

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE



SOUTHWESTERN
JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY

Book Reviews

Biblical Studies

***Exodus: An Exegetical Commentary.* By Victor P. Hamilton. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011. 752 Pages. Hardcover, \$54.99.**

The value of reading works by Victor Hamilton is his skill at making the complex practical and understandable. In this commentary on the book of Exodus, Hamilton has once again carefully and adeptly addressed the text with clarity and precision and produced a volume that is of value for the church as well as the academy.

The stated goal of the work is to engage in the discussion among academia, but also to serve as a resource for pastors (xi). He has accomplished that with relevant interaction with current scholarship and practical application for the church. While the scholarship of the text will make it useful, its very readable style and functional organization make it attractive.

The introduction of the work is brief, but does delineate some of the key themes of the book as well as demonstrate the contemporary relevance of the book of Exodus. At the end of the introduction (xxviii-xxix) Hamilton offers a simple and coherent (rhyming) outline of the book, though it is not the one that he uses in the commentary.

The organization of the commentary is clear and easy to follow. The work includes seven parts that are logically arranged around the key movements in the text. Within each part, the work is divided into smaller pericopies. Each section includes his translation, grammatical and lexical notes, as well as commentary. One of the strengths of the work is the frequent drawing of connections to the rest of Scripture. The commentary includes references to every book in the Old Testament and every chapter in the Pentateuch.

Hamilton demonstrates excellent interaction with the Hebrew in both the notes and commentary sections of the work. He interacts well on most of the critical positions within the book presenting all sides fairly, but offering compelling evidence for the positions he espouses.

Interested readers will find helpful the discussions on the Hebrew midwives (11-16), bridegroom of blood (80-83), the Red Sea (207), the offerings (495-508), and the golden calf incident (529-34), along with an excellent excurses on the hardening of Pharaoh's heart (170-74).

Some will find the absence of extended discussions on the date of the Exodus, the route of the Exodus, or the numbers of Israelites who left Egypt curious. On the question of the date of the Exodus, Hamilton sort of dismisses the question completely, and refers the reader to others "who have addressed the date of the exodus" (10), though he does recommend a couple of sources that do handle the discussion in detail. With regard to the route, only a brief non-descript reference can be found (206). He does mention the question of the numbers of people who left Egypt three times, twice parenthetically (8, 544) and once simply to conclude that "whatever size

the departing body of Israelites is, it is large enough for Pharaoh to say, "The Israelites have become more numerous for us/than we" (194).

The strength of this commentary is seen in its two most extended sections on Moses' confrontation with Pharaoh along with the corresponding plagues (97-196) and the Covenant at Sinai which is climaxed with the Decalogue (291-354). His unique style and insights will challenge students and pastors as they engage the text of Scripture. Those hungry for a fresh approach to the central story of the Exodus will not leave unsatisfied. It will not gather dust on anyone's bookshelf.

Deron J. Biles

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I & II Samuel. In The Old Testament Library. By A. Graeme Auld. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011. 686 Pages. Hardcover. \$75.

One can turn to most any page at random in Graeme Auld's voluminous commentary on the books of First and Second Samuel and immediately discover that the strength of this work is its exegetical excellence. Through profuse interaction with the Hebrew text and thorough analysis, Auld has significantly advanced the study of these books revealing them as vital to the understanding of David, the monarchy, the Old Testament, and indeed, the rest of Scripture.

From the first words of the Introduction, the author makes it clear that the books of Samuel are about David. They present the key figures that prepare the reader for the life of David and help us "know him better" (2), intricately detail his life, and then reveal the monumental impact of his life on subsequent generations. One of the uniquenesses of Auld's approach to the understanding of the books of Samuel is his thesis that the books are read from beginning to end, but were written from end to beginning (9-14), with the book of first Samuel serving as a prequel to the story of David (12). Though the reference in the very first sentence of the Introduction to David as the "first king of Israel" (1) is curious and perhaps misplaced, the author advocates him as the most significant Old Testament figure.

The outline of the text is simple and clear. The author begins each section with his own translation and critical notes, followed by an explanation of the text. The selected bibliography at the beginning of the work reveals the sources on which the author relied in the composition of the commentary.

Throughout the book, Auld gives careful attention to textual criticism and also reveals the relationship of the books of Samuel to the rest of Scripture. The Index of Scripture and other Ancient Sources (631-62) demonstrates the meticulous interaction with the Hebrew Bible; though much more could have been said about the relationship of the books of Samuel with the New Testament. In spite of the book's depth, the significant text of Yahweh's promise to David in 2 Samuel 7 receives comparatively slight attention with oddly no reference to its Messianic implications (420-26).

Critical to the author's explanation of the book, and the reader's understanding of it, is Auld's theory of what he calls, "the Book of Two Houses (BTH)." With only a brief definition of it, Auld explains BTH as a hypothetical source which comprises the entire story of David and the "house of Yahweh from the death of Saul till the fall of Jerusalem" (10). Throughout the remainder of the commentary, Auld frequently refers to the work and believes it to have been the common source of information for both the authors of First and Second Samuel and the Chronicler

(cf. 11, 14, 16, 17, 19, 27-28, 29-30, etc).

Other useful features to the work include the Introduction and the Excurses. The Introduction outlines the book, analyzes the available manuscript texts for the books of Samuel, explains the author's translation, as well as discussing the question of authorship, the relationship of the books of Samuel to Chronicles, and the place of I and II Samuel in the Old Testament Historical Books. The excurses generally serve as after-works of key sections. The final and most helpful of which delineates the key themes and characters in the books of Samuel (622-30). Although it might have been clearer if it had been divided into two different excurses with one related to the people and another related to the themes, the section serves as a valuable discussion of seven important characters in the book and eight key themes, while also functioning as something of a conclusion to the work.

While the book will serve as a helpful resource for students, pastors, and scholars, it does presume a certain level of familiarity with the Hebrew text. Users will find it invaluable in exegesis, though less in application. In the end, anyone interested in a thorough, academic, and clear exegesis of the books of I and II Samuel will find this commentary an excellent addition to his or her library.

Deron J. Biles

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***Old Testament Wisdom Literature: A Theological Introduction.* By Craig G. Bartholomew and Ryan P. O'Dowd. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011. 336 pages. Hardcover, \$30.**

Well-known wisdom scholar Craig Bartholomew has teamed up with his former student, Ryan O'Dowd, to deliver readers an engaging, thought-provoking introduction to the Old Testament Wisdom Literature. Readers of this book benefit from Bartholomew's previous work on Ecclesiastes (*Reading Ecclesiastes: Old Testament Exegesis and Hermeneutical Theory* [Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1998] and *Ecclesiastes* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009]) as well as O'Dowd's excellent treatment of epistemology in Deuteronomy and the Wisdom books (*The Wisdom of Torah: Epistemology in Deuteronomy and the Wisdom Literature* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009]).

This volume is a valuable addition to the plethora of introductions to various segments of the Bible. However, the term "introduction" is perhaps misleading, as it does not cover in detail the typical topics included in introductions, such as such as authorship, date, *Sitz im Leben*, history of interpretation, and other critical issues, though the authors do include helpful outlines of each book. This text is also somewhat unique in its genre because it neglects Psalms and Song of Songs, both of which one would expect to find in this type of work. However, this lacuna is balanced by a thorough treatment of wisdom themes in the New Testament.

Whereas the term "introduction" may cause pause, the term "theological" is the operative word in the title, for it is the authors' theological treatment of Wisdom Literature that distinguishes this book from other introductions to Wisdom. That Bartholomew and O'Dowd focus their efforts on "readings of biblical texts that consciously seek to do justice to the perceived theological nature of the texts and embrace the influence of theology (corporate and personal; past and present) upon the interpreter's enquiry, context, and method"¹ is obvious in their exegesis of each

¹Christopher Spinks, *Scripture, Community, and Crisis of Meaning: Debates on the*

Biblical book. While some chapters (e.g. “Where Can Wisdom Be Found?”) include a section explicitly devoted to “theological reflections,” nearly every page includes rich reflection on the theology of Wisdom Literature.

