine of Creation have been divorced from Christology.

In the final chapter Leithart deals with Athanasius' views on sanctification. His essential point is that Athanasius saw sanctification as deification through participation in Christ. Leithart ends the book with a prayerful epilogue, praying that both he and his readers would recognize the centrality of Christ in all things.

*Athanasius* is a stimulating read, both intellectually and spiritually. Leithart's reputation as an engaging writer is only bolstered by this work. He is able to explain the issues, positions, and doctrinal convictions of Athanasius and his opponents, as well as of present day theologians, with a potent combination of detailed accuracy and simplicity. He is also able to do so while promoting spirituality, worship, and Christological focus throughout the book. For biblical and theological scholars working in an ecclesial context, there can be no higher goal than academic integrity wedded with spiritual vitality, and Leithart meets that goal with ease.

Also worth noting is Leithart's continual use of lengthy quotations from Athanasius, and occasionally others, to support his points. It is clear from these quotes that Leithart is looking to primary sources but also taking the

material he uses from these sources in their original context. There can be no charge of prooftexting here. Leithart also engages the theological issues of the day through Athanasius' work, including the social Trinitarian movement and the "nature vs. grace" issue. Finally and perhaps most importantly, Leithart consistently proves his thesis throughout the book.

Occasionally, Leithart does seem a bit repetitive, but this is due more to the fact that he is so consistent in arguing for his thesis than it is to poor writing. This critique, though, is very minor in comparison to the erudition he shows as both a churchman and a scholar in *Athanasius*.

Matthew Y. Emerson
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**Michael J. Quicke. *Preaching as Worship: An Integrative Approach to Formation in Your Church.*** Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011. 279 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0-8010-9226-8. $17.99 Paperback.

Michael Quicke has been a leading homiletician for several years, giving us terrific material such as *360-Degree Preaching*. *Preaching as Worship* is yet another valuable resource for the church in general and pastors in particular. As the title suggests, this book focuses on the relationship between preaching and worship. Quicke's aim is to "open preachers' eyes afresh to glorious big picture worship" (20). He says, "I plead for a shift of worldview. Instead of claiming the supremacy of preaching as all-important, I dare claim the supremacy of worship, which includes preaching and much else" (21). He transparently and humbly weaves his personal discovery throughout this book, providing theological and practical insight along with personal testimony and experience.

Quicke says that preachers can become "myopic" (39), missing important details of life and leadership. He says often these preachers view the church as their own "preaching dome" (37). He argues that preachers have a bigger role than delivering sermons, and should see themselves as worship leaders.

In chapter 2, he provides several reasons why preachers are sometimes "not interested" in worship: (1) worship is considered less important, (2) worship is viewed as burdensome, (3) worship is seen as a specialist subject, (4) worship is deemed controversial, (5) worship is reckoned an enthusiasm, (6) worship causes personal pain, (7) worship is dismissed as boring, and (8) worship is just not understood. He encourages preachers to elevate their concept of worship saying, "Worship embraces vision, mission, and everything else, for nothing is more important than living together for God's glory" (37).

He says that "myopic preaching" is marked by several characteristics, each showing a serious indicator that preachers have separated their task from worship. These indicators include: faulty definitions of worship (such

as "music only" or "Sunday only"); a thin theology of worship; a non-directive use of Scripture (not using Scripture to direct the entire corporate worship service), "liturgical amnesia" (having low regard for 2,000 years of worship); feeble community formation (seeing corporate worship as something for individuals only); naïveté about culture; ambivalence about music; not living in God's narrative (not showing people how they fit within God's grand story); isolated preparation (preparing sermons separate from others, including musical worship leaders); and "worshipless sermons" (chapter 3).

Quicke then moves toward a fuller definition of worship. He points out that worship is bigger than preaching, is bigger than music, needs liturgy, needs some pragmatism, embraces mission, and is bigger than Sunday services (chapter 4). He proposes that true worship is God-empowered, all-inclusive, continuous, and Trinitarian (70-76).

Building on this theology, Quicke describes what "big picture preaching" looks like. He says that preachers should see themselves as worshipers, see preaching as an act of worship, and see how worship itself is proclamation. He adds that preachers should help the listeners learn how they belong to "God's unfolding story." He also states that "worshipful preachers" will actively seek "community transformation," and most of all, big picture preaching means that preachers will no longer see their task apart from worship.

After setting out these foundational points and chapters, Quicke takes individual chapters to tease out his thoughts and the implications for preachers. Throughout the book, he also provides a "Question Toolbox" that summarizes his thought and serves as a tool for corporate worship preparation. The questions are:

(1) Gift: Are we thankfully receiving this gift from the Triune God of grace?
(2) Magnification: Are we expressing its richness toward God?
(3) Scripture: Are we allowing Scripture to direct?
(4) Audiences: Are we addressing two audiences? (God and people)
(5) Community: Are we community by story?
(6) Mission: Are we enabling community to scatter?

As a homiletics professor, I plan on using *Preaching as Worship* because this is one of the only recent homiletics books to deal with this vital relationship between worship and preaching. I fear that many students may leave preaching classes thinking that if they can preach good sermons, then everything else will just sort of happen in the church. They certainly can become "myopic." While I am committed to sending out expository preachers, I also want to send out "worship-leader preachers." That means students need to think about how to incorporate the public reading of Scripture in gathered worship, select songs, how to work with the musical worship leader, do public prayer, create biblical community, celebrate the ordinances, and lead the mission of the church from the pulpit.

As a pastor, I plan on working through this book with our elders and pastoral interns. I was personally challenged, motivated and instructed by Quicke on this important topic.

Tony Merida,
Wake Forest, North Carolina

**Christian Smith. *The Bible Made Impossible: Why Biblicism Is Not a Truly Evangelical Reading of Scripture.*** Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2011. xiv + 220 pp. Hardback, ISBN 9781587433030. $22.99 Hardback.

Christian Smith writes *The Bible Made Impossible* to accomplish three things: 1) to demonstrate why the popular "biblicist" approach is impossible to maintain consistently, 2) to show some corollary problems with the general biblicist interpretative strategy, and 3) to offer an alternative, more truly evangelical approach to reading the Bible.

Smith begins with a definition of biblicism that consists of a constellation of ten assumptions or beliefs that, when generally held, form biblicism (4–5). He then explains what he sees as the death blow to biblicism: pervasive interpretative pluralism (PIP). Smith describes PIP as, "The very same Bible—which biblicists insist is perspicuous and harmonious—gives rise to divergent understandings among intelligent, sincere, committed readers about what it says about most topics of interest" (17). In other words, if the Bible really is perspicuous and harmonious, then surely it would be clear enough on the most important issues to minimize the variety of interpretations produced by faithful readers. There is, however, a great variety of interpretations; ergo at least some of the ten foundational biblicist claims must be reconsidered.

Pervasive interpretative pluralism, Smith argues, cannot be easily minimized or explained away, and he spends the rest of chapter 1 and all of chapter 2 shoring up his case for PIP by giving numerous examples and arguing that attempts to dismiss the destructive impact of PIP on a biblicist hermeneutic fall short. Smith then tries to get at the root of PIP and concludes that the Bible is multivocal and polysemic. In Smith's words, "The Bible can and does speak to different listeners in different voices that appear to say different things" making at least some of the Scripture "somewhat semantically indeterminate" (47–8).

After spending some time in chapter 3 discussing the historic and psychological origins of biblicism, the former of which Smith lays squarely at the feet of Charles Hodge and Benjamin Warfield, Smith moves on in chapter 4 to a discussion of some of biblicism's corollary problems. Smith identifies nine distinct difficulties for evangelicals that grow out of biblicism. Among these are blatantly ignored teachings, arbitrary determinations of cultural relativism, and the lack of support for biblicism in the Bible itself.

In part two of his work, chapters 5–7, Smith offers his own non-biblicist, yet "truly evangelical" reading of the Bible (93). He begins by suggesting a "Christocentric" alternative hermeneutic that is at its core Barthian. For Smith, "Barth offers a very powerful, sophisticated, biblically grounded, antiliberal, evangelical vindication of historically orthodox Christianity" (121). To Smith's mind biblicism, in focusing on the text with a reverence approaching worship, at least partially misses the reality about which the text testifies, namely Jesus Christ. Smith then argues that if biblicism must be rejected at least in part and replaced with a Christocentric hermeneutic, then evangelicals will have to live with a good deal of ambiguity and uncertainty about what the Bible teaches. Evangelicals will also, he argues, have to reject an ultimately modern, scientific approach to reading Scripture that seeks excessive perspicuity and Cartesian certainty. Smith offers a kind of speech-act language model as a preferable replacement.

There is much to admire about Smith's work. Thoughtful evangelicals, when they see the interpretative patterns described by Smith happening in their own contexts, tend to disapprove of them (eisegesis, proof-texting, etc.). Smith's contention, however, is that *all* of evangelical biblicism is guilty of these errors and, in fact, *must* be guilty given what biblicists claim about the nature of Scripture. This is where most evangelical scholars will disagree with Smith. Despite his attempts to demonstrate the contrary, it appears that Smith, while clearly accurate at times, does actually overstate the problem.

Smith also falls prey to his own brand of biblicism. He calls biblicists to the carpet for claiming certainty and unanimity of interpretation where there is none, and yet throughout his work, when seeking to promote his own positions, Smith manages to find great clarity from the Bible in places where there certainly is no historical unanimity of interpretation (e.g. the trinity, issues of wealth and poverty, slavery, etc.). Additionally, though Smith rightly criticizes evangelical biblicism for often making arbitrary determinations of cultural relativism without any systematic criteria, he may be guilty of the same when he suggests that Evangelicals must learn to live with ambiguity. "Let the ambiguous remain ambiguous," he says, but without giving any helpful criteria for what marks a text as ambiguous (142), though he does quite confidently identify many ambiguous and non-ambiguous texts throughout his essay when he needs them to make his case. It appears that the Bible isn't quite so "impossible" after all.

Smith concludes with the reassurance "that nothing of the gospel of Jesus Christ needs to be lost in the rejection of biblicism" (176). It is doubtful that most academically-minded evangelicals who read Smith will agree. Some will certainly conclude that Smith's attack on biblicism is misguided and that his solution to the problem of PIP undermines the Scripture in a way that makes articulating and defending the gospel of Christ impossible. Even so, every serious-minded evangelical should read Smith's often *uncomfortably* insightful work.

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**Michael Bergmann, Michael Murray, and Michael Rea. *Divine Evil: The Moral Character of the God of Abraham.*** New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.vi + 337 pp. Hardback. ISBN 9780199576739. $125.00 Hardback.

This is a collection of essays examining God's moral character in the Old Testament. Overall, the essays are well-written. One of the book's unique strengths is the depth with which it explores God's commands to the Israelites to practice *herem*, the devoting of human beings, livestock, and other things to Him for whole-sale destruction.

The book is divided into three sections. Part one crystallizes problems Christians face in light of God's portrayal in the Old Testament. Louise Antony, Edwin Curley, and Evan Fales contribute chapters, with responses from Eleonore Stump, Peter van Inwagen, and Alvin Plantinga. Antony contends God is not a loving father, and, in fact, He is a terrible and abusive parent. For support she looks at a number of passages. These include God's command to Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, His ordering the destruction of populations such as the Amalekites, and His imposition of over-the-top punishments such as not allowing Moses to enter the Promised Land after he strikes a rock. Curley and Fales argue that portions of the Old Testament cannot be divinely inspired, since they teach morally erroneous truths. These include Numbers 31 where God commands the destruction of the Midianites, the excessive punishments in Leviticus that require the death of homosexuals, adulterers, and witches, and Exodus 21 where God permits the Israelites to sell their daughters into slavery.