The first three chapters lay the foundation for the rest of the book. “An Introduction to Wisdom Literature” outlines the major themes of Wisdom and its distinguishing characteristics. “The Ancient World of Wisdom” places Old Testament wisdom within the larger world of ancient Near Eastern Wisdom, noting the features of Biblical wisdom that make it unique in its historical and cultural setting. “The Poetry of Wisdom and the Wisdom of Poetry” announces a clarion call for Christians to rediscover the wonder captured in the Old Testament Wisdom Literature, most notably the wonder of creation—something that has been lost in our modern, Western culture (13). Furthermore, this chapter cogently argues for the usefulness of poetry for the Christian life, successfully resurrecting the notion that “[l]iterature and poetry are uniquely positioned to enable us to imagine what was and what could be, as well as to find meaning in the broken past” (69).

Bartholomew and O’Dowd spend the next six chapters examining Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes. The authors first give an overview of each book (one chapter per book) and its major theological themes and emphases, then devote a second chapter to a particular issue within the book. For example, they analyze in detail Proverbs 31, Job 28, and Ecclesiastes 3. Homileticians will find these more detailed chapters invaluable for developing a methodology for understanding and communicating the theological import of the wisdom books. *Old Testament Wisdom Literature* is rounded out with three chapters that focus on wisdom in the New Testament, the overall theology of Wisdom Literature, and the application of wisdom’s theology to present-day life.

It is difficult to point to any significant flaws in *Old Testament Wisdom Literature*, though its expansion to include Song of Songs and the Psalms would make it more usable in a classroom setting. The book’s strengths, including its rigorous exegesis, faithfulness to the Biblical text, readability, recommended reading lists, thorough indices, and accessibility and applicability to Christians across the spectrum—laity, pastors, and scholars—make this an essential volume for studying the Old Testament Wisdom Literature.

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***A Commentary on the Psalms: Volume 1 (1-41).* By Allen P. Ross. Kregel Exegetical Library. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011. 887 pages. Hardcover, \$44.99.**

Allen Ross is a professor of Old Testament at Beeson Divinity School and has designed this volume to be used by teachers and preachers of the book of Psalms. He aims to present in his commentary “what a pastor or teacher needs to have for the development of an expository message” (12).

To give an orientation to the study of the Psalms, Ross provides an introductory section that engages the requisite critical and hermeneutical considerations. He highlights both the value and difficulty of studying the Psalms. On the one hand, “the church is missing one of its richest experiences if it ignores the Book of Psalms or relegates it to a routine reading in a service without any explanation” (29). On the other hand, a student of the Psalter must also grapple with textual variants, divergent

translation traditions, a wide-ranging reception history, and the difficulty of discerning poetic forms and figures of speech. In his discussion of these technical issues, Ross consistently takes conservative, evangelical positions (e.g., affirming Davidic authorship of psalms attributed to him in the superscriptions, see 42-47).

A clear strength of this volume is its focus on the structure and literary features of each psalm. Ross begins by acknowledging that “there is no final word on the Book of Psalms” (11). People have used the Psalms for a stunning variety of purposes, so a work attempting to analyze them must have a specific task in mind. Ross focuses “on the chief aim of exegesis, the exposition of the text” (11). In pursuing this goal, Ross seeks to equip his readers to teach *all* the Psalms. “By exegetical exposition,” Ross means that “the exposition should cover the entire psalm, and that it should not only explain the text verse-by-verse but also show how the message of the psalm unfolds section-by-section” (12). Accordingly, the largest section of the introductory material focuses on the nature of Hebrew poetry and the literary form and function of the individual Psalms (e.g., Laments, Imprecations, Praises, Royal Psalms; see 81-145). Because these literary features form the warp and woof of the Psalter, they should receive careful attention. Ross provides here a helpful and straightforward literary orientation to reading Biblical poetry.

Once readers *understand* these literary features, they must then seek to *explain* them. This movement is a central concern for Ross. He notes in this regard that “the development of the exposition from the exegesis is basic to this commentary” (17). For each psalm, Ross gives a translation with discussion of textual variants and translational difficulties in the footnotes. He then briefly sets the psalm in its literary/thematic context within the Psalter and notes the structure of the psalm (through an exegetical summary and outline). Next he gives a “commentary in expository form” that articulates the main point of each section and sub-section of the exegetical outline. Ross concludes his treatment of each psalm by discussing its message and application. Here Ross usually tries to connect the meaning of the psalm both to the lives of contemporary readers and also to any relevant theological themes from the New Testament. In this focus and commentary structure, Ross connects a careful reading of the psalm with a fruitful preaching of the psalm. Because this connection exists, the structure of the sermon should mirror the structure of the psalm. The help that Ross provides for those attempting this task gives his commentary considerable value.

As noted, Ross highlights the importance of understanding individual Psalms in their own right. Recognizing that “the psalms were not arbitrarily added to the collection,” Ross also admits the need to relate them to the larger collection. Though he surveys recent work on the Psalter that seek to discern an overall shape and hermeneutically significant arrangement of the Psalms (52-63), Ross cautions against “the tendency to see connections and patterns that may not be there, or if they are there, are only slight” (62). “Until the details are worked out to satisfaction,” Ross argues, this type of study “will seem to be artificial and forced” (62). Because Ross is not interested in working out any of those details himself, his commentary will be more helpful in the study of individual psalms than in the study of their strategic arrangement within the Psalter.

In urging the value of the Psalms for the life of the church, Ross notes that in modern churches, “The use of the psalms has almost fallen by the way to the detriment of the spiritual life of the church, and the prayers, hymns, and songs that have replaced the psalms in worship do not have the substance, power, and beauty that

they have" (25). Through his warm and engaging exposition, Ross has done a part in helping these Psalms re-enter the life and worship of the churches. Praise the Lord!

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Enns, Peter. *Ecclesiastes. The Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011. 238 pages. Paperback, \$25.*

The writer of Ecclesiastes queried, "What profit has the worker from that in which he labors?" In both his contribution to the field and commentary on the book of Ecclesiastes, Peter Enns has answered that question. Continuing the effort of the Two-Horizon series, which seeks to combine the foci of Biblical exegesis and theology, Enns has produced a helpful work for pastors, students, and anyone interested in the study of this enigmatic book of the Bible.

The writing style of the book is clear and easy to follow. Enns generally writes in first person as though including the reader on a journey of discovery with him in the text, pausing periodically to insert contemporary application. He explains that the difficulties and apparent contradictions of the text are real and intentional as the narrator allows the tension of swelling questions to lie unresolved until the Epilogue.

The structure of the book is clear and easy to follow. It is composed of an Introduction, Commentary, Theological Horizons, Contributions of Ecclesiastes to Biblical Theology, and the Significance of Ecclesiastes for Theology and Praxis today. The Introduction outlines the critical issues of the book and explains the author's approach to the text. The main issues addressed in this section include questions of the purpose, authorship, narrator, date, and outline. Here, Enns also includes a list of key lexemes that are helpful in the understanding and organization of the book. Especially insightful is the discussion regarding the end of the book as key to the understanding of the book as a whole (7-16). Though Enns admits that the conclusion itself is "nothing new under the sun," he demonstrates how the narrator has put Qohelet's struggle in context, resolved to trust God, and shifts the focus to Israel's responsibility (15, 115-16, 149, 170). The conclusion almost unexpectedly calls the reader back to faith in God "not despite the pain but through it" (116).

The Commentary section is based on the author's division of the text into 16 pericopies. Each subsection includes an overview followed by an exegetical analysis. The commentary makes helpful use of Hebrew, as well as supportive footnotes for those interested in more in-depth study.

Due to the confines of the assignment of the series and the nature of the book of Ecclesiastes, Enns employs a variety of means of addressing the complex issues of the text. Sometimes, he offers his opinion on areas of difficulty, though not always giving multiple sides of the debate. At other times, he is content with living with a measure of ambiguity in the text. Still other times, the author pauses just long enough to identify areas of conflict, but leaves them unresolved.