Part two offers up responses to some of the philosophical problems Christians face regarding God's character in the Old Testament. Many of these chapters focus on the practice of *herem* with regard to the Amalekites, Canaanites, and the Jerichoites, and they are concerned with the philosophical question of whether, assuming God actually commanded such an exercise, it is plausible to view Him as a perfect being. John Hare, Mark Murphy, Eleonore Stump, Richard Swinburne, and Nicholas Wolterstorff contribute chapters, with responses from James Crenshaw, Wes Morriston, Paul Draper, and Louise Antony. The contributors make a number of points in this section. For example, as for the Amalekites, Stump suggests that perhaps God foresaw that they were going to continue to morally degenerate as a people to the point where they would commit atrocities akin to the ones that Heinrick Himmler committed in killing thousands of Jews. If so, then just as it would have been better for Himmler to have died before committing these crimes, so, too, God would have been justified in ordering the Israelites to kill the Amalekites. With regard to the Canaanites, Swinburne urges that

insofar as God is the author of life, He has the right to withdraw it from any person at any time. In turn, there is nothing morally wrong with Him commanding the Israelites to kill the Canaanites. As for the Jerichoites, at first, reading in Joshua 6 that with regard to this people group the Israelites "struck down all the inhabitants with the edge of the sword" may suggest that they did kill all of them. However, Wolterstorff points out that this particular phrase is repeated throughout the book of Joshua the way a refrain is repeated in a poem. As such, there is reason to interpret it non-literally as meaning "scored a decisive victory over the people of Jericho." In turn, if the Israelites did not slaughter all of the Jerichoites, Wolterstorff argues it is reasonable to think that God never actually commanded them to do so.

Part three of the book continues to offer up responses to some of the problems Christians face regarding God's character in the Old Testament, but this section approaches the topic from the perspective of theology. Again, many of these chapters are focused on *herem*. Gary Anderson and Christopher Seitz contribute chapters, with responses from Nicholas Wolterstorff and Evan Fales. Anderson notes modern scholars suggest that one reason the Old Testament contains stories pertaining to *herem* is not to encourage people to engage in genocide but rather to teach a spiritual lesson. Just as the Israelites had a lot of zeal in eliminating any sign of idolatry that stood in the way of worshipping God, so, too, people should have the same energy in removing any idolatry in their lives. Seitz urges that when it comes to understanding God's moral character, one passage of the Old Testament should not be focused on to the exclusion of others. Passages involving *herem* reveal God's concern to punish wrongdoers, but other passages reveal His mercy. For instance, while God orders the destruction of the Jerichoites for their wickedness, nonetheless, Scripture also records that He spares Rahab the prostitute.

The editors have done an excellent job bringing together a first-rate group of philosophers and theologians. Scholars will want to use this book as a starting point for further discussion on these issues, and Christian laity will find it profitable as well.

Allen Gehring
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**G. Sujin Pak, *The Judaizing Calvin: Sixteenth-Century Debates over the Messianic Psalms*.** OSHT. Oxford: OUP, 2010. Viii + 216 pp. Hardback. ISBN 978-0195371925. $65.00 (Hardback).

Debates on the nature of 'Christian' readings of the Old Testament litter the history of exegesis, from the early church to the present. Pak takes the reader into one moment of those disputes as they swirled around Calvin's rereading of eight messianic psalms (2, 8, 16, 22, 45, 72, 110, and 118).

Pak begins (ch.1) with the medieval period and offers the general exegetical context for the debate. Scanning a variety of key interpreters (and the *Glossa*) the author argues that the interpretations of these psalms quite explicitly were concerned with their "fulfillment" in Christ. They key point here is that this was understood to be the meaning *ad litteram*, rather than by type or allegory. Indeed, Pak quotes Denis the Carthusian: "No Christian interpretation to explain the literal sense of this psalm [Ps 2] is suitable or allowed unless it is interpreted concerning Christ."

Martin Luther is then treated (ch.2) primarily for his role upholding traditional "orthodox" readings, and regarding Jewish readings. Luther famously had no appreciation and even a seeming hatred of Jewish readings. In this light the "clarity" of the psalms teaching the work of Christ (again, *ad litteram*) stands out to him. David stands as a prophetic mouthpiece and exemplar of faith. And, though Pak points to some shift in Luther he remains a figure for the contrast that will come.

Pak spends significant time on Martin Bucer's reading (ch.3) as a bridge into a Reformed approach. Bucer, contrary to Luther, makes extended and positive use of rabbinic readings. But Pak maintains that Bucer uses those readings to bolster the traditional manner of seeing Christ as the primary (or sole) fulfillment of the messianic psalms.

Finally turning to Calvin (ch.4) we see the shift now patiently spelled out come somewhat into focus. In direct contrast to Denis (above), Calvin is very happy to limit or emphasize the literal sense as more strictly concerning David as teacher and example rather than as a prophetic spokesman. Pak finds three principles that govern when Calvin speaks of the psalm as applying to Christ: (1) by typology through the literal application to David; (2) when Christ utters the words of the Psalm directly (e.g. 22:1); and (3) when the application is in keeping with the "simple and natural" sense of the passage. The third, naturally, shows the issue far more often is a matter of exegetical choice than some systematic decision of Calvin to de-christologize readings. But Pak wants to bring out the significance of the shift. For Calvin, you are not guided by a kind of christological lens to read the Psalms. Calvin is content to remain in the world of the Psalms as they stand on their own merits, rather than reading them through their use by the fathers or even the apostles.

But the climax of the book's argument (ch.5) comes in the late-16th century debate between Aegidius Hunnius, a Lutheran theologian who authored a work entitled *The Judaizing Calvin*, and David Paraeus who defended Calvin against Hunnius. Here we see the shift through the eyes of Hunnius, for whom Calvin read the Old Testament "like a Jew." Pak walks through the fascinating debate with the criticisms of Hunnius and the responses of Paraeus, giving this reader at least a new way to see some of the early confessional divisions. Though showing Paraeus to defend Calvin ably from most of the criticisms, Pak agrees with Hunnius that Calvin has done something

different, placing the historical concerns in a different location than much of the previous tradition: seeing the Psalm as it stands in its own literary-canonical context, and regarding David first, rather than by necessity interpreting as though the text entirely concerned the future work of Christ.

Pak's study is a fascinating look at a key moment in the narrative of exegesis in the West. For what it undertakes the book is insightful. The great difficulty is the scope. Choosing but eight psalms is far too small a sample to draw any conclusions of any of the authors. It may be that her general thesis can hold up (and certainly the debate with Hunnius gives some sharpness to it). But this work cannot be said to prove the point in any way. Further, as is clear in Paraeus' defense (via Pak), Calvin was by no means the only one in the church's tradition or among his contemporaries to offer the readings he gives. But such could undercut a central part of the book: arguing that *Calvin* represented a kind of watershed in the history of exegesis. Notwithstanding, the book is interesting, helpful, and provocative. And it ought to gain a good reading among Calvin scholars and those interested in the historical side of theological exegesis.

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**John Polkinghorne.** ***Testing Scripture: A Scientist Explores the Bible.*** Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2011. xii + 106 pp. Paperback. ISBN 9781587433139. $17.99 Paperback.

After an impressive career as a theoretical physicist, in 1979 John Polkinghorne resigned his post at Cambridge to enter into the Anglican priesthood. This positioned him well to write about the relationship between faith and science, which he has done in over twenty-five books. In addition, he has written five books that deal strictly with scientific subjects. Polkinghorne displays a gift for presenting difficult concepts in brief, clear prose. Take, for example, his book *Quantum Theory: A Very Short Introduction*. In that work—only 128 pages long—he explains quantum physics in a way that the average non-scientist can understand. This is no small feat. He attempts a similar task with *Testing Scripture*, which Polkinghorne presents as a brief work, written from the perspective of a scientist but intended for non-specialists. A noble goal, but with mixed results.

As a scientist, Polkinghorne attempts to do a theology of Scripture from below, or as he puts it, as "a bottom up thinker" (9). But he writes as a believing scientist, which he admits up front. In fact, he employs a presuppositionalist approach as much as the inductive method. Polkinghorne's central thesis is that in order to understand the Bible correctly, one must discern Scripture's lasting authoritative truth from its time-bound cultural context (3). The great dilemma facing any student of Scripture is the difficulty of discerning between the time-bound and the permanent. As for theological method,

Polkinghorne presents a version of the Wesleyan quadrilateral: Scripture, worshipping experience, tradition, and reason. The book argues for a trajectory theology. That is, we cannot simply take what the Bible says at any given point, but we must also look to where it is headed. In addition, Polkinghorne argues for a personal rather than a propositional understanding of the nature of revelation (19). The Bible should be viewed not as an "ultimate textbook" but rather as a "laboratory notebook." As such it is not an inerrant record given by divine inspiration, but a devout, human record of divine acts in persons and events. Unfortunately, due to the constraints of the book's brevity, Polkinghorne simply presents his theological method and his arguments with very little explanation or defense. Readers will probably find themselves wishing that he had provided more discussion for these assertions.

The structure of the book is curious. The first two chapters give Polkinghorne's view of revelation, inspiration, and theological development within Scripture. By recognizing the development in Israel's understanding of the nature and character of God, this allows one to deal with the crudities and atrocities of early Scripture without rejecting the spiritual value of the Bible (13), and it allows one to deal with its contradictions (14).

In the middle portion of the book—chapters 5 through 9 (less than forty-five pages)—Polkinghorne provides a survey of the whole Bible. He makes a valiant effort at a herculean task. For example, chapter 5 covers the entire Old Testament in just eleven pages. The result is a description so brief that it is impressionistic. Moving to the Gospels, Polkinghorne argues that, though the authors used the Old Testament in ways that are "strange and illegitimate"—they give a faithful presentation of Jesus Christ. The witness of the Gospels to the virgin and the bodily resurrection should be accepted at face value.

The remaining chapters (3, 4, and 10) deal with selected topics—the Bible's presentation of Creation and the Fall, the Bible's ambiguity, and its profundity. Polkinghorne argues that the traditional understanding of the Fall is no longer available to us. But this is not a problem, since "Scripture is not a dead deposit of unchanging meaning, the repository of assertions that have to be accepted at face value without question, but a living spring from which new truths and insight can be expected to continue to flow" (31). His discussion on the Bible's ambiguity is itself ambiguous (chapter 4). It ends abruptly, raising the issue, but offers little insight or resolution. The book ends with observations about the Bible's profundity (chapter 10). This chapter is perhaps the most fruitful, in terms of a scientist exploring the claims of Scripture.

One wishes that Polkinghorne had discussed a number of topics that are often addressed in works of this type: the Bible's sufficiency, self-attestation, and perspicuity come to mind. Most conspicuous is the absence of any discussion on biblical authority. Unfortunately, he equates inerrancy

with the dictation view of inspiration, and he dismisses the notion of an inerrant text as "inappropriately idolatrous" (9).

The title, *Testing Scripture*, is unfortunate. One expects a closer, more apologetic examination of the nature of the Bible. The title to the British version, *Encountering Scripture*, misleads less. Indeed, the book reads much better as the pastoral observations of an Anglican divine. Polkinghorne has provided us with an interesting and intriguing book. He gives many profitable insights for a layman attempting to understand the Bible—particularly in the matter of the proper method of interpretation. In the end, however, the book presents a view of inspiration that does not do justice to the Sacred Text. And, perhaps because of *Testing Scripture*'s brevity, its argument seems disjointed. Polkinghorne managed to explain quantum physics in a little over a hundred pages. Maybe in his explanation of the nature of the Bible he should have devoted more pages.

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**Frances M. Young. *From Nicaea to Chalcedon: A Guide to Its Literature and Background,*** 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010. x + 406 pp. Paperback. ISBN 9780801039157. $39.99 Paperback.

In the second edition of *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, Frances Young endeavors to update the prior material to include recent research on various aspects of the 3rd and 4th century church. According to Young, there have been tremendous gains in the areas of the Arian controversy, the hermeneutical differences between Antioch and Alexandria, the biographies of the Cappadocians, asceticism and monastic politics, and Byzantine and Syriac studies. She attempts to cover these gains through adding profiles on Marcellus of Ancyra, Evagrius Ponticus, Pseudo-Macarius, and Ephrem the Syrian. There are no other significant changes to the first edition.

In this updated collection, Young's goal remains the same as the first: "to be a companion to standard textbooks, providing background material, an introduction to the characters involved in the disputes, to the literary sources and the critical questions they pose" (vii). Like the purpose, Young's outline remains the same. She begins with an overview of the early church historians in chapter one, moves on to Athanasius and the Arian controversy in chapter two, and then introduces the desert fathers and their literature in chapter three. The Cappadocians are the subject of chapter four, while chapter five introduces the reader to important people, controversies, and events of the late fourth century. Young concludes with a chapter on the main Christological controversies, including the Apollinarian and Nestorian debates.

Because of the widespread reading Young garnered with the first edition, this review will not attempt to summarize each chapter's argument but

will instead focus on the effect of the additions in their respective chapters. She first adds material on Marcellus of Ancyra, a bishop and at one point a mentor and friend to Athanasius. Marcellus appears to have argued for God ultimately as Monad, with the Trinity functioning as a temporary solution to man's fallen condition. Athanasius, in his controversy with Arius, could not associate with such a position and so his relationship with Marcellus faded, both historically and in writing. Young uses this section to provide the reader with background into both Athanasius' influences and his relational struggles. It also demonstrates for the reader how the theological controversies of the time were usually a result of a mix of exegetical, philosophical, political, and relational impetuses.

Young next includes material in chapter three on two important aspects of the study of the desert literature, the person of Evagrius Ponticus and the 'Macarian' Homilies of Pseudo-Macarius. Both of these provide historical detail about the desert literature that rounds out her other sections in this chapter. Evagrius gives insight into both the life of the desert monks through his panegyric histories and also into the typical exegesis of those men and women through his reflections on Scripture. The 'Macarian' homilies, on the other hand, provide the link between the spirituality of the monks of the East and the focus on the mind in the tradition of the monks of the West. Finally, Young includes a section on Ephrem the Syrian in chapter five and portrays him primarily as the exemplar of the link between Syrian and Western Christianity. Young demonstrates that Ephrem, through his immersion in Eastern culture and church life but also in Western ideas, was a living link between the Eastern and Western parts of the Church and the Empire.

Young inserts her additions into these chapters seamlessly, and her old and new material is cogent and insightful. She is able to give an overview of the people, events, and literature of the time with both intrigue and precision. Her ability to combine the narratives of the time with primary sources gives the reader the sense that careful scholarship has gone into every part of the book. Even though the book is billed as a guide or overview, Young is able to accomplish that purpose and also provide the reader with some critical evaluation of other scholarship in the area. She helps the reader not only understand the historical material but also engage it critically. Finally, the additions Young makes in the second edition provide a new flavor to the entire work, making it even more thorough than the first. This is a must read for students of the early church, theological method, or hermeneutics, even if they are familiar with Young's first edition.

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**Nicholas Perrin.** ***Jesus the Temple.*** Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010. xvi + 223 pp. Paperback. ISBN 9780801045387. $29.99 Paperback.

In his latest book, Perrin convincingly shows that a counter-temple agenda was central to Jesus' earthly ministry. More, he argues that "Jesus of Nazareth saw himself and his movement as nothing less than the embodiment of Yahweh's eschatological temple" (p. 12). Without being new, this idea has received relatively little attention from New Testament scholars. Perrin's book is therefore a welcomed addition to historical Jesus' studies, one that will set the stage for further analysis of this important theme.

The book is composed of five chapters. In the first (pp. 17–45), Perrin summarizes the agendas of two Jewish counter-temple movements, the community behind the *Psalms of Solomon* and the Qumran sect, followed by John the Baptist's proclamation as it relates to the temple. In doing so, the ground is laid to place Jesus' own concern for and critique of the temple in their first century historical context. If Jesus brings something new to the table, his call to be the temple has many points of contact with these movements: together with them, Jesus was highly critical of temple authorities, saw the temple as defiled, and considered his movement as carrying certain temple functions.

Passing over the Gospel's biographical accounts of Jesus' life and ministry, Perrin studies in his second chapter how the primitive church viewed itself in relation to the temple (pp. 46-79). Reviewing writings of the second century (the *Didache*, the *Epistle of Barnabas*) and of the New Testament, the idea is now put forth that the early church was itself a counter-temple movement with strong similarities with the earlier forms studied in chapter 1 (p. 77–78 ). Indeed, the writings of the early church are replete with evidences that it co-identified Christ *and* itself with the temple. The church community saw itself as "the community in which the eschatological temple was taking shape" (p. 47), convinced that "the heavenly temple, the great hope of Judaism, had broken forth in preliminary fashion in the resurrection of Jesus-Christ" (pp. 48, 75).

Now, if counter-temple movements existed at the time of Jesus' earthly ministry, and if the church was a counter-temple movement understanding itself as the new temple, Perrin argues that the historical plausibility that Jesus (and not simply the early church in its theological reflection) saw himself as taking an active part in the establishment of the eschatological temple is reinforced. This is argued at length in chapter 3 (pp. 80-113) in considering how the 'cleansing of the temple' episode climactically expresses Jesus' concerns for the temple, both as a criticism of the temple leadership and as an announcement of the implementation of a new temple in his own person and work.

Having established the multidimensional (ethical, political, religious) aspects of this action, in the final two chapters (pp. 114-48; 149-82) Perrin focuses on neglected aspects of Jesus' concerns for the temple: his interest for the poor, together with his common practices of healing, exorcisms, and table fellowship. For Perrin, Jesus' poverty ethics is indicative of his conviction

that God was at work in dealing with the temple's failures, not least that of its leadership. In feeding the poor and through almsgiving, the Jesus countermovement practiced jubilee and set itself up as a new priesthood. Likewise, his healings, exorcisms and meals he shared with people indicated that "he had reconstituted time, space, and a people around himself, the new convergence of heaven and earth, the new temple" (p. 179).

*Jesus the Temple* is saturated with surprising and thought provoking insights. For instance, *pace* recent interpreters, Perrin understand *lestes,* in the expression "den of robbers" not as revolutionaries (brigands), but as pointing to the greed of and evil economic oppression perpetrated by the temple authorities during Jesus' lifetime (pp. 92-99). In a similar vein, Perrin illuminates Jesus and the rich man's conversation in Mark 10:17-22, arguing that the phrase "treasure in heaven" (v. 21) operates not simply as an exhortation to almsgiving in its link to soteriological merit (*cf.* Sir. 29:9-12), but more fundamentally as a disapproval of the present temple practices. Jesus did not want his interlocutor to store up treasures in the soon to be destroyed temple, but rather encouraged him to participate fully in his own eschatological movement, offering a better temple, and with it, a better temple treasure (p. 125).

All in all, Perrin's book demonstrates that Evangelical scholars are indeed able to propose solid and balanced historical Jesus studies. In a well-written and quite entertaining style, Perrin does not shy away from difficult historical questions, exhibiting control of both primary and secondary sources, yet humbly admitting that clear answers are not always possible. As such, *Jesus the Temple* is a very valuable and creative contribution to the field.

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**David S. Dockery (ed.) *Southern Baptists, Evangelicals, and the Future of Denominationalism.*** B & H Academic, 2011. Paperback. 978-1-4336-7120-3. $24.99. Paperback

In October 2009 Union University in Jackson, Tennessee, hosted a conference commemorating the 400th anniversary of the modern Baptist movement. David S. Dockery, Ray Van Neste, and Jerry Tidwell edited the conference's proceedings into a single volume, *Southern Baptists, Evangelicals, and the Future of Denominationalism* that explores the complex relationship between Southern Baptists and the broader evangelical community. It is a welcome addition to an ongoing discussion.

It has not always been fashionable to label Southern Baptists as "evangelical." In 1983 three Southern Baptist seminary professors publically reflected on the subject under the title, *Are Southern Baptists "Evangelical"*? Perhaps not surprisingly, one said no, one said yes, and one said maybe, depending largely on how one defined evangelical. Obviously, much has changed

since 1983. Recent scholarship in the field, particularly Barry Hankins' *Uneasy in Babylon: Southern Baptist Conservatives and American Culture*, suggests that Southern Baptists have come to be more self-consciously identified as "evangelical" and increasingly less tied to historical denominational moorings.

While none of the contributors to *Southern Baptists, Evangelicals, and the Future of Denominationalism* would deny that Southern Baptists are evangelical, a number of questions remain open for discussion. For instance, can denominations still function in the twenty-first century? This work is divided into three sections and Section One, "Denominationalism: Historical Trends, Future Challenges" contains four essays that consider denominational viability for contemporary churches. Nearly everyone concedes that mainline American denominations declined in the twentieth century's waning decades. Nonetheless, each author agrees that denominationalism remains a legitimate, arguably necessary, way of coordinating cooperative ventures between churches. David Dockery's essay, "So Many Denominations: the Rise, Decline, and Future of Denominationalism" is especially instructive. As he sees it, denominations remain helpful, especially in maintaining theologically orthodoxy.

If denominations are here to stay, what impact might they have on churches? Section Two, ""Evangelicals and Southern Baptists: Identity, Beliefs, and Ministry," contains five essays that explore the contours of contemporary church life. Here, Ray Van Neste's "The Care for Souls: Reconsidering Pastoral Ministry in Southern Baptist and Evangelical Contexts," and Harry L. Poe's "Recovering the Gospel for the Twenty-first Century" merit special consideration. Van Neste maintains that pastoral care transcends both evangelicalism and denominationalism. He taps a variety of sources ranging from John Chrysostom to W. A. Criswell to challenge ministers to be biblical shepherds to their flocks. As for personal evangelism, Poe raises an important issue, namely, how does one present the gospel in a culture that frequently redefines sin along non-biblical lines or refuses to acknowledge its existence altogether? His essay may well be the most provocative of the lot.

Section Three, "Southern Baptists: Understanding the Past in Order to Explore the Future," contains four essays that reflect on denominationalism's future. In this case, each writer projects a guarded optimism. James Patterson notes that Baptists have a legacy of controversy and they survive as an identifiable group because of their theology. Nathan Finn contends that Southern Baptists have a future and it likely includes evangelicals, but much will depend on the changing contours of evangelicalism.

Assessing a collection of essays, especially conference proceedings can be tricky. Usually, one finds an essay or two that deserve close attention while the others are helpful to varying degrees. Happily, this is not the case with *Southern Baptists, Evangelicals, and the Future of Denominationalism.* Readers should be pleased with the uniform quality of these essays. They are all in-

formative, intelligent, and well-written. Moreover, those wanting more information on specific topics with find a wealth of information in the essay's footnotes and/or bibliographies. Together these essays raise some interesting questions. For example, precisely *how* does one draw appropriate lines of orthodoxy that both define who Southern Baptists are, but also allow for dialog and cooperation with the broader evangelical community? What role does culture play in shaping corporate structure and identity? A collection of the caliber would have been even stronger had it included one final essay tying the others together while offering some sort of analytical framework delineating the parameters for Southern Baptist/evangelical cooperation.

So, do Southern Baptists have a denominational future and are evangelicals in that picture? The contributors to the collection would offer a cautious, qualified, "Yes." As long as churches create organizations beyond local churches there will likely be denominationalism in some form. All things considered, the real future of how Southern Baptists relate to evangelicals may depend more on changes within evangelicalism than changes within the Southern Baptist Convention.

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**Leslie C. Allen. *A Liturgy of Grief: A Pastoral Commentary on Lamentations*.** Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011. xi+195 pp. Paperback. ISBN 9780801039607. $21.99 Paperback.

Leslie Allen's pastoral commentary on Lamentations is a thoughtful meld of reflection on his years as a hospital chaplain and sound biblical scholarship. His twin focus on both biblical and pastoral insight is evident throughout, with discussions of the text peppered with examples from his own practice.

Allen reads Lamentations as "grief literature" operating from the perspective of the sufferer, as "grief work"; and from the perspective of pastoral care, exemplifying caregiving (p. ix). His thesis is that Lamentations is "best understood as the script of a liturgy intended as a therapeutic ritual" (p. 8). The goal of this liturgy, Allen argues, is to draw the community to prayer (p. 10), which is modeled by both Zion and a "pastoral mentor" (p. 11). The finale of the book is thus Lamentations 5, where the community takes up lament before YHWH (p. 12, 22-23).

Allen's commentary is both contemporary and attentive to the particular situation of grief with which Lamentations is concerned. He provides a brief overview of the historical context, multiple genres, content, and voicing of Lamentations (pp. 4-15) and identifies three trajectories in Lamentations – grief, guilt, and grievance (pp. 15-22). This threefold typology helpfully elucidates the seemingly contradictory elements of pure pain, penitence, and protest that appear in Lamentations.