In the Theological Issues section, Enns addresses nine themes apparent in Ecclesiastes. Here, he explains that the tension of Qohelet's view of God is part of the fabric of the book, giving voice to the struggles of peaks and valleys of faith (124). The author's discussion of "fearing God anyway" (149) may be one of the most valuable take-aways of the work. He describes Ecclesiastes as a "brutally honest book" (135) allowing the reader permission to conclude that harmony is not always better than tension (145). Enns elaborates on that issue by way of application in the

section, "Ecclesiastes and the People of God" (182-91), identifying further points of identification for readers today with the struggle of and lessons learned by Qohelet.

The last section, "Significance for Theology and Praxis Today" further identifies areas of application for readers today. While the section seems to overlap the previous section, as the author allows (192, 195, 201), it further emphasizes and calls for honesty in faith's journey (209).

The commentary, which encourages us to think of Solomon as we read it (133), reminds us of our own need for wisdom in life's journey and faith to trust in God. Enns' work will be a helpful contribution to anyone's library interested in understanding and applying Ecclesiastes.

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***A Liturgy of Grief: A Pastoral Commentary on Lamentations.* By Leslie C. Allen. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011. 195 Pages. Paperback, \$21.99.**

Leslie Allen has set out to accomplish a significant task. Combining his years of chaplaincy experience with his expertise in scholarship, he has attempted to fuse the two worlds extracting truths from one which speak to the other. He uses Israel's tragedy as a backdrop to force the reader to confront the very real issues of pain and suffering and to reconcile them with faith. His book serves as a commentary on a very practical Old Testament book as well as a guide to dealing with suffering today.

Allen explains his goal for the book in the preface as an endeavor to "integrate biblical scholarship and pastoral care" (ix). From the very first pages and consistently throughout the text, he has achieved that goal. He helps the reader identify both the needs that are being expressed and the different perspectives of the voices who are expressing them.

The outline of the book is simple and clear. The introduction outlines the context by explaining the hurt behind the text, identifies the voices in the narrative, delineates some of the critical issues the book will address, and presents a challenge to caregivers today dealing with those who grieve. Next, the five chapters in the commentary correspond with the chapters in the book of Lamentations.

In the first two chapters, the author addresses the grief, guilt, and the need for prayer. In the third chapter, Allen explains how the writer of the third poem is personally identified with the grief, and throughout the chapter articulates the emotions behind their struggle to come to grips with the tragedy that has befallen them. Those emotions come across in the book, according to Allen as a "comprehensive mingling of ... nostalgic yearning, deep sadness, and angry protest" (20). The third poem, both in form and content, functions as a highlight and turning point in the nation's struggle. The genius of the structure of this poem draws the reader's attention to the anguish as well as the frequent personal interjections of the author's thoughts. Juxtaposing the poet's grief is his awareness of the character of God and his faithfulness in the past. Even calling that to mind, the author begins to show signs of hope and healing (3:22-24).

In chapter four, Allen explains how the community confronts the sins which caused God's judgment. Even the expression of the infliction of Yahweh's punishment lends hope to a time when the retribution will be completed and the nation will be restored.

Chapter five, according to Allen, realizes the goal of the previous four poems

(145). The nation turns its attention to the Lord. The crisis is not over, and neither is their frustration, but their focus is in the right direction. Their attention turns from the past to the present and the chapter ends with a hopeful look to the future.

One of the strengths of the book is Allen's use of imagery and illustration. Throughout the commentary, he helps the reader see how the issues with which Israel dealt are still relevant today. Moreover, his writing style is clear and easy to follow. The author builds the commentary on his own translation of Lamentations. The fruit of his language research is seen throughout with fresh word pictures. For example, Allen translates the Hebrew word *ekbah* as "how terrible that" (35). He explains that the word expresses emotional intensity. Moreover, his elucidation of the writer's use of Hebrew alliteration enhances the reader's understanding of Hebrew poetry. Finally, Allen demonstrates how Lamentations fits within the context of the Old Testament and how the book influenced and was influenced by other prophetic writings.

Allen's work will enhance the reader's understanding of the book of Lamentations as well as give them tools to equip them for dealing with grief and the theological questions it produces. The book is more than a commentary; it's a resource for training healers and for helping people heal.

Deron J. Biles

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***The Book of the Twelve: Hosea-Jonah.* By James D. Nogalski. Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary. Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2011. 488 pages. Hardcover, \$60.00.**

The title alone of Nogalski's two-part commentary, *The Book of the Twelve*, shows the focus of his study and the uniqueness of his contribution. Nogalski stands out as a mature and steady voice in the conversation of the Twelve, noted since the publication of his influential dissertation. One can see his fingerprints in the creation and direction of the Book of the Twelve group in the Society of Biblical Literature. What is more, he has written and edited numerous articles, essays, and books specifically on the Twelve. Nogalski fills the commentary with decades worth of scholarly and, at times, groundbreaking insights. Given the length and depth of Nogalski's study of the Twelve, it would be tempting to cram all of his sagacious knowledge into a commentary, leaving it commendable only to a specialist. Such a commentary, however, would counter the purpose of the commentary series, which seeks to provide accessible scholarship for students and ministers.

The commentary commences with a brief introduction to the Twelve, laying the groundwork for comments on the redactional layers, intertextual links, and theological reflection found in the commentary proper. Nogalski then moves through each Biblical book by dividing the text into logical units based on the Hebrew Bible. In this sense, the commentary may seem conventional, allowing for innovation only by fresh translation, exegetical insights, or updated connections to contemporary life. The format of the series, along with Nogalski's scholarship, however, provides a highly innovative, educational, and easy-to-understand resource for students and ministers.

Let us take the ingenious hyperlink format as the point of departure. Two types of hyperlinks in the commentary are called "Sidebars" and "Interpretation." This commentary series puts a given topic (e.g. Intertextual Features of Hosea 13) in relief by using orange ink within the commentary proper, while placing the full

discussion in margin of the page using the same orange ink (177-78). The hyperlink format makes the work easy to follow. It also provides Nogalski the opportunity to discuss often intertextuality in a concise and easy-to-reference way.

Nogalski moves into fairly uncharted waters by programmatically introducing how each book functions within the Twelve, giving the commentary a distinctive mark. A few examples allow one to see this commentary as a weather vane of sorts, showing where Old Testament scholarship is likely heading. He begins the introductory section of Hosea and the Twelve with the claim, "It is no longer adequate to treat Hosea in isolation from the other writings in the Twelve" (30). He then moves to Joel, which, according to him, was compiled in order to be placed in its location within the Twelve (204). While discussing Joel, he puts forth an original argument that "this" in Joel 1:2 serves to connect to Hosea rather than a reflexive comment about Joel (206). He also positions Obadiah in an interpretative framework with Amos because of Obadiah's placement in the Twelve, linking the narratives about Israel and Edom to the Twelve (378). While the study of intertextuality within the Twelve seems to be early in its development, the implications of this study for preaching ministry could be extensive.

With his work, Nogalski serves students and ministers well. Highlighted, succinct discussions on literary features in the Hebrew Bible, such as parallelism (356), irony (419), word play (171), and catchwords (132) help the reader to become sensitive to important aspects of exegesis out of reach by English translations. Additionally, Nogalski appropriately introduces the reader to terms and issues related to Old Testament scholarship, such as imprecatory Psalms (394), synchronic and diachronic (9), tradition history (389), and woe oracle (320).

Several additions would have made the commentary even better: canonical and intertextual connections shared by the Old Testament and the Twelve; the plot(s) of the Twelve; further explanations of literary development (e.g. Joel); and summaries detailing the theological inter-connectedness of each prophetic book. Nogalski's work will stimulate one's thinking about the Minor Prophets. What is more, his comments on application will sober a reader to be sensitive to the theological message of these prophetic books. Nogalski models well for younger scholars how one deals firstly with the finer points of a discipline for a long time, then writes with expert knowledge for students and ministers. Nogalski's commentary gives clarity to ministers who desire to preach these significant yet neglected prophetic books.