Allen reads Lamentations 1 in keeping with the prophetic tradition (pp. 52-56), with the reporter and Zion providing a liturgy for accepting culpability and processing grief. Zion thus "leads the way for the congregation to turn to God" (p. 59). Lamentations 2 is, for Allen, an intensification of the emotion and sentiment expressed in Lamentations 1 (p. 64). The goal of the chapter is, as for Lamentations 1, to express guilt, accept culpability, and set an example to the congregation to "induce them to articulate their sorrow and return to God" (p. 82).

In Lamentations 3, Allen suggests, the speaker who reported Zion's pain in Lamentations 1 and 2 now becomes a "wounded healer," sharing his own experience in order to recruit the congregation's empathy (pp. 85-88). He is thus able to gain their trust (p. 90) and deliver a sermon on the appropriateness of waiting for YHWH (pp. 102-11), once more urging the listening community to prayer (p. 115).

In Allen's framework, the urge to prayer should culminate in a communal lament in Lamentations 4 (p. 121). This, however, is not the case, with Lamentations 4 returning to dwell on the themes of reversal and deprivation introduced in Lamentations 1 and 2. Allen explains the unexpected interlude as a necessary step in the grief process, demonstrating the need for patience and time to reflect upon past trauma (pp. 121-24).

The goal is reached, however, in Lamentations 5, as the congregation turns to prayer (p. 145). This is not the ultimate goal, however, but a "lesser, but necessary intermediate goal" (p. 146), that of connecting with YHWH to pave the way for restoration. The prayer of Lamentations 5 is thus evidence of a turning point in the transition back to YHWH (p. 147).

Allen's work is clearly informed by current critical scholarship, but without unwieldy footnotes and references, making it particularly accessible to students and pastors. His endorsement of continuing to read and use Lamentations and lament and complaint psalms in the church is especially valuable. While rightly noting that expressing such strongly worded complaints might "run counter to Christian norms of prayer" (p. 158), Allen explains how grief literature can appropriately address YHWH from "within the circle of faith" (p. 167).

If I were to hazard a couple of criticisms, I would venture that Allen's ongoing analogy between Lamentations and Alcoholics Anonymous is somewhat jarring. Further, while he draws on *some* scholarly studies of grief and loss, most of his pastoral reflections are autobiographical and biographical in nature. While helpful, then, they do not always have the weight of the discipline of psychology proper behind them. One final concern is that Allen's translations have sometimes carried out the interpretive work perhaps better left to the reader. For example, he yields Lamentations 3:21 as: "(But) this is what I recollected, waiting hopefully as a consequence" (p. 94), explaining the sparse Hebrew more decisively than is perhaps warranted. This,

however, may simply be my preference for literal rather than dynamic translations.

*A Liturgy of Grief* is an accessible and engaging reading of Lamentations interspersed with practical insights and personal anecdotes. Soaked in the pain of myriad griefs, the book promises to be a profoundly helpful primer for students and pastors seeking resources with which to engage people's present pain.

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**Michael J. Anthony and Michelle D. Anthony. *A Theology for Family Ministries*.** Nashville: B&H Academic, 2011. viii + 265 pp. Hardcover. ISBN 978-0-8054-6421-4. $34.99. Hardcover.

Michael J. Anthony is Research Professor of Christian Education at Talbot School of Theology. Michelle D. Anthony is Director of Family Ministries at Rock Harbor Church in Costa Mesa, and is the Family Ministry Architect for David C. Cook Publishing. Together the Anthonys have a long publishing and ministry record and are well qualified to write a book on family ministry.

The goal of *A Theology for Family Ministries* is to provide the church, especially church leaders, with a resource to enable biblically and theologically-responsible ministry to twenty-first century families. The specific focus of this text is ministry to non-traditional families, including ministry within the contexts of fragmented families, single-parent families, gay-partner families, blended families, and the like.

*A Theology for Family Ministries* is actually an edited volume with contributions from fourteen different authors across the evangelical spectrum. The Anthonys authored or contributed to three of the twelve chapters that make up this book. By way of structure, *A Theology for Family Ministries* contains three sections (or units, as they are labeled). The first unit looks at the changing face of the North American family. Section two, which constitutes the bulk of this text, focuses upon forming a biblical theology of the family. The final unit of the book is a bit more practical in nature as it looks at family ministry in the local church. The topics that are addressed in *A Theology for Family Ministries* are wide-ranging, and include Old Testament teachings on the family, New Testament teachings on the family, a theology of marriage, spiritual markers in the life of a child, a theology of grandparenting, equipping parents to be spiritual leaders, and youth ministry from a family perspective, among many other issues.

Edited volumes are notoriously difficult to review, as factors such as writing style, quality of research, and biblical perspective inevitably vary between authors. *A Theology for Family Ministries* is certainly no different in this regard; however, the editors and publisher are to be commended for produc-

ing a remarkably homogeneous text given the number of contributors. This book is also aided, as its title communicates, in that it is designed as a theology "for" family ministry, not a theology "of" family ministry. As such, each chapter can be read and understood in isolation, as each chapter is merely a separate part of a whole. Readers could even skip over chapters that are not of interest and the book can still serve its purpose of providing theology for family ministry. The publisher is also to be applauded for giving three thorough indices: a name index, a subject index, and a Scripture index. Such indices are especially valuable in edited volumes like *A Theology for Family Ministries*.

It is difficult to find many drawbacks to *A Theology for Family Ministries*. Certainly, one could quibble with style changes between chapters, as well as a few minor typographical and form errors. Additionally, while all of the contributors to the volume are evangelical, implicit and explicit theological differences between the authors arise. Moreover, the prospective reader ought to be aware that this book is aimed primarily at students and ministry leaders. Thus it has a textbook feel to it, as it is heavily footnoted and has fairly small type. These minor issues aside, *A Theology for Family Ministries* is a fine book that ought to find its way onto the bookshelf of pastors and other ministry leaders who have interest or occasion to engage in family ministry.

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**Kenneth E. Bailey. *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes: Cultural Studies in 1 Corinthians*.** Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2011. 560 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0-8308-3934-6. $30.00 Paperback.

Given the innumerable studies and commentaries on biblical books like 1 Corinthians, one might wonder whether new insights and discoveries are really possible. It seems that all that can be said has been said. However, Kenneth Bailey's new volume, *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes*, is a refreshing reminder that for those willing to mine more deeply into the biblical text, precious gems can really be found. Bailey offers an impressive, and genuinely original, contribution to the study of 1 Corinthians that both New Testament scholars and pastors will appreciate.

Although Bailey studies Paul's letter in chronological order, like a standard commentary, his volume breaks out of the standard commentary genre in a number of important ways. First, as the title suggests, Bailey writes as one with vast personal experience in Middle-Eastern and Mediterranean cultures. He has taught biblical studies for over forty years in places like Egypt, Lebanon, Jerusalem, and Cyprus. This background shapes and illumines his exegesis at a number of points. For example, in his discussion of 1Cor 1:12, he notes the depth and difficulty of Middle-Eastern ethnic conflicts and why Paul would have been so keen to address them (p.69-70). Also, he brings the

Middle-Eastern perspective to bear upon the issue of head-coverings/propriety in worship in 1 Cor 11:17-34 (p.300-310), and also upon the issue of women speaking in worship in 1 Cor 14:33-40 (p.413-417).

Second, Bailey employs a much-neglected resource for New Testament studies, namely the versions of the New Testament in Syriac, Arabic, and Hebrew. He has gathered twenty-three representative samples of such commentaries on 1 Corinthians from various time periods in the history of the church. His purpose in using these sources is to answer the question, "How did Middle Eastern Christians across the centuries understand this text?" (p.16). These ancient commentaries illumine Bailey's exegesis at a number of important junctures throughout his study. For instance, in his discussion of 1 Cor 4:17-21, Bailey discovers that this passage has not been understood by most ancient commentators as the conclusion of the preceding section on Christian unity (1 Cor 3:1-4:16). Instead, it has been understood (for over a thousand years!) as the introduction to the next section on sexual purity (1 Cor 5:1-6:8). Modern readers of (and commentators on) 1 Corinthians often miss this connection due to the fact that modern chapter headings suggest a new section begins at 1 Cor 5:1. Once this connection is understood, then the reader recognizes that Paul is beginning his discussion on sexual purity with an appeal to apostolic tradition (1 Cor 4:17), something he does at the beginning of each of the major sections (p.158-159).

The third contribution of Bailey's work is arguably the most significant. He spends substantial time analyzing the rhetorical style of Paul's writing and demonstrates that it is very intentionally patterned after Old Testament prophetic literature, particularly the book of Isaiah. Bailey explains, "Our concern here is to see how Paul has arranged *collections of Hebrew parallelisms* into larger patterns that are important to identify for a deeper understanding of his intent" (p.22, emphasis his). Throughout the study, Bailey uncovers seemingly endless sub-structures within Paul's thought, exposing how intricate and well-crafted this letter actually is. The payoff of all these observations is that one begins to realize that Paul's letter is not as "occasional" as scholars often suppose—as if it were just a disjointed list of responses to the queries (or problems) of the Corinthian church. On the contrary, the Hebrew structure used by Paul reveals that he has composed "five carefully constructed essays" on a number of key topics (p.26). Thus, "the Corinthians' questions (oral and written) are worked into *Paul's outline*, instead of the other way around. *He* sets the agenda, not the Corinthians" (26, emphasis his). The letter of 1 Corinthians, then, has more of a universal intent than has typically been acknowledged. Although Paul is writing to a particular congregation, and is certainly aware of their issues, this letter presents Paul's authoritative apostolic teaching on some very critical subjects that he intends for all Christians everywhere.

In the midst of these many positives, one area of concern is Bailey's treatment of the topic of men and women in worship in 1 Cor 11:2-16.

While making a number of helpful observations about the complexities and nuances of this passage, Bailey struggles to offer a fair presentation of what he calls the "traditional" view. Instead, his description of this view proves to be a bit of a caricature. According to Bailey, those with a traditional view think women were "created to serve men" (297), regard "men as more important than women" (303), and believe that women are created for men's "bed and board" (310). However, I know of no advocates of the "traditional" view that would hold any of these beliefs or describe themselves in this fashion (and Bailey provides no documentation that they do). Bailey is, of course, free to argue for the exegetical position he finds most compelling. But, his argument would be strengthened if he presented the strongest version of his opponent's position, rather than the weakest.

This issue aside, Bailey has produced a tremendous piece of scholarship that is intriguing, illuminating, and distinctive. Scholars and pastors alike will enjoy the new discoveries available on every page.

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**Prosper Grech, *An Outline of New Testament Spirituality.*** (Grand Rapids, Cambridge, U.K.: Eerdmans, 2011). Xi + 140 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0-8028-6560-1. $18.00. Paperback.

In this outline, Grech discusses "the essential themes for meditation by all those – lay people, religious, and priests of whatever confession – who seek to live their Christian faith in its fullness", further noting: "I have tried to let the texts speak for themselves without complicating them with notes or long explanations. … The main purpose of this book is to help the reader to respond to God's gift in Christ with love and discernment rather than to lecture him or her" (from the preface, p. vi). Grech serves as professor at the Patristic Institute in Rome and as a member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission. He understands spirituality to be the Christian's total response of faith, made effective through love and vivified by the Holy Spirit, to God's self-manifestation in Christ (p. vii). Spiritual theology "penetrates deeply into the mystery of our redemption, and inquires about the completeness of our response of loving faith to God's gift in Christ" (p. vii). He stresses that the "distinguishing feature of Christian spirituality is its relatedness to the Word's incarnation, which distinguishes it even from Jewish piety. Such spirituality describes and fosters the believer's total donation of self in response to God's total self-giving" (p. viii).

Grech starts out with a study or the human existential situation: "Deliverance: From What? For Whom?" (pp. 1–11). In "Response to the Old Testament Covenant" (pp. 13–28), Grech provides a survey of the spirituality which the church inherited from Israel, which is rightly understood as an integral part of the Christian's response to God's saving initiatives of old and

in Jesus Christ. For good reasons some editions of the New Testament have also included the Book of Psalms, although the significance of the Old Testament goes far beyond this observation. In this context a chapter on the spirituality of early Judaism might have been added, as early Judaism drew on the Old Testament but also had its own distinctive emphases (deriving from a variety of sources) which left their imprint on Jesus, early Christianity and various strands of Christian spirituality. While Grech rightly points to Christ's incarnation and salvific work which distinguishes Christian spirituality from Jewish piety, the points of contact (the call to respond to God's saving acts for his people in worship and a life of obedience and the specific manifestations of this response) must not be underestimated.