Ethan Jones

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***Jesus among Friends and Enemies: A Historical and Literary Introduction to Jesus in the Gospels.* Edited by Chris Keith and Larry W. Hurtado. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011. xxiii + 328 pages. Paperback, \$26.99.**

Chris Keith (Lincoln Christian University) and Larry Hurtado (University of Edinburgh), present a fascinating investigation. This edited volume of essays explores what one can learn about the historical Jesus from both his friends and enemies. It is a novel idea even though Scot McKnight and Joseph Modica already edited a study of Jesus' enemies accusations (xiii).² Of course, the canonical Gospels

²Scot McKnight and Joseph B. Modica, *Who Do My Opponents Say that I am? An Investigation of the Accusations against Jesus* (NY: T & T Clark, 2008).

contain information about Jesus that is both correct by his friends and incorrect by his enemies (2).

In each essay the author traces the information about each friend or enemy (or group of them, such as the Jewish leaders) from outside of Scripture and then from inside of Scripture. The outside sources include Jewish rabbinical writings, secular writers, the Apocrypha, pseudepigrapha, and agrapha (sayings of Jesus not contained in the four Gospels).

The essay writers are all published scholars in the area of Jesus research, such as Richard J. Bauckham, Michael F. Bird, Warren Carter, Anthony Le Donne, the two editors, and six others. Although the majority of these scholars are from the United Kingdom, there is a good variety of educational institutions represented.

The premise of the book is strong: the Gospels' full pictures of Jesus include the historical context as well as their portrayals of Jesus' friends and enemies (269). For instance, one gains much knowledge about Jesus in his arguments with the Jewish religious leaders (189). Each essay follows the same format of examining the noncanonical literature and then examining the Gospels one by one, which provides a helpful consistency in the study.

Periodic callout explanations are beneficial for students and lay people, covering basic explanations of subjects such as the Nag Hammadi Library (128), Caiaphas' Ossuary (229), Criteria Used in the Quest for the Historical Jesus (82), and Enochic Literature (190-91). However, some descriptions were simply too short, such as The "Longer Ending" of Mark (135) and The Jesus Seminar (154)—the latter one woefully lacking any negative criticism of that controversial group of Gospel critics.

A nice surprise was the concluding chapter. Rather than summarizing the previous essays, which editors of this type of book frequently do, Keith and Hurtado summarize and analyze recent trends in the Third Quest for the historical Jesus. The good news is the growing rejection of flawed criteria (that had led to claims that certain Gospel texts are inauthentic) and a positive emphasis on returning to the text itself. The bad news (from this reviewer's perspective) is the skepticism many scholars continue to have of the accuracy of the Gospel texts (287, fn. 61). The editors describe three current trends that indicate a return to the text: (1) modifications to the criterion of dissimilarity (276-81), (2) recognition of the failure of the criterion of inauthenticity (281-84), and (3) an examination of the Gospel texts as early Christian memory of Jesus (284-87).

Even though there is a connecting theme of returning to the text of the Gospels, unfortunately there are occasional disparagements on the historicity of what the texts mention. For instance, Anthony Le Donne claims the Gospels exaggerate how bad Jesus' enemies were (206-07). Michael Bird (67) and Helen K. Bond (223, 234) believe the accounts of John the Baptist's death were greatly embellished. Bond also claims the Gospel writers concocted elements in Jesus' trial narratives (228, 232, 241).

The primary weaknesses of this book are twofold. First, the subject matter is so vast that space does not allow adequate exegesis of the relevant Biblical texts. Second, there is inadequate application. The conclusions for each chapter were woefully brief—like the conclusions in many current undergraduate student term papers. At the end of each chapter, the reader is often left wondering, "So what? What does one do with this data?" For instance, what is the importance of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha being Jesus' friends when the Gospels rarely mention other friends

of his? What does their friendship reveal about Jesus? The chapter on Jesus' family does not contain a conclusion section (125), so these questions remain unexplored. Other unexplored questions include: what effect did having an unbelieving family have on Jesus? What may have led to the apparent unbelief of his siblings prior to his resurrection? Granted, the answers to these questions are speculative, but they remain within the purview of this book.

Although this essay collection could have delved deeper, it is nevertheless a volume that can be helpful to pastors, students, and teachers. The premise of this book could make a good sermon series, and it certainly reveals helpful information about Jesus.

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***Reformation Commentary on Scripture: New Testament, Volume X, Galatians, Ephesians.* Gerald Bray, ed. Timothy George, General Editor. Downers Grove: IVP Academic. 2011. 446 pages. Hardcover, \$55.**

All those who love and admire the ancient Biblical Scripture along with maintaining a keen interest in Reformation scholarship need only to pick up the new volume of the *Reformation Commentary on Scripture (RCS), Volume X, Galatians, Ephesians*, to have their attraction profoundly satisfied. The *RCS* has set itself apart as a scholarly achievement with multitudinous insight and application for both the academy and the Church at large. Steeped in historical-critical-exegetical methodology and utilizing primary sources from the sixteenth century reformers' hands, the *RCS* amasses an impressive collection of unique sources from a wide-variety of Christian traditions within the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation movement. Calling upon the likes of reformation giants such as Erasmus, Luther, Calvin, and Tyndale, the *RCS* will claim its mark as the pinnacle of reformation-period Biblical commentaries due to its brilliant and needful inclusion of other lesser known reformers such as Bullinger, Bucer, Musculus, Brenz, Wigand, Cudworth, and Bugenhagen – all critically translated from Latin, German, French, Dutch and middle-English to be displayed potently after five hundred years of neglect. As such, the *RCS* exists to render dual access to the profound thoughts and Biblical-exegetical insights of key reformers with an aim of historical interpretation, appreciation, and modern-day comparison for contemporary expressions within the church and Christian society. The *RCS*, then, acts as a superb historical analysis of sixteenth-century Biblical, religious, and social scholarship while simultaneously serving the contemporary church with unique religious perspective and spiritual inspiration.

Mirroring its sister series, the *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (ACCS)* also produced by IVP Academic, the *RCS* was produced with similar intention and audience in mind. Designed as a twenty-eight-volume series of Biblical-exegetical commentary covering both Old and New Testaments from the primary source writings of sixteenth century leaders, preachers, and scholars, the *RCS* duplicates the *ACCS* overall concept, method, and format ensuring the same quality and innovation expected by its eager audience. As the debut volume exudes, *Galatians, Ephesians* displays modern scholarship through hefty and helpful introductions, critical evaluation of both the sources and original authors, and extensive footnotes with a view toward aiding the modern reader to ascertain with ease the historical context, probable resources, and spiritual assumptions of the Protestant reformers'

writings. No doubt a pivotal source of inspiration for Luther's propagation of *sola fide* within the protestant reformation cry of "justification by faith alone," the series' general editor, Timothy George, has given great weight to both the Biblical books represented in this initial *RCS* production and their continual source of doctrinal development and ecclesiastical inspiration found uniquely in Galatians and Ephesians. Considered to be a concentrated source of the unadulterated gospel as proclaimed by the Apostle Paul, volume editor, Gerald Bray, perfectly captures the immediacy and urgency with which the reformers wrote concerning their protestant cause encapsulated and exegeted in Galatians and Ephesians as a means of conversion and Biblical cause toward Roman Catholics, heretics, and those spurned within the Lutheran and Reformed traditions through church discipline. More so, as a mark of brilliance exhibited within the design of the *RCS*, the contemporary reader can palpably sense the very weight of the place of Scripture itself amidst its compelling revolutionary message (given in the vernacular during the passionate sixteenth-century debate among competing religious societies), adding immense value and pleasure to the historian's reading of the *RCS Galatians* and *Ephesians* and the Christian's continual spiritual encouragement. As a measure of encouragement to buy and read this particular volume, Bray aptly demonstrates the critical nature which the Biblical books of Galatians and Ephesians played in the larger reformation movement for the reformers and their cause, strategically, doctrinally, and inspirationally captured in this inaugural *RCS* volume.