The life and teaching of Jesus according to Matthew, Mark and Luke are foundational for all Christian spirituality and discussed in the longest chapter of the book, entitled "Response to the Gift of the Kingdom: Jesus" (pp. 29-77). In "Response to the Paschal Mystery: The Pauline Tradition" (pp. 79-101), Grech outlines the believers' participation and incorporation into the redeeming death and resurrection of Christ. "Response to the Light: John" (pp. 103-124) covers faith and love in the Gospel and letters of John. In the final chapter, "Response to Christ's Presence in History: Acts and Revelation" (pp. 125-138), Grech assesses the Christians' place within history and their hope of final redemption.

In the "Conclusion" (pp. 139f), Grech returns to the definition of spirituality as "the believers' full response to God's offer of salvation in Christ" (p. 139) and argues:

This means that we cannot relegate spirituality to a mere moral response. *Metanoia* means a complete change of mentality, a new outlook on life based on the Christ-event, and that changed outlook will reflect the degree to which our faith has transformed our worldview. Apart from the observance of God's commandments, dynamic and yet contemplative spirituality also involves prayer, good works, an apostolic conscience, and social action, all prompted and animated by the love the Holy Spirit gives us. In short, it means making the first three requests of the Our Father – Hallowed by thy name, they kingdom come, and thy will be done – the principal purpose of our existence. Spirituality requires that prayerful meditation which will personalize our faith and make it part of our personality (pp. 139f).

Under the title *An Outline of New Testament Spirituality* one might have expected a study of prayer, or spiritual experience, of spiritual gifts, of discipleship or similar themes in the New Testament. Grech does not offer that. However, he does offer a succinct outline of the message of the New Testament and of the response which it elicits and is to elicit in believers under the guidance of the Spirit. It is very welcome that this is done with an emphasis on the spirituality inherited from the Old Testament and in a broad salvation-historical perspective, including all parts of the New Testament canon. The author is to be thanked for this summary of the distinct features of

*Christian* spirituality (including frequently neglected aspects) which are often almost forgotten or blurred in the discussion of practice of spirituality. Although some aspects of New Testament theology are described in distinct Catholic terminology (e.g. paschal mystery), the volume will be an inspiration for personal meditation and a resource for ministry for all Christians.

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**Richard R. Pervo, *The Making of Paul: Constructions of the Apostle in Early Christianity.*** (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010). Xv + 376 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0-8006-9659-7. Paperback.

The popular perception and scholarly portrayal of Paul have changed significantly over time. As with the figure of Jesus, it seems that each generation paints and perhaps needs to paint its own portrait of Paul. In the present textbook, Pervo, a senior North American New Testament scholar and author of the recent *Hermeneia* commentary on Acts, argues that such constructions of Paul happened from the very beginning. In this study, he intends to describe and evaluate this process of "constructing" Paul:

The thrust of the following pages is toward defining profiles of Paul and Paulinism in terms of the needs, questions, and values of the persons, groups, or movements represented in various texts. Specifically, I wish to describe how Paul becomes a, even *the*, pillar and founder of catholic Christianity, by which I mean the emerging "great church" of the period from 150-250 CE, and later. In order to accomplish this great task, Paul (not unlike Jesus) had to die (xii).

Pervo further notes that Paul's letters were not discovered, like thousands of ancient letters, through the labours of modern archaeologists, nor "were they preserved for the benefit of future historians or theologians. They were edited and copied to meet the needs of early Christians. This is an obvious but very important point: the Pauline letters that have come down to us represent Paul as some early believers wished him to be received and understood" (2).

An introductory chapter offers a survey of research on the Pauline legacy, a reconstruction of the development after Paul's death and a survey of Paul the apostle, the evangelist of the entire world, as a redeemed sinner and as a teacher, and on the close link between suffering and the proclamation of salvation. Pervo also describes the similarities between the formation and proliferation of traditions about Jesus and Paul: "In both cases, followers set out to preserve his heritage by producing texts from oral and written traditions. The process included the amalgamation of different genres, the editing of multiple texts into one, experiments with different sorts of editions and the production of 'apocrypha'" (19). In his approach, Pervo concentrates

upon a number of entire books rather than piecemeal examination of a broad range of texts, as he notes in the introduction (1).

Chapter one sketches how "Paul became a book" (23-61). It addresses the genre of letters, collections of letters in the ancient world, the collection of Paul's letters, partition theories, interpolations and glosses, possible deletions and the formation of the Pauline corpus. Throughout, Pervo challenges the literary integrity of Paul's letters and revives positions that have ceased (for good reasons) to dominate the discussion (many of the recent rhetorical studies of Paul's letter have understood them to be careful compositions and have questioned partition theories or the presumed omission of sections).

In chapter two, Pervo examines – without distinction between canonical letters and letters outside of the New Testament canon – letters that were attributed to Paul between the late first and mid-fourth century (63-118; Colossians, Ephesians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, 3 Corinthians, Laodiceans, Alexandrians and the correspondence between Paul and Seneca). Pervo argues that the most important fact communicated by the existence of pseudo-Pauline letters is that the apostle continued to have authority (63). Pervo suggests that a trend can be seen to make Paul more conservative in matters of ethics. These letters also shift from Paul as essentially the *only* apostle to Paul as *one* of the apostles, all of whom stick to the same story (117). "All the Deutero-Paulines look back upon the authentic letters, and all make use of one or more of them. These latter epistles testify both to the success of Paul's chosen form and to the requirement to keep him up-to-date" (117). The cohesive picture and development of Paul presented here becomes less convincing when one does not share Pervo's positions on the authorship and dating of the letters of the *Corpus Paulinum* (and other New Testament books). A number of recent studies have provided good reasons to do so.

A third chapter is devoted to Paul and the epistolary tradition in early Christianity (119-148). Pervo proposes the hypothesis that the success of Paul's practice of writing letters is responsible for much of the epistolary tradition in early Christian literature. Even letters that engage Paul critically or modify his views bear negative testimony to the value of Paul's method. Pervo examines – again without any distinction – Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 1 Clement, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp of Smyrna, 2 Peter and Dionysius of Corinth. He concludes for this literature: "Liked or not, Paul was always there, a basis of power, a target to attack, a literary model to imitate" (148). Pervo does not discuss the significance of early Jewish letters to communities which may have shaped Paul and the other letter writers in the New Testament; cf. I. Taatz, *Frühjüdische Briefe: Die paulinischen Briefe im Rahmen der offiziellen Briefe des Frühjudentums*, NTOA 16 (Freiburg, CH. Universitätsverlag, 1991).

Chapter four sketches portraits of Paul in narrative genre (149-185). It surveys the Acts of the Apostles (149-157; "In summary, the heroization of Paul in Acts is not highly restrained. Paul has it all and does it all. His story

and accomplishments rival that of Jesus in some important respects", 156), the Acts of Paul, the *Epistula Apostolorum*, the Acts of Peter, the Acts of Barnabas, the Acts of Titus, the Acts of Xanthippe and Polyxena, the Apocalypse of Paul and the so-called Pseudo-Clementines. Pervo notes the considerable variation from Paul the hero portrayed in the canonical Acts to the villain of the Pseudo-Clementines. As common features, Paul is portrayed as the subordinate of Jerusalem who ran his own mission; he is integrated into the apostolic circle and granted his own sphere of labour. In addition, there is emphasis on the congruity between Paul's teaching and that of the other apostles. "Another noteworthy component of the narrative tradition is the representation of Paul as a saviour figure in his own right" (185).

Pervo then turns to other representatives of what is considered to be a recognisable "anti-Paulinism" (187-198), seeking to explain the silence regarding Paul in Matthew, Hegesippus and other sources. In a chapter covering the period between Marcion and Irenaeus (199-228), Pervo sketches how Paul and his writings have become objects of interpretation. Discussion includes Marcion of Sinope, Paul among the "Gnostics" and Paul in Irenaeus of Lyons. During this period, Paul became a theologian in a formal sense: "Irenaeus, utilizing various intellectual and rhetorical methods, shaped the portrait of Paul as an orthodox theologian within the framework of emerging Christian Bible, creed and methodology" (228).

In the "Conclusion" (229-239), Pervo writes that the post-Pauline texts confront readers with the frail nature of the Pauline inheritance and the problems its transmission to subsequent generations raised. Paul had not attempted to present an immutable gospel carved upon stone tablets. His writings were occasional, models for dealing theologically with pastoral problems rather than catchall solutions. These letters were often obscure, especially to those who were not part of the generating discussion (229f).

He further summarises the developments which he sketched. The volume closes with an annotated Pauline "family tree" (241-244), bibliography, detailed notes (283-358) and an index of primary sources and of modern authors.

Pervo offers a good survey of current critical scholarship on the person and theology of Paul as it was received and developed in early Christianity, and adds his own insights and emphases. The framework is that of a (proto-) orthodoxy emerging from earlier varieties in early Christianity whose members were engaged in conflict and in pursuit of varied goals. While there are good reasons to challenge Pervo's interpretation of the canonical sources on a number of issues (thus changing his sketch of *Wirkungsgeschichte*), his interpretation of other early Christian and patristic sources is helpful. Pervo overemphasizes the differences between the letters of the *Corpus Paulinum* and also those between the Paul of the epistles and of the Acts of the Apostles. Several recent studies have pointed to more nuanced positions; see for example, T. E. Philips, *Paul, His Letters and Acts*, Library of Pauline Studies

(Peabody: Hendrickson, 2009; for a critical assessment see S. A. Adams in *Journal for the Study of Paul and His Letters* 1, 2011, 229-236) and S. E. Porter, *The Paul of Acts*, WUNT 115 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999; see my review in *ThLZ* 125, 2000, 1021-1024).

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**Dozeman, Thomas B. *Exodus*. Eerdmans Critical Commentary.** Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009. xix + 868 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0-8028-2617-6. $55 Paperback.

Dozeman sifts a vast amount of critical material to bring us this "Eerdmans Critical Commentary," contributing an almost 900-page work to a series which advertises itself as "accessible to serious general readers and scholars alike," and as opening up areas of the book's "background, its interpretation, and its application." I might suggest that it is stronger on the first two of these three, and that I can think of few general readers, no matter how serious, who would be likely to follow a lot of the discussion. But for scholars this is a treasure-trove of digested analysis concerning many aspects of the troubled state of Pentateuchal criticism at the present time. Which leads one, perhaps, to a dual judgment on the book: while in some respects Dozeman delivers a model critical commentary on Exodus, I wonder whether this equates in other ways to being a commentary on Exodus criticism. I suspect that those whose interest is the latter will find this work to be of real value, while those looking for more in the way of interpretation and application of the text may need to go elsewhere.

An elegant 50-page introduction sets the scene, beginning with a helpful if brief discussion of genre(s) and history. Exodus is seen as neither ancient nor modern history writing; it is not uncritical of mythical traditions; but it still maintains a focus on divine causality.

Then comes discussion of various forms of the documentary hypothesis, and this requires careful reading in order to understand what follows. Dozeman's key proposal is that there are two basic traditions: a post-exilic "P History," aware of and dependent upon a prior, possibly exilic, "Non-P History," each of which contain within them various traditions and layers while remaining broadly discernible as coherent wholes. We are occupied here with authors capable of creative development of their traditions, rather than editors of written sources. Hence the "Non-P" nomenclature avoids confusion with the old source-critical "Yahwist" (J), even if in practice Non-P seems to *function* a little like a JE-combination. My guess is that Dozeman views this approach as a somewhat over-simplifying attempt to make progress through the tangled debates currently occupying Pentateuchal critics. But since it leads him to spend considerable energy in the following 700+ pages of commentary on disentangling two sets of traditions and tracking

redactional significance in the changes between them, I do wonder if the average reader of Exodus may feel that the complexity still risks outweighing the putative interpretive insights. In some ways it seems like a very helpful framework to talk of Non-P and P, and of course all the old conundrums which once drove scholars to source-critical approaches get a form of resolution too. But I confess to not always finding the hard labor of demarcation all that illuminating, and on occasion, such as finding (surely rightly) a resonance between non-P's *ki-tob hu* of the baby Moses in 2:2 and the repeated refrain of Gen 1, Dozeman ends up saying "when read in the larger context of the P History in the present context of the Hebrew Bible, links with Genesis 1 are forged" (p. 80), by which point one wonders if the interpretive framework is really proving to be a help or a hindrance.

A third introductory topic outlines the shape of the book: chapters 1–15:21 on "The Power of Yahweh in Egypt," and 15:22 to the end on "The Presence of Yahweh in the Wilderness." Dozeman has a lot to say, helpfully, on key themes like power, holiness, revelation, and divine presence. The way in which he says it involves introducing each main section (six in all) with a discussion of main themes (sometimes sub-divided into sections), authors (marking out P and non-P), and literary structure (usually a demarcation of the commentary's interpretive units). Lengthier units then get their own introductions in terms of themes and composition history. Finally, for each unit a fresh translation is offered, with relatively brief clarifying notes, and then the commentary. Although there is logic to this approach, it can make it hard to locate all the comment on any particular verse.

Dozeman is willing to engage with the history of interpretation, although only once – on "law" – does this merit a whole sub-section. It is usually focused on traditional Jewish and modern critical reception. A one-off citation of John Wesley on witchcraft with respect to 22:18 rather highlights the lack of similar engagement elsewhere.

The commentary proper recapitulates the strengths and weaknesses of the whole: excellent attention to inner-biblical resonance under the guise of mapping alternate traditions, and real clarity with regard to the structure of each section of text. And yet, many important questions which surely rightly detain the reader of Exodus are barely touched on. To cite one example, a rather brief paragraph on 20:13 will not help the reader grasp what is at stake in translating this text as "do not murder," while the preceding commandment is discussed at length, but mainly in terms of Sabbath traditions, rather than what the Sabbath might really signify.

Reviewers must always be careful not to criticize a book for not being the book they would have written themselves, but at the same time there are a lot of serious readers of Exodus for whom this commentary may not be quite what they need. Nevertheless, on Dozeman's own terms, and with respect to any readers wanting to get to grips with what it looks like to read a

Pentateuchal text in the midst of current critical reconfigurations, this will remain a valuable study.

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**Craig Ott and Stephen J. Strauss with Timothy C. Tennent. *Encountering Theology of Mission: Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments and Contemporary Issues.*** Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010. 432 pp. Paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8010-2662-1. $29.99. Paperback.

*Encountering Theology of Mission* (ETM) is the fifth in Baker Academic's "Encountering Mission" textbook series. Previous volumes include: *Introducing World Missions, The Changing Face of World Missions, Encountering Missionary Life and Work, and Christianity Encountering World Religions.* In this latest addition to the series Ott, Strauss, and Tennent have collaborated to provide a current, insightful overview of an oft-neglected subject. ETM has accomplished something that most previous theologies of mission have failed to do – namely, this book is organized as a fairly comprehensive and accessible textbook.

To that end, the authors assert that a theology of mission must endeavor to "provide clear biblical direction for the task of mission," "accompany and scrutinize the foundations and practice of mission," and "hold forth the missionary dimension of the gospel to Church and Academy" (p xiii). Therefore, the text is organized into three parts, each corresponding sequentially to these goals. Part 1 seeks to establish the "Biblical Foundations of Mission" containing chapters on "God and the Nations" in both the Old and New Testaments, *Missio Dei* as the justification of mission, the purpose and nature of mission and various aspects of the task of missions. Part 2 attempts to convey the "Motives and Means for Mission" with chapters on motivation, the Church's role, the missionary's vocation, and spiritual dynamics. Part 3 addresses "Mission in Local and Global Context" with chapters on contextualization, world religions, and final implications, each of which is related to the necessity of mission: 1) the exclusivity of Christ 2) the reality of hell, and 3) the destiny of the unevangelized. Figures, lists, call out boxes and chapter summaries complement most chapters, providing the ability to quickly access pertinent information.

Possibly the most helpful aspect of ETM precedes the aforementioned parts in the form of an introduction. The authors engage in a rigorous research-laden effort to define and distinguish between commonly confused terms. For example, following sections defining "missiology" and "missional theology", the authors explain how the convergence of the two form the discipline of "theology of mission" (p xx). Next the authors highlight the various sources which inform one's theology of mission: the bible, history, social sciences, and the global church (p xxii). The Introduction concludes

with a historical overview of the developments in theology of mission in each major era of Church history with an emphasis on developments from the Reformation to the present. By naming the "major players" and summarizing their contributions that helped to shape the discipline from the outset, the authors of ETM have made clear how their own thinking has been shaped as well as set their own forthcoming contribution into its historical context.

Others have provided biblical theologies of mission in the past (see George Peters' *A Biblical Theology of Mission* first published in 1972 and more recently Andreas Kostenberger and P.T. O'Brien's *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth* published in 2001, and Christopher J.H. Wright's *The Mission of God* from 2006), but ETM does a good job of boiling the vast Mission of God documented in the expanse of the biblical grand-narrative down into three foundational chapters. Careful and relatively comprehensive research emerges as one of the great strengths in these first chapters in that they draw from the well of many who have plumbed these depths before. By pulling together and summarizing insights from other biblical scholars and missiologists, the authors have served their readers well and exposed them to varied points of view. For example, in Part 1 both Walter Kaiser and Christopher J.H. Wright are referenced, making arguments for the centrifugal and centripetal emphases of Old Testament Israel respectively. Perhaps it would have been more helpful to have utilized the common plot movements of Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Restoration to organize these first several chapters to situation their work squarely among the recent trend that biblical theologians seem to have established. In Part 2 the authors distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate motivations for mission, giving examples of representative literature. This reader particularly appreciated the discussion in the chapter entitled, "The Church and Mission," which addresses how churches and agencies must cooperate rather than compete. Also appreciated was the author's intentional emphasis on the necessity of the global church both for theologizing and for engaging in mission together. Such an approach is paramount because every culture has its blind spots. This is precisely why this reviewer studied under an Asian missiologist who taught that any theology of mission must be biblically based, theologically sound, theoretically coherent, trans-culturally relevant and practically applicable. I believe that ETM has in large part accomplished just that.

George Robinson
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**Andrew David Naselli and Collin Hansen, eds. *Four Views on the Spectrum of Evangelicalism.*** Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011. Paperback. 222 pp. $16.99. Paperback.

*Four Views on the Spectrum of Evangelicalism* is the latest entry in Zondervan's widely acclaimed Counterpoints series. Each volume in the series puts a group of scholars in dialog about a doctrine or issue that is contested among evangelicals. How fitting that this latest offering brings together interlocutors who debate the very nature of the evangelical movement itself. Editors Andy Naselli and Collin Hansen offer introductory and concluding chapters, respectively, but the heart of the book includes lengthy chapters from four evangelical theologians. Following the format of early Counterpoint volumes, each contributor briefly responds to the other chapters. Each contributor was asked to weigh in on three debated topics: evangelical-Catholic cooperation, movement boundaries in relation to views like open theism, and the importance of penal substitutionary atonement.

Kevin Bauder of Central Baptist Theological Seminary argues for fundamentalism, which occupies the space on the right of the evangelical spectrum. Bauder contends for an essentially theological identity, tying fundamentalist doctrine to the gospel message. Penal substitutionary atonement resides at the core of the gospel. Cooperation is multilayered, with the degree of cooperation contingent upon the degree of doctrinal affinity. Catholics and open theists are out of bounds for fundamentalists, though for different reasons. Bauder spends considerable space criticizing what he considers fundamentalist excesses, though many observers will argue Bauder is a revisionist who is criticizing mainstream fundamentalism. Bauder could be described as a "moderate" or even "progressive" fundamentalist who shows greater sympathy for some non-fundamentalist evangelicals than many of his fellow fundamentalists.

Albert Mohler of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary argues for confessional evangelicalism, which in keeping with the spectrum analogy is a step toward the center and away from fundamentalism. Or so goes the theory. Yet, Mohler's confessional evangelicalism sounds remarkably similar to Bauder's moderate fundamentalism, even if the two men run in different circles. Like Bauder, Mohler argues for a self-consciously theological identity. He advocates "theological triage" as a model for fostering faithful cooperation, strongly affirms penal substitution, rejects open theism, and expresses hesitancy toward Catholic-evangelical ecumenism. A looming question for Mohler's model relates to his understanding of confessionalism; simply put, in what sense is evangelicalism confessional? There is no commonly held evangelical confession for faith. At best, there are a handful of evangelical identity markers, though even here there is considerable debate, which is why a market exists for this book! On the whole, Mohler's model seems more applicable to individual churches, institutions, and denominations than the broader evangelical movement.

John Stackhouse of Regent College argues for generic evangelicalism, which at the end of the day focuses more on description than prescription. Stackhouse offers a very theological understanding of evangelicalism, and he

clearly affirms penal substitution, but he allows for more fluid boundaries and appreciates greater latitude in terms of Christian cooperation. On the whole, Stackhouse would prefer to focus on who are more or less faithful/healthy/ balanced in their evangelical identity rather than quickly write folks he disagrees with (like open theists) out of the movement entirely. As a historian, I appreciate Stackhouse's understanding of evangelicalism, which seems based at least as much on habits and alliances as it is doctrines. Furthermore, his focus on faithfulness rather than theological precision, particularly in the most debated matters, seems both wise and helpful. His generic (centrist?) posture seems less helpful in confessionally minded churches, institutions, and denominations; here, Mohler's paradigm seems more applicable. Many evangelical groups could be considered confessional branches of a generically evangelical family tree.

Roger Olson of Truett Theological Seminary argues for post-conservative evangelicalism, advocating fluid boundaries in part because the movement has included diverse—perhaps even incompatible—sub-traditions from its inception. At their core, evangelicals affirm a shared experience of the new birth more than they share common doctrines. Olson rejects making penal substitution a hallmark of evangelicalism and opposes breaking fellowship with open theists; doctrine is important, of course, but since different evangelicals interpret Scripture in different ways, who adjudicates the various interpretations? Interestingly, he remains less than sanguine about evangelical and Catholic ecumenical endeavors, which sounds curiously like drawing boundaries. Catholics notwithstanding, Olson's evangelical tent seems big enough to include at least some folks who are so far removed from the center of the evangelical spectrum that they would have no interest in camping with us.

Several key themes emerge throughout the book, especially the difference between *describing* who evangelicals are and *defining* who they ought to be. While all the contributors affirm some amount of both prescription and description, in terms of emphasis Bauder and Mohler lean toward the former while Stackhouse and Olson tilt toward the latter. All of the contributors work off of David Bebbington's famous evangelical "quadrilateral" of biblicism, conversionism, crucicentrism, and activism, and most of them engage Paul Hiebert's discussion of the difference between movements that are "centered set" versus those that are "bounded set." Naselli's closing chapter does a fine job of summarizing these and other themes. *Four Views on the Spectrum of Evangelicalism* is a helpful book that deserves a wide reading, particularly alongside the more intentionally descriptive works of historians such as Bebbington, George Marsden, and Barry Hankins.

Nathan A. Finn
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**Billings, J. Todd. *Union with Christ: Reframing Theology and Ministry for the Church.*** Baker Academic, 2011. 192 pp. Paperback. ISBN 9780801039348. Paperback.

While theologians and biblical scholars seem to be increasingly interested in union with Christ, the pastoral and practical dimensions of this doctrine are often relatively unexplored. This excellent text by Todd Billings contributes to the closing of that gap as he puts his theological expertise in this area to use (see his acclaimed dissertation on Calvin and union, published as *Calvin, Participation, and the Gift: the Activity of Believers in Union with Christ* [Oxford University Press, 2007]).

Billings' goal is to use biblical and reformational ressourcement (a.k.a., theological retrieval) to speak to the church today about God's "amazing…action in uniting believers to Christ" (2). Union is at the heart of the gospel and the Christian message, a theological concept with "astonishing implications" (173) for every sphere of life. Billings targets contemporary practices and mindsets that union and its implications could recalibrate, refine, overturn, and replace. His aims for his five chapters are concise and clearly stated in the introduction, the conclusion, and each chapter.