With a solid design to educate and reinforce modern reformation scholarship, the editors of the *RCS* have generously included extensive notes, commentary, maps, timelines, appendices, and voluminous bibliographical, authorial, scriptural, and subject indices within this first volume. Exhibiting large portions of primary source sixteenth-century literature, the reformer's vast exegetical corpus, newly translated and critically evaluated, is certain to intrigue and please the modern sixteenth-century historian among many others. Most helpful, the series general editor also details forty pages concerning the breadth and critical nature of the historical context of both the times and authors themselves of the reformation movement, useful historical context immediately employed for the scope of both books and no doubt all others in this series. Owing great awareness and exegetical scope to the purpose of this series, Bray brilliantly executes the unraveling of sixteenth-century theological and social insight comprised through Biblical exegesis from the sheer variety of reformed continental authors chosen—each upholding their nuanced platform of either Lutheran or Reformed positions. Attempting to cover even a restrained topic such as the Biblical-exegetical insights of sixteenth-century protestant reformers seems rather a straightforward and innocuous task, this project notwithstanding. However, in form of a critique, the early Anabaptist position is noticeably absent from Bray's protestant treatment and selection of possible reformed writers. Any number of selections from Hubmaier, Philips, and Simons among many possible others would lend further credibility and continuity to the current volume as these mentioned Anabaptist reformers represented evangelical protestant and reformational convictions (over-against dissenting Anabaptist spiritualists and humanists), being a recognized, though minor reformed voice and from whose leaders there exists a plethora of germane texts.

In sum, editor Timothy George notes in addition to the goal of producing helpful scholarly reformation research and highlighting obscure reformation primary sources as evidenced in this first volume, the *RCS* series also intends to enrich

contemporary Biblical interpretation through (1) the exposure to Reformation-era Biblical exegesis, insight, and preaching; and (2) the recovery of the robust spiritual theology and devotional treasures of the Reformation's engagement with the Bible. Speaking as a scholar and a dedicated Christian, I wholeheartedly feel that George succeeds on this front. Thus, a concerted strength of the *RCS* will be its utility among critical scholars and churchmen alike. Broadening its readership base and ensuring the creative posterity and potential success of the series and others like it, the *RCS* has produced an excellent product for the generally curious, spiritually interested, or the dedicated sixteenth-century scholar – all who stand to gain immensely as they read and enjoy each forthcoming volume.

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***Trinity, Revelation, And Reading: A Theological Introduction to the Bible and its Interpretation.* By Scott R. Swain. T&T Clark Theology. London: T&T Clark, 2011. 168 pages. Hardcover, \$90.**

Is reading your Bible part of God's redemptive plan? Scott R. Swain teaches systematic theology at Reformed Theological Seminary in Florida. In this volume, Swain seeks to lay the groundwork for answering this question in the affirmative. Swain seeks to provide "a theological introduction to the Bible and its interpretation" (1). He asks, "What roles do Holy Scripture and the reading of Holy Scripture play within the unfolding drama of the commerce and communion between God and humanity?" (1). Swain begins with the assumption that the nature and function of Scripture must be understood in relation to a host of theological realities (e.g., Trinity, revelation, providence, anthropology). His goal, though, is not to treat these areas comprehensively but rather to demonstrate their coherence. He aims to articulate a "coherent vision of how these themes fit together within the larger evangelical reality of God's relation to his people" (2). "The entirety of this book," Swain writes, "is devoted to tracing the place of Holy Scripture and its interpretation within the economy of trinitarian, covenantal self-communication and communion" (8).

Accordingly, the first part of the book focuses on the nature of Scripture within the context of God's "unfolding purpose for creation" (13). The God portrayed in the Bible is one who speaks; one who reveals himself to his creation. The Biblical narrative conveys a drama of "kingdom and covenant" that rehearses God's creation of humans and his purpose for them, mankind's rebellion in sin, and God's subsequent plan of redemption through a promised redeemer. In this drama of redemption, God extends a word of covenant to his people. Swain thus outlines God's covenant with Abraham, David, and the promise of a new covenant that is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. "By his covenantal Word," Swain reflects, "God creates, redeems, and consummates the world" (33).

Two major features of this divine communication are "double agency discourse" and "covenant discourse." As Swain puts it, the former aspect highlights that God himself communicates and the latter emphasizes that God communicates himself (35-36). To explain double agency discourse, Swain notes that "the history of God speaking is the history of God speaking through authorized agents or representatives, preeminently his prophets and apostles" (35). When the prophets and apostles speak, God himself speaks. The content of that speech involves a word of covenantal communication. In other words, "by means of his prophetic and apostolic

word, God binds himself to his people and his people to himself” (40). Through God’s written words, he “transmits and communicates his covenantal-Christological discourse to his people” (53). Scripture, in other words, is “the divinely authorized literary means whereby the living God continually speaks to his people” (56).

Regarding the nature of Scripture itself, Swain argues that because the written Word is communicated by means of the Holy Spirit (inspiration), it bears the qualities of divine perfection. It has authority because it communicates a word from a sovereign God. It is true and trustworthy because God is true and trustworthy. It is sufficient because “God has revealed all things necessary to know him in a saving way and to serve him in a pleasing way” (83). It is clear because “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (87, 1 Jn 1:5). Swain also reflects on the impact these attributes have on the interpretation of Scripture.

After this discussion of the nature of Scripture, Swain next outlines the nature of Scripture reading. Because the “commerce and communion between God and his people is an inherently textual phenomenon,” the actual reading of Scripture is an integral feature of the life of the church. For Swain, the act of reading is an “act of covenant mutuality,” as God’s ordained means of communing with his creatures. The reason Christians are a “people of the book” is because “Scripture is the supreme locus of God’s self-communication in the world” (95). In this light, the authority of the church and its interpretive traditions (e.g., the rule of faith) are “aids” in the pursuit of “renewed reading” (100ff). Swain urges that within the context of this interpretive community there must be both public and private reading. Swain ends his volume by arguing that the “characteristic shape of biblical interpretation” that should mark this community includes the practices of prayer, explication, meditation, and application (125-36).

Recent work in the field of bibliology has focused on the “role” or “dogmatic location” of Scripture within God’s plan of redemption. Swain’s volume represents a succinct synopsis of and contribution to this area of emphasis. Swain’s overall argument is to the point, and progresses in a clearly discernable fashion. On the whole, he provides a compelling articulation of Scripture’s integral function in God’s saving purpose in the world. This work will aid those with a high view of Scripture to account more fully for Scripture’s function in both personal and corporate contexts.

In his introduction, Swain outlines a number of elements that have shaped his thinking on Biblical interpretation (10-12). He writes within the Reformed tradition, is sympathetic to the concerns of the Theological Interpretation movement, and is willing to utilize “critical interpretive methods” when needed in the interpretive task. Indeed, Swain seeks to appropriate key insights from past and present thinkers in the Reformed tradition (e.g., Herman Bavinck, B. B. Warfield, Kevin Vanhoozer, John Webster). Swain’s discussion of the “covenantal context” for reading Scripture is also tied to the Covenant Theology of the Reformed Tradition (e.g., 7-8). However, most of his exposition of the covenantal language in Scripture and the covenantal nature of Scripture is drawn from an exposition of the Biblical covenants themselves (e.g., Abrahamic, Davidic, New) rather than the theological constructs of Covenant Theology. Thus, those from other theological traditions will still be able to benefit directly from Swain’s substantive insights about God’s covenantal purposes. Further, on the whole, this volume presents an accessible entry point into the Reformed tradition’s robust doctrine of Scripture.

One of the most helpful aspects of Swain’s volume is his emphasis on the act of reading itself. Having shown how reading is an act of “covenant mutuality” for the

believer, Swain observes that “the best way to become a good reader of the Bible is to become a reader of the Bible” (120). Taking note of the importance of God’s Word, Swain urges believers to mediate on the words within that Word. In the way he structures his work, Swain also draws attention to the theological significance of the careful and consistent reading of Scripture. By reading these divinely given words, believers commune with God himself. As Swain concludes, “Reading, is therefore a living conversation between an eloquent Lord and his attentive servants, a conversation in which the reader is summoned to hear what the Spirit of Christ says to the churches” (139). In the end, Swain provides a theological context for and a fresh impetus to the readerly mandate *tolle lege* (“take up, and read!”).