Chapter One ("Salvation as Adoption in Christ: An Antidote to Today's Distant yet Convenient Deity") surveys the miracle of adoption, Calvin on union, and the common North American approach to God. Billings raises the specter of Moralistic Therapeutic Deism, showing that the God of the Bible has more to offer than the cheap god toyed with by many Americans. In particular Calvin's stress on the "double gift" (justification *and* sanctification) in union is highlighted. When God unites us by the Spirit to his Son, it is not merely justification and forgiveness (a new status) but sanctification, a new identity and new power that are given to God's people, so that a full-orbed new life in the Messiah is ours. The God of adoption is not deistic and distant, but comes close and even empowers us to "live into" a new identity. Billings is heavy on the Bible and heavy on Calvin, to good effect.

The second chapter ("Total Depravity in Sin, Total Communion in Christ: How the Bondage of the Will Mirrors a Theology of Salvation as Communion") articulates a rhetorically savvy (and biblically faithful) approach to total depravity, which in Billings' view is not simply a negative statement, but a positive assertion about the value of humanity, since we are only truly human when we are fully in communion with God.

These opening chapters provide an invigorating introduction to union, which should prove particularly fresh and bracing for many Young Reformed pastors, their detractors, and evangelicals writ large. We are reminded that TULIP is not the heart of Calvin and the reformed tradition. Billings' emphases undermine under-developed ideas sometimes found in the Young Reformed camp. The emphasis on sharing or participating in the Spirit's work addresses the difficulty many seem to have in coordinating divine and

human agency in sanctification and mission (also appearing later in the book, i.e., ch. 5, p. 155). The focus on union as God's means of providing us with new power for Christian life and mission stands over and against a narrow emphasis on mere "sanctification by justification" or "sanctification by gospel." And the fuller dimensions of the gospel revealed when we emphasize union could improve justification-centered approaches to the gospel. Later chapters also portray the dignity we have in the participation in God's mission, the building of God's church and witnessing to the Messiah. Such emphases undercut the passivity on offer in some versions of the Christian life, mission and sanctification.

In the third chapter ("Encountering a Mystery in Union with Christ: On Communion with the Incomprehensible God"), Billings covers more technical terrain, addressing the transcendence of God and its significance for the ongoing role of Christ as mediator in union. Divine accommodation in Calvin's thought is put to good use here. Billings draws on Bavinck's development of Calvin and earlier thinkers to explore Christ's role as mediator of the beatific vision in the final state. Some readers who would benefit from the opening chapters will struggle with language and concepts in this chapter (i.e., the distinction between archetypal and ectypal knowledge).

Chapter four ("The Gospel and Justice: Union with Christ, the Law of Love, and the Lord's Supper") focuses on the sacraments and union. One might suspect that Baptist readers of this journal would find room to quibble here. But Billings focuses not on ontological details like Calvin's approach to "real presence," but on practical implications of Eucharist on which evangelicals should agree. He explores the Belhar Confession from South Africa, adopted in 1986 in response to apartheid. The emphasis on action in response to our union is faithful to a number of themes. Justice, love and other actions flow from Union (justification and sanctification are the result of Spirit's new creation work uniting us to Christ, leading to justice) and from Eucharist (see especially *Institutes* 4.17.40, John's Gospel, and 1 Cor 11). The gospel includes forgiveness and a new life through participation in Christ by the Spirit, and that new life leads to justice. The supper—as segregated churches in the American South and South Africa knew full well—is not merely a vertical affair. As it displays the gospel and unites to Christ, it implicates believers' involvement in a wider body and in service to neighbors.

In the fifth chapter ("Ministry in Union with Christ: A Constructive Critique of Incarnational Ministry"), Billing affirms much that gets labeled "incarnational mission" in our contemporary efforts. But he critiques this label and misguided efforts fostered by such rhetoric, for "the incarnation is not an 'ongoing process' to be repeated or a 'model' to be copied in Christian ministry" (124). He proposes instead an emphasis on participation in the work of the Spirit, bearing witness to Christ and creating a new humanity in him.

A biblical scholar (like the present reviewer) might have a different portrait, even if he or she attended to practical aspects of ministry as Billings does. But Billings provides a helpful entry into an important arena. This text is more appropriate and commendable for systematic or historical theology courses, although individual chapters could be profitably employed to augment courses on Paul, John, missiology, and the sacraments.

Jason Hood
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**Guthrie, Steven R.** ***Creator Spirit: The Holy Spirit and the Art of Becoming Human***. Baker Academic, 2011. 222 pages. Paperback. ISBN 978-0-8010-2921-9. Paperback.

Philosophical aesthetics is a white-hot area of interest for Christian thinkers interested in being culturally relevant to our post-literate era. From the visual arts to music, literature and theater, a significant wave of interest in how to think about the creative arts has begun to produce serious works that span the gap between rigorous theology and legitimate arts.

Steven Guthrie's *Creator Spirit* steps into this interest with an exhaustive pneumatology of creative endeavors. Carefully researched (and footnoted) and cautiously developed, he moves from foundational issues to lofty ideals for creating Gospel-laden art.

Guthrie rightly reminds us that the creative arts counterbalance the hyper-rational tendencies of academic theology. Guthrie works carefully within three traditional suspicions of the fine arts that have haunted traditional theology: a Socratic skepticism about art's value, a Patristic cynicism about art's morality, and an Enlightenment distaste for art's passions. The void created by these suspicions sometimes results in a dour, curmudgeonly view of the arts as a whole.

On the other hand, Guthrie pulls no punches in addressing the artistic community's theological deficiencies. From theosophy to postmodernism, the philosophical and ideological underpinnings of contemporary art are detailed and scrutinized in the light of sound theology. While careful to identify the sources of these shortcomings, Guthrie mines these very sources for theological gold in ways that are reminiscent of Augustine's famous "gold of Egypt" trope.

Augustine, however, is less important than Athanasius for *Creator Spirit*, as that Father undergirds the bulk of the book's argument. Guthrie views *Letters to Serapion* as crucial to understanding how Christians might think about creativity in the context of pneumatology, especially in the Athanasian emphasis on the Spirit's ministry of restoring the fullness of humanity's *imago dei*. Guthrie's thesis may be distilled as exploring how "one of the principal works of the Holy Spirit is to make and remake our humanity. In creation,

incarnation, and redemption, the Holy Spirit is *the humanizing Spirit* [author's emphasis]" (page xvi.).

Guthrie begins with the uneasy relationship between Christian thought and the mushy spirituality that so easily dominates the fine arts, moving quickly into foundational questions about what it means to be human. The chapter on the importance of community to the arts is especially strong and counters the elitism and subjectivity that too frequently poses as aesthetic criticism today. Discussions of non-Christian and Christian notions of artistic inspiration are likewise very helpful, demonstrating the stark contrasts between the two. The arts allow us to gain glimpses of the redemptive consummation of this world, both in the physical realm, where salvation is effected, and in transcendent glimpses of the next world, where restoration will be fully realized.

The challenge of bridging disparate academic subjects is that their presuppositional questions and, indeed, their technical languages can differ in complicated ways. There are times when *Creator Spirit* borders on overwhelming the aesthetician with theological technicalities, even as the theologian may find some of the examples from the arts to be befuddling. In general, however, Guthrie navigates these difficulties gently, though digesting the sheer breadth of his sources does require patience and a bit of humility.

Perhaps the greatest strength of *Creator Sprit* is its relentless combination of orthodoxy and orthopraxy. For theologians, the book calls for the application of pneumatology, viewing creative pursuits as a worthwhile arena for living out one's theological convictions. For artists, the book presents a bracing view of the importance of theological soundness, particularly from a biblical perspective. The index of scriptural citations is extensive and is not merely decorative; Guthrie emphasizes a hermeneutic authority not often found among philosophical aestheticians.

Secular critic Camille Paglia observed in *Arion* (2007) that the loss of religious fervor in Western art has resulted in vapid traditions. Guthrie's helpful aesthetic theology will provide grist for artists of all media to think carefully about the Gospel-burden of their crafts. Perhaps a new renaissance of high-quality art rooted in the Christian faith will be able to trace its roots to *Creator Spirit*. If we are fortunate, a new generation of theologians will likewise engage the artistic community with a passion for creative works that incarnate the Truth of the Gospel.

Gene C. Fant, Jr.,
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**Dennis Jowers, Paul Kjoss Helseth, William Lane Craig, Ron Highfield, and Gregory A. Boyd. *Four Views on Divine Providence.*** Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011. 264 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0-310-32512-3. $19.99. Paperback.

The doctrine of divine providence—of God's reign over his creation for his glory and the benefit of his people—is one of the most comforting and perplexing in the Christian faith. Knowing that "God causes all things to work together for good" for His people (Romans 8:28) brings comfort to our hearts. Yet the same doctrine raises many deep and knotty questions as well. Christians in every generation have struggled with how God's will and sovereign power relate to evil in general and to human decisions, good or evil, in particular. In this volume, another in Zondervan's Counterpoints Series, readers listen in on a robust debate by four ardent proponents of contrasting views. Each contributor presents his own view, and then withstands a brief rebuttal by the others. The authors summarized their views as follows:

Helseth: "God causes all things."

Craig: "God directs all things."

Highland: "God controls by liberating."

Boyd: "God limits his control."

Helseth begins the debate with a carefully-worded presentation from the confessional Reformed position, supporting his view with many familiar passages of Scripture. In effect, Helseth argues that God is "omnicausal," having determined everything before the foundation of the world according to his eternal plan, yet "in such a way" that God is not crushing human freedom or is the author of evil. Helseth ultimately rests in the "inscrutability" and "mystery" of this harmonization. Such a view is deeply unsatisfying to Craig and Boyd, considering the recourse to "inscrutability" as a cop-out, unworthy of the very effort before them in this volume. Boyd specifically rejected Helseth's use of the "mysterious 'in such a way' clause" that Reformed thinkers tend to resort to, saying it proves the unintelligibility of the determinist position.

Craig argues from the Molinist position, which asserts that God rules the universe relying on his omniscience, having planned the world factoring in all the actions/decisions of free creatures utilizing "middle knowledge," God's exhaustive understanding of "counterfactuals": "what might have been if…" Craig's article was well written, passionate, and densely argued serving as a good introduction to those who are unfamiliar with the Molinist position. But while he succeeds in showing that God does know "counterfactuals," giving many examples (e.g. Jesus before Pilate, "If my Kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight …." John 18:36), he fails to show Scriptural support for his very premise: God rules *by means of* this middle knowledge. Craig acknowledges that his primary arguments for his view are theological, not exegetical. By rebuttal, Helseth pushes Craig even on whether his arguments are more likely philosophical, not theological.

In Highfield's article, he asserts that "God controls by liberating, and liberates by controlling." By this, he means that God frees humanity from the enslavement that Satan and sin have worked on the human personality

and enables free choice to flow in the direction it should travel, along the lines of God's will. Highfield rightly clarifies the whole issue in one question: "Does God accomplish his will in all things?" This is the great divide: the view of theologians who answer "yes" has lately been called the "no risk" view, and that of those who answer "no" the "risk" view. Highfield says the analogy of faith shows God to be sovereign, working out his plan by his wisdom and power. According to the rebuttals, one of the more controversial aspects of Highfield's essay is that he seems to toy with the idea that nothing is really evil, that evil has no real, lasting being.

Boyd presents the "open theism" view, asserting that God limits his control in order to achieve free love in the hearts of his people. He rejects the possibility that God could act like a mad scientist who implants a chip in the brains of people forcing them to love the scientist. According to Boyd, true love can only be given by those who are truly free, and freedom must be absolute. God actually does not control anything, but is constantly responding to free human decisions with astonishing resources of power, wisdom, and love. God's infinite intelligence allows him to respond to every human decision and "win" in the end by bringing good out of evil. Boyd thus "solves" the riddle of harmonizing divine sovereignty and human freedom by effectively denying the former to celebrate the latter. Boyd's presentation will delight those who celebrate libertarian freedom, but frustrate those who seek to address all the relevant texts on the mystery of divine providence.

In summation, this volume will serve as the starting place for many who are seeking to work out at a deeper level the questions of divine sovereignty and human freedom. The format does an excellent job of enabling readers to see how such divergent answers to these questions can be framed and asserted.