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Theological Studies

***God of the Living: A Biblical Theology.* By Reinhard Feldmeier and Hermann Spieckermann. Translated by Mark E. Biddle. Waco, TX: Baylor University, 2011. 612 + ix pages. Hardcover. \$59.95.**

God of the Living is a remarkable book. First, the book is a product of close collaboration between an established OT scholar, Spieckermann, and NT scholar, Feldmeier, both at Göttingen. Although the book deals often with the OT and NT distinctly, the work is seamlessly integrated from its overall structure to each individual chapter. This type of collaboration took the better part of a decade, but the work would not be possible without it.

Second, the book was written and published in German at virtually the same time as it was translated and published in English. Again, this amount of collaboration between German authors and English translator is remarkable.

Third, the book synthesizes the complex picture of God presented throughout the entire Christian Bible. The authors have synthesized this picture around Jesus’ proclamation about God: He is the God of the living (Mark 12:27). The authors draw two main points from Jesus’ statement. First, God is the one who makes alive, both in creation and again in resurrection and salvation. Second, God is the one who desires relationship with people. As the authors put it, “This fundamental, without which God would not be God, is his specific desire for relationship with human beings and the world” (12).

In order to arrive at a synthesis of the picture of God in the Bible, the authors have produced a Biblical theology. In other words, their task is theological and corresponds to the intent of the Bible “to transmit knowledge of God reliably” (2). In fact, they go so far as to say, “Scholarly exegesis must adhere to this intention of the biblical documents [to transmit knowledge of God reliably] if it wants to take seriously the true objective of the texts beyond the circumstances in which the texts originated” (2). At the same time, their work “is defined by the convictions that appropriate understanding of the voices of the biblical witnesses without scholarship in the history of literature and religion is deficient” (8). Based on these convictions, the authors discuss the Biblical documents according to the results of historical-critical methods in explaining the origin and development of the Biblical documents themselves and show great awareness of the religious developments in Ancient Near Eastern and Hellenistic-Roman cultures that form the backdrop to Old and New Testaments.

The book consists of two principal parts. The first part addresses God's being, who he is. The second part addresses God's activity, what he does. In the first part, each chapter addresses one aspect of God's being (e.g. as loving one, Almighty, spirit) by tracing the development of the picture of God usually from the earliest OT witnesses to the latest NT ones. In the second part each chapter addresses twin aspects of God's activity (e.g. Eternity and Time, Covenant and Promise, Salvation and Judgment), again by working from earliest to latest witnesses. By structuring their work in this way, they have intentionally chosen to describe the Biblical doctrine of God "in historical-genetic and systematic fashion" (12).

Let me summarize a couple of discussions in order to provide a sense for what the authors are arguing and how they are doing so. The first sample discussion addresses God's being as the Almighty, or in other words, his omnipotence. Their starting point is the common theological objection to God's omnipotence as the absolute power of a tyrant. In contrast they show how the Biblical witness consistently points to God's power in the context of salvation. They point out that the Gospels repeatedly use the expression "nothing is impossible" and that the "formulaic expression appears exclusively in the context of a promise or a request" (190). This observation, along with others throughout the Bible, lead them to conclude that in the Bible "almightiness is not unbounded omnipotence, but a power expressed in God's will for the salvation of his people" (197).

The second sample discussion is devoted to Hiddenness and Wrath. As they say, these themes "are deliberately not treated along with their respective positive counterparts, love and revelation" (339). Part of their rationale stems from New Testament language about God: "The New Testament says that God is a God of love (2 Cor 13:11), indeed, that he *is* love (1 John 4:8, 16), while the contrary statement, that he is a God of wrath, indeed, that he *is* wrath, is inconceivable" (339). Therefore, wrath and love are not two sides of a coin, but "God's wrath is his reaction to injustice and defiance" (339), that is, part of his activity, not of his being.

The above examples give a sense to the emphasis that the authors place on God's desire for salvation. I fear that the emphasis on God's intent to save may distort parts of the Bible, e.g. the final images recorded in Revelation, so that God's reckoning of the world, his judgment and wrath, eventually give way to universal redemption.

God of the Living is an ambitious work. For those who study the Bible academically, it stands as a model of collaboration needed for serious study of the Bible. For those interested in the discipline of Biblical theology, it is an example of Biblical theology carried out through historical-critical tools. For those just interested in the Bible's picture of God, it offers many insightful individual observations and helpful lines for synthesizing the complex portrait of God in the Bible.

Joshua E. Williams

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***Union with Christ: Reframing Theology and Ministry for the Church.* By Todd J. Billings. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011. 192 pages. Paperback, \$19.99.**

Billings' purpose in this book is "to highlight key present-day implications of a Reformation doctrine of union with Christ" (3). In contrast to his former historical-theological work and other contemporary books written on union from a polemic, philosophical, or doctrinal perspective, Billings' book contributes not only

to academia, but also to the church through his resolution of problems posed by contemporary Western Christianity through the application of union with Christ to these dilemmas.

The main feature of Billings' method is his characterization of his approach as "a theology of retrieval" (2). The term "theology of retrieval," is a relatively new designation coined by John Webster to refer to "a mode of theology, an attitude of mind ... a cluster of theologies which reach a broadly similar set of judgments about the nature of systematic theology" and includes such more familiar theological designations as "post-liberal, post-critical, restorationist," palaeo-orthodox, intratextual [and] even postmodern" (Webster, *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, 584). Billings' "theology of retrieval" approach seems to be the mental attitude of engaging with pre-modern sixteenth-century Reformation texts as cross-cultural conversation partners. Through the cultural clash with contemporary Western Christianity, the conversation is aimed at enabling current theologians to see Scripture with "new eyes" or "shake up our modern categories" (3-8, 168).

A secondary feature of his method is to offer an exposition of union with Christ followed by an application of it to resolve one of two general types of contemporary Western Christian problems: "moralistic therapeutic deism" and the various false polarities created by the fundamentalist-modernist controversy (8-10).

Rather than being a carefully constructed argument that expands on a thesis, Billings' work is "a series of thematic essays" (2) which represent various "reflections" (114) on the theme of union with Christ. In one essay, by relating union to adoption and Calvin's double grace of justification and sanctification, Billings stresses that union involves the impartation of a new identity and the empowerment to "live into" it (15-21). Billings uses Christian Smith's two sociological studies (*Soul Searching* and *Souls in Transition*) to define the current American cultural theology as "moralistic therapeutic deism" (MTD) (21-22). In MTD, religion is moralistic because God only helps people to be good rather than saving them, and religion is therapeutic and deistic in that God is distant except to resolve the crises of individuals (22). Union resolves the problem of MTD by replacing moralism with salvation in justification, therapy with "living into" a new identity in sanctification, and God's distance in deism with intimacy in adoption (26-34).

In perhaps his most significant essay, Billings demonstrates from Scripture and the Reformed tradition that the bondage of the will or total depravity "mirrors" or is the necessary counterpart of union with Christ (36-40). A contemporary problem is that both Calvinists and their detractors misunderstand the TULIP acronym, with its emphasis on total depravity, as indicating that predestination is the "central dogma" (57-58) or "theological core" (170) of Reformed theology. Union with Christ clears up this misunderstanding when those in the Reformed camp and its detractors recognize that it was not the original Reformers or later Reformed scholastics who lost the parallel between the bondage of the will/total depravity and union with Christ, but rather contemporary Calvinists (57-58, 170-71).

In his closing essay, Billings argues that while the incarnational ministry model has developed a number of significant insights, it is based on the faulty theological premise of imitating the "unique and unrepeatable ... saving event" of the incarnation. As a result, its valuable insights are best preserved by basing them on the alternate foundation of ministry in union with Christ (14, 124).

Throughout the book, Billings demonstrates his expertise in the topic of union with Christ and historical theology. In his essays, Billings seems to cover

nearly the full multidimensionality of the concept of union with Christ by dealing with its soteriological (65), pneumatological (152-56), ecclesiological (15-27), mystical (67, 83), ethical (48), and eschatological (153-55) dimensions in the context of detailed arguments through the writings of various historical figures. However, this book seems better suited for those with at least some basic working knowledge of the discussion about union with Christ rather than beginners. One reason for this assessment is that Billings does not give an in-depth explanation of what union with Christ is, presumably because he assumes that his readers already know.

Billings's various analyses of contemporary Western Christianity seem to be on the mark. For example, Billings's summary of Smith's studies as "MTD" appears to be an accurate description of the current state of popular theology in America. While Billings does an excellent job of describing contemporary theological and cultural problems as well as expositing the various historical concepts related to union with Christ, the main value of his work does not seem to be his use of union to resolve contemporary issues. Rather, his work seems more important for its demonstration of how certain well-known theological and ministry ideas in Scripture are related to union with Christ.

One exception may be his second essay. While arguing on different grounds, Billings' claim that both Calvinists and their detractors misunderstand the TULIP acronym as indicating that predestination is the "central dogma" (57-58) or "theological core" (170) of Reformed theology mutually reinforces Kennedy's (*Union with Christ and the Extent of the Atonement in Calvin*) claim that union rather than predestination is central. Billings argues that TULIP is a bad summary of Dort and Reformed doctrine because: (1) Dort did not summarize the Reformed faith, but rather responded to the Arminian Remonstrance and "supplemented" the Dutch Reformed confession of faith found in the Belgic Confession, (2) Dort dealt with election, sin, and the assurance of salvation, but never mentioned the "limited" atonement, and (3) Dort emphasized sin more than communion with God, while the Belgic Confession placed more emphasis on the latter (58-59). Kennedy argues that the structure of Calvin's *Institutes* indicates that union rather than predestination is central since union is included in the main discussion of the application of the benefits of salvation in Book III of the *Institutes*, and predestination only occurs in the subsequent secondary location as an answer to the ancillary question of "why not all are saved" (151). An important question would be whether Billings and Kennedy represent a growing new consensus regarding the center of Calvin's thought.

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***For Calvinism.* By Michael Horton. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011. 208 pages. Paperback, \$16.99.**

In *For Calvinism*, Michael Horton (Professor of Systematic Theology and Apologetics at Westminster Seminary California) explores Biblical and historical roots beneath the doctrines of grace—commonly referred to as Calvinism. Published by Zondervan alongside Roger Olsen's *Against Calvinism*, these two books speak to one of the theological trends that is (according to *Time* magazine) "changing the world."

Throughout the book, Horton encounters caricatures and stereotypes head-on—providing historical evidence through sermons, creeds, and catechisms—ex-

plaining that those who hold those certain positions stand on the fringes of Reformed theology, or are misunderstood assumptions by those outside of Calvinism about Calvinists.

An example of such misunderstandings is the Calvinistic understanding of depravity. Whereas critics of Reformed theology often argue that Calvinists begin theologically with Gen 3 (The Fall), rather than Gen 1 (The Creation), Horton contends that Reformed theology begins with the Creator God and His prize creation, man. Man was created with freedom of will, and chose sin, evil, and death, thereby shackling all of creation in sin. The result is that all of humanity now chooses sin freely, and—controlled by sin—cannot choose otherwise.

Another such example of confusion exists around the Calvinistic understanding of election. Horton writes, “It is impossible to read the Bible without recognizing God’s freedom to choose some and not others” (54). This does not, however, mean that God plays an active role in reprobation—that is, “God’s decision *not* to save some” (57). Horton states explicitly that, “God is not active in hardening hearts in the same way that he is active in softening hearts” (57).

Horton defends the doctrine of limited atonement, but only after sharing his preference for the terms “definite atonement,” or “particular redemption.” This is certainly the most hotly debated of the five points of Calvinism, and one that many Calvinists – both historic and modern – flatly deny. For Horton, however, the argument against the Calvinistic understanding of the atonement has lost its center. Whereas those in disagreement argue that Scripture plainly states that Christ died for all, Horton maintains that the question is not for whom did Christ die, but rather, does his atonement save, or merely make man saveable? Calvinists, according to Horton, believe that the atonement is limited in its extent, while unlimited in its efficacy, while Arminians maintain that it is unlimited in extent, while remaining limited in its efficacy. Rather than leading Calvinists to proclaim the gospel to only those elected for salvation, Horton maintains that, “we declare not only generally to all but particularly to each person that Christ’s death is sufficient to save him or her” (97).

Perhaps the most common objection to Calvinism is that a Calvinistic understanding of election and predestination leads to lax evangelistic and missionary zeal. Horton quotes the late Southern Baptist church historian William R. Estep as stating, “Calvinism is anti-missionary,” and that the doctrine of election forces evangelistic and missionary efforts to be “exercises in futility.” Responding to this accusation, Horton writes,

The premises in Estep’s article do indeed follow logically to his conclusion. If election eliminates personal responsibility for responding to the gospel and the gospel itself is not to be proclaimed indiscriminately to every person, of course the missionary enterprise would be a fool’s errand. However, none of the premises is actually held by Calvinists. But they are widely assumed by non-Calvinists. It is a caricature of Calvinism that leads to the conclusion that, on logical grounds, it is inimical to missions (151-52).

Horton then describes the rich history of Calvinist missions, from Calvin himself to Carey and Eliot, from Brainerd to Livingstone. This historical survey of the manner in which Calvinism has provided the impetus for innumerable missionary endeavors renders accusations to the contrary completely lacking in historical

fact. Horton further provides a compelling Biblical argument for the logic of Calvinism in missions.

Sadly, *For Calvinism* will primarily be read by the already-convinced, or the will-not-be-convinced. This is not due to the author's tone, as much as the topic. Few stumble upon books like *For Calvinism* without a predetermined (freely-chosen, of course) position in mind. However, even those predisposed against Calvinism will find in Dr. Horton a gracious host, welcoming them to explore the vast richness of the Calvinist theology.

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***Against Calvinism: Rescuing God's Reputation from Radical Reformed Theology.* By Roger E. Olson. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011. 208 pages. Paperback, \$11.95.**

Roger Olson's book is as jarring as its title. Right from the start, he doggedly pursues his intention to challenge the juggernaut of American neo-Calvinism (what he calls "Radical Reformed Theology"), saying a firm "No" to this development within evangelicalism that he believes is bad for theology, bad for the church, and bad for evangelism. The first three chapters set the parameters for his critical analysis of this particular iteration of Calvinism. Olson utilizes Collin Hansen's description of the theology of the *Young, Restless, and Reformed* (those informed primarily by John Piper and R.C. Sproul who are functioning as a self-conscious theological movement) to define the problem. He characterizes this brand of Calvinism as that which insists on the middle three letters of TULIP along with "divine determinism" (which entails a compatibilist understanding of free-will) and the reprobation of the non-elect. Olson spends the rest of the book dismantling those key components of Radical Reformed Theology one-by-one, briefly concluding each chapter by offering the requisite component of classical Arminianism as a better alternative.

Olson's articulation of Radical Reformed Theology is extremely helpful. The debate surrounding neo-Calvinism often bogs down because of a lack of clarity over which form of Calvinism is under discussion. Calvinists often subtract whatever aspects of the system they find objectionable, so Olson settles the matter in his chapter entitled "Whose Calvinism? Which Reformed Theology?" Since Piper and Sproul have been the standard-bearers for neo-Calvinists, Olson determines that they should be the standard-setters as well. Those who advocate neo-Calvinism need to be prepared to defend Piper and Sproul's version or be able to articulate where they disagree and how their version remains both intelligible and still legitimately Calvinistic.