Andrew Davis
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**James W. Thompson. *Moral Formation according to Paul: The Context and Coherence of Pauline Ethics*.** Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011. 213 pp. Paperback. ISBN 9780801039027. $ 24.99 Paperback.

The goal of this book is to "grasp the specific shape and inner logic of Paul's moral instructions" (ix). Thompson's distinct contribution in this endeavor is his interpretation of Paul's ethics in light of the moral tradition of Hellenistic Judaism (e.g., Tobit, 4 Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, and the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*). This tradition rooted ethics in the Mosaic law, even though the law was rarely cited. Some authors also drew from the Greek philosophical tradition—e.g., Philo, 4 Maccabees, and Wisdom speak of obedience to the law in terms of Plato's four cardinal virtues.

Turning to discuss Paul, Thompson first demonstrates how "Paul shapes the moral consciousness of his gentile converts by instructing them

with the vocabulary of ancient Israel" (62). They are God's "holy" people who are to maintain boundaries, his "elect" who were chosen by God, and the people who are to "walk" worthily of God. He then goes through Paul's lists of vices and virtues which draw less from the philosophical tradition than Hellenistic Jewish tradition did—e.g., Paul never lists the four cardinal virtues. Instead, he draws extensively from the law, and like other Hellenistic Jews he focused on the sexual ethics of the Holiness Code and the love command. Regarding obstacles for obedience, the Greek and Jewish tradition often focused on passions which prevented right conduct or obedience to the law. Paul's contribution here is unique, for his anthropological pessimism is "without parallel in antiquity" (155), and yet he maintains a distinct optimism for the ethical conduct of his Christian communities. The final chapter addresses the disputed letters of Paul without delving into question of authorship. These letters address new problems and show both continuity and discontinuity with the letters written before Romans.

The most important contribution of this book, in my view, is Thompson's repeated point that Paul's ethics are rooted in the Mosaic law, even though Paul rarely cites from it in the context of his moral instruction (e.g., 74, 76, 99, 116, 126, 188). Especially important here are Paul's comments about the importance of Scripture for the moral instruction of Christian converts (1 Cor 9:10; 10:11; Rom 15:4) (114).

I have only one point of criticism of the book, but it is important—in my view, Thompson fails to explain how Paul's theology is the foundation of his ethics, specifically his theology of the law and his theology of the cross. Thompson's chapter on the law (chap. 5) has only a two-page discussion of freedom from the law in Paul, and he concludes that Paul's negative comments about the law are "only in debates about terms of admission for the Gentiles…. Thus Paul is not making sweeping statements about the place of the law as a source of ethical reflection, but is focusing on the place of the gentiles within the family of God" (113). This conclusion, however, fails to give full weight to Paul's negative view of the law, which is perhaps spelled out most clearly in Romans 5–8. There Paul does not reflect on Gentile inclusion but on the law's role in human history. He argues that the law entered "in order that the transgression may increase" (Rom 5:20–21), and that sin used the law to bring about death (Rom 7:7–25). In Paul's view, then, to be under the reign of the law is to be under the reign of sin (Rom 6:14). Christians have been severed from the reign of law through their death with Christ (Rom 7:4), and do not serve in the "oldness of the letter," but in "the newness of the Spirit" (7:6). One must understand this to understand how a Christian is to live according to Paul.

Second, Thompson fails to explain how Paul's theology of the cross is the foundation of his ethics. Thompson certainly believes that the cross is central in Paul's thought, for he observes that the center of the new symbolic universe for Christians is "the Christ event—the descent, death, and resur-

rection of Christ" (44). And in some cases he briefly comes back to this point (e.g., 109, 149, 151, 155, 164). But overall I do not think the book adequately develops Paul's view of the cross and Christian ethics (see, e.g., Rom 6:1–23). Here I appeal to V. P. Furnish's classic comment: "The study of the Pauline ethic… is not the study of his ethical theory, for he had none, nor of his code for Christian living, for he gave none. It is a study, first of all, of the theological convictions which underlie Paul's concrete exhortations and instructions, and secondly, of the way those convictions shape his responses to practical questions of conduct" (*Theology and Ethics in Paul*, 211–12).

With this said, I think that pastors will find the book to be a helpful introduction to Paul's ethics and to the broader ethical discussion, a needed introduction for modern people who rarely think about such things. Pastors will also benefit from Thompson's emphasis on the communal nature of Paul's ethics, a good reminder to churches in America which tend toward rugged individualism. Finally, scholars will benefit from Thompson's immersion in the German literature on Pauline ethics, a discussion which may not be accessible to them outside of a book like this one.

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**David J. Hesselgrave and Ed Stetzer. *MissionShift: Global Mission Issues in the Third Millennium.*** Nashville: B & H Academic, 2010. 312 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-0-8054-4537-4. $26.99. Paperback.

The list of the contributors to *MissionShift* (hereafter MS) is a "who's who" in contemporary missiological thinking. The book is structured in three sections, each of which is anchored by a significant essay from leading missiologists: Charles Van Engen, Paul Hiebert, and Ralph Winter. Current missions thinkers and missiologists interact with what is set forth in these three essays. MS takes on even greater significance in knowing that the contributions by Hiebert and Winter are some of their last before going home.

In section one, Charles Van Engen begins the discussion of mission's past by providing a historical overview of the Church's definitional understanding of mission. According to Van Engen, Evangelical missions is in need of a "new, appropriate, creative, and motivating" definition of mission (p. 22). Although Van Engen's definition (p. 27) is complex, his overall point is well-taken. Good definition, or right thinking, directly impacts good practice. In the words of Lewis Carroll's Cheshire Cat, "If you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there."

In section two, Paul Hiebert helps frame mission's present.In light of the constantquestion of how to relate to people from other cultures, Hiebert writes, "We need to learn how to live in a multicontext world, to build bridges of understanding and relationship between different contexts, and to judge between them" (p. 83).Since all humans "live in particular contexts" (p. 82),

contextualization has been, is, and will continue to be a critical issue in missions. Hiebert capably deals with issues of culture and communication as he pushes for what he terms, critical contextualization. This approach allows missionaries to interact with different societies while at once guarding the fidelity of the biblical message and showing appropriate sensitivity to these differing cultures with the goal of gospel transformation on both the micro and macro levels (pp. 98-100).

In section three, Ralph Winter pushes the reader to consider mission's future.This essay, "The Future of Evangelicals in Mission," is a showcase for the unique yet provocative missiological mind of Ralph Winter, and it elicits the best group of responses in the book. In addressing the future of missions, he inserts a historical look at Evangelicalism while never fully addressing what the future holds for missions. Winter advocates a recovery of what he terms First-Inheritance Evangelicalism (FIE) which was characterized by "both spiritual and social concern" (p. 164), as opposed to Second-Inheritance Evangelicalism (SIE) which is concerned primarily with ministering to spiritual concerns throughevangelism (p. 164). As Winter sees it, SIE has a stranglehold on Evangelicalism today. Winter is a keen observer, a prophet, or both, when he writes, "My prediction in this chapter is that in the twenty-first century the mainstream of Evangelicalism in the USA, and of Evangelical missions in particular, will recover a broader perspective, moving from what has been dominantly SIE to a rediscovery of the earlier full spectrum of the FIE tradition" (p. 168). Today there is certainly a movement toward recovering a fuller spectrum of evangelicalism that emphasizes both spiritual and social concern. For a delineation of some future missions challenges, Scott Moreau's response in chapter 15 and J. Mark Terry's response in chapter 18 are helpful.

In addition to the aforementioned essays, the value of MS lies in the charitable interaction by the respondents. Of particular interest is the summary response by Ed Stetzer at the end of each section—see chapters 7, 13, and 19—as well as David Hesselgrave's concluding chapter, "A Scientific Postscript—Grist for the Missiological Mills of the Future." In MS, the display of academic rigor alongside charitable interaction is both refreshing and a good model for scholars. This scholarly yet charitable interaction continues outside of these chapters in Hesselgrave's apology for his presumptive characterization of Ralph Winter's theology (p. 290). Hesselgrave's apology for these comments is on display at edstetzer.com on February 16, 2011 entitled "Open Letters on Open Theism."

In his chapter, Hesselgrave summarizes an unhealthy tendency among mission thinkers and missionaries, "[L]eft to their own devices, Evangelical mission thinkers and practitioners tend to become overly creative and unduly adventurous" (p. 278). Adventuresome and "loners" are apt descriptions of missionaries, so the need for continued charitable conversation within the evangelical community is of utmost importance in order to stay on task for

the glory of God. Whether one considers himself a novice or an expert in all things missions, this book is a worthy read.

Greg Mathias
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**Stanley Porter, Cynthia Long Westfall (ed). *Christian Mission: Old Testament Foundations and New Testament Developments.*** Pickwick Publications, 2010.xii + 259 pp. Paperback. ISBN 9781608996551. $24.00 Paperback.

*Christian Mission* is a series of nine articles originally presented as papers at the 2006 H.H. Bingham Colloquium in the New Testament at McMaster Divinity College. The lectures/articles were written by seven biblical studies experts and one missiologist: Mark J. Boda (McMaster Divinity), Brian P. Irwin (Knox College), Michael P Knowles (McMaster Divinity), Craig A. Evans (Acadia College), Stanley E Porter (McMaster Divinity), Cynthia L Westfall (McMaster Divinity), Ekhard J. Schnabel (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School), and Michael Goheen (Trinity Western University). These scholars were challenged to explore the missionary implications of key biblical themes in an effort to answer the conference question, "How did a first-generation Jewish messianic movement develop the momentum to become a dominant religious force in the Western world?"

This volume is an attempt to demonstrate dialogue between biblical scholarship and missiology. Each of these contributors argues that the missionary mandate and the global expansion of the faith is an important theme running throughout the Old and New Testaments. It is true that this idea is presented in more popular works like John Piper's *Let the Nations be Glad* and Christopher Wright's *The Mission of God*; however, the present work provides a helpful perspective as it brings together the field of biblical studies and missiology. It is an attempt to correct an issue that was first raised by David Bosch when he noted that biblical scholars, because of their desire to emphasize the original meaning of the text, "frequently fail to show whether, and, if so, how, the Bible can be of significance to the church-in-mission and how, if at all, a connection between the biblical evidence and the contemporary missionary scene can be made." (David Bosch, "Mission in Biblical Perspective," 532. Quoted in this book, p. 221). As Michael Goheen notes, "This book is part of a growing recognition of the need to return to Scripture afresh to bring our thinking and practice of mission under the authority of God's Word" (p. 210).

The chapter by Mark J Boda, "Declare His Glory among the Nations: the Psalter as Missional Collection," most clearly demonstrates this dialogue. In the article he argues that the missionary nature of the people of God is demonstrated in both dominant themes as well as the structural arrangement of the Psalter. His exploration of the different uses of "the nations" as a key

theme in the Psalms is helpful, though not entirely original. However, his argument about the missional purpose of God's people being revealed in the rhetorical structure is quite unique. He argues that the editorial decisions which resulted in the final structure of the Psalter are intended to show how the nations should respond to God. In the beginning of Book 1, the nations are shown rebelling against the Lord and his Son. Then, "As one moves through the Psalter at regular intervals, there is the reminder that everlasting praise to Yahweh is the *telos* of this book… this praise is to involve every nation and all creation" (p.31). From this careful thematic and structural analysis, he concludes with seven missiological implications applied to the contemporary church and her mission.

The most important article in this book is Michael Goheen's "Bible and Mission: Missiology and Biblical Scholarship in Dialogue." Goheen's chapter concludes this volume effectively as he summarizes and connects the arguments of the other contributors. He then develops a strong appeal for missiologists and biblical scholars to engage in meaningful dialogue with each other in order to strengthen both fields. He concludes, "For the sake of faithfulness to our call to participate in God's mission in a changing time, I hope that at least something of that dialogue between biblical studies and missiology has taken place in this volume" (232).

This book is helpful for those interested in biblical scholarship and missiology. Some readers unfamiliar with Biblical Studies might find some the arguments a bit too technical. However for those willing to work through the nuances, the book should prove to be a breath of fresh air. For anyone tired of the individualism and the "stove-pipe" nature of academia, this book serves as a good example of biblical scholarship aimed at supporting the current needs of the people of God.

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