The main strength of the work is its devastating critique of Radical Reformed Theology. Olson's engagement with Calvin, Loraine Boettner, Sproul, Piper, Paul Helm and others is substantive, fair, and striking. From every angle, whether it be unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, or the decree of reprobation, Olson demonstrates that neo-Calvinism leads inevitably to a God who purposefully causes sin and evil (things like the Fall, the Holocaust, and childhood cancer). This God does not desire the salvation of all people. Moreover, he necessarily prohibits the redemption of the non-elect for the sole purpose of having an object upon whom he may display His wrath, which makes God's glory contingent upon creation. Olson is careful throughout to remind the reader that the overwhelming majority of Calvinists reject such an understanding of God. He convincingly dem-

onstrates, however, that this conclusion is the only logical outcome, and, of course, patently unbiblical.

The main weakness of the book is clear as well: Arminianism is not a viable alternative to Calvinism. Olson exposes the utterly speculative nature neo-Calvinism only to offer Arminianism's equally speculative concept of "prevenient grace." He dismantles four of the five points of Calvinism, but has no word for "perseverance of the saints." This is because Arminianism's position (or non-position) on the issue is dead wrong. Neo-Calvinism will continue to dominate the marketplace of (theological) ideas until a clearly superior paradigm for Biblical soteriology emerges.

Also, Olson speaks of "rescuing God's reputation," and he argues throughout that the God of Calvinism fails to be a God of love. Often, however, the problem with God's reputation is not God's problem but the culture's problem. The Bible portrays God in many ways that don't seem very loving from the culture's perspective, but evangelicals insist on that portrayal because it is Biblical. Calvinism's view of God is flawed because it fails to take seriously the Bible's own clear teachings about the importance, nature, and implications of God's love.

Roger Olson's courage in confronting what is, at least for now, an enormously popular theological program is admirable and much needed. As he points out in the book, neo-Calvinism's rise is due in large part to the dearth of serious theological engagement and education in evangelical churches over the last generation. Piper and others have filled that void passionately, purposefully, and with stunningly successful effect. But the dangers of that system are real and present and must be met with the same passion and purpose. Olson points the way.

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***Excellence: The Character of God and the Pursuit of Scholarly Virtue.* By Andreas J. Köstenberger. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011. 270 pages. Paperback, \$17.99.**

We live in a day in which superlatives are sometimes wasted on the ordinary. Sports figures are lauded as heroes and the common is elevated to the level of the exceptional. The danger of such exaggeration is the possibility of overlooking the truly extraordinary among the sheer volume of the common. Andreas Köstenberger has issued a passionate challenge to strive for more.

The book appertains to any audience, but targets scholarship, particularly young and aspiring scholars (44). Though the book is a charge to scholars, the author consistently reminds the reader that excellence extends beyond the realm of academia. Excellence, according to Köstenberger, must pursued in vocationally, morally, and relationally (232). As such, excelling in an academic setting, but failing in other areas (like the home) falls short of excellence (28, 232).

The author's goal is not just excellent scholars, but scholars of excellence. The book, in large part, seems to be the author's response to the claim by Michael Fox that faith and scholarship are incompatible (62). Köstenberger ardently denies and adeptly defeats this claim. He asserts that "believing scholarship is not only possible but in fact is more virtuous than critical, unbelieving, or supposedly objective academic work" (24). Indeed, he maintains that God is the source of all excellence (33).

The outline of the book grows out of 2 Peter 1:5-7. Peter begins this pericope by admonishing his readers to add to their faith virtue. Köstenberger proposes that the term often translated "virtue" is best translated "excellence" (45). From that, the

author begins by building a foundation for excellence. He describes the excellence of God and demonstrates the pursuit of excellence as a calling that believers share based on a consistent translation of the same word above used in 2 Peter 1:3. To complete the foundation, Köstenberger adds the virtues of holiness and spirituality.

For Köstenberger, excellence relates to the concept of holiness. As holiness expresses that which is set apart, excellence carries a similar denotation. Then, completing the foundation for excellence, Köstenberger addresses the issue of spirituality. He asserts that the primary disciplines of the Christian life are prayer and the study of God's Word (76, 84). Spirituality, moreover, compels the believer to active engagement with the world under the direction and leadership of the Holy Spirit and his work in our lives (75).

Building on that foundation of excellence, the balance of the book addresses those ingredients that the author argues comprise vocational, moral, and relational excellence. A consistent strength of the book is not only the author's consistent personal witness of his own faith, but his defense of Scripture and the application of Biblical truth to the academic world.

With each ingredient, Köstenberger addresses how they are revealed in the Old Testament and the New Testament, and how they related to excellence in scholarship. The book is filled with practical advice, relevant concerns, passionate challenges, and personal integrity. Its relevance to the academic world is apparent, though even the author undersells its relevance to other areas as well (148). This book is a challenge that aspiring Christian scholars should take to heart and seasoned scholars should apprehend and regularly monitor.

The translation of *aretē* as "excellent" seems well-founded and clearly articulated. Though, allowing that point, and conceding the remainder of the ingredients as "necessary for academic excellence" (27) as the author suggests, one wonders why Peter would be encouraging his readers to add anything to excellence (2 Peter 1:5), if in fact excellence would already encompass the remaining ingredients that Peter espouses.

Köstenberger should be commended for his clear refutation and debunking of Fox's unfounded conclusion. Indeed, the irony that Fox once served as the president of the Society of Biblical Literature is not missed.

In the end, the book is a summons. Like a watchman, Köstenberger has issued a call to all Christian academicians present and future. One can be a committed believer and a competent scholar. It's not an unreachable goal; instead, it is one that must be met. Moreover, this book serves as exhibit A. We must not settle for mediocrity when excellence is within our reach. The character of God demands it, our calling requires it, and our world needs it.

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Historical Studies

***Theologian Trading Cards.* By Norman Jeune III. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012. 315 cards. \$26.99.**

When taught well, the study of church history opens the door to two thousand years of doctrinal insight, political posturing, and intriguing personalities that shape the thought and theology of the modern church. In one sense, the study of church history is the study of such personalities and the manner in which they interacted in agreement and disagreement. The difficulty for students then, is the sheer volume of these historic figures, their contributions to theological thought, and discerning their rightful place in history.

In his *Theologian Trading Cards*, Norman Jeune III (M.A., Talbot School of Theology, Biola University) offers a unique study tool patterned after the American baseball card to assist Bible college and seminary students as they explore the leading voices from the early church councils to modern day. The 287 historical figures are divided among fifteen theological and historical “teams” such as the “Orthodoxy Dodgers” (heretics), the “Geneva Sovereigns” (Reformed), and the “Münster Radicals” (Anabaptists). Each card contains a picture or portrait on one side opposite brief biographical material and the historical significance of the figure. One immediately sees the value of such flashcards.

Upon further examination, one begins to notice peculiar inclusions that might not be expected. Contemporary theologians are well represented, including N.T. Wright and Kevin Vanhoozer, despite the fact that it is too soon to predict the impact of their theological contributions upon history. Their place in the collection at the expense of notably absent names such as Puritans Richard Baxter (who literally wrote the book on Reformed pastors) and William Gouge (whose work influenced centuries of believers’ understanding of the Christian home) may raise suspicion.

Anabaptists are particularly well represented, perhaps reversing the centuries old trend toward minimizing their contributions to Christian thought, while the first English Baptists, Thomas Helwys and John Smyth, are completely absent. John Bunyan, the author of one of the most influential books in all of Christian history, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, is not mentioned. One observes further that Baptists in general are marginalized and names such as Roger Williams (who championed religious freedom in the early United States), John Broadus, James P. Boyce, and B.H. Carroll (founders of Southern Baptist seminaries) are simply missing from the deck, as is the Prince of Preachers, Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

Further complicating matters is the reality that all history is interpretive, and that Jeune was, by the very nature of the project, required to make debatable decisions regarding the categorization of particular figures. Such decisions would lead him to categorize Jonathan Edwards as an “Evangelical / Fundamentalist” rather than Puritan, and to group the Anabaptists separately as a whole, despite the fact that many were condemned as heretics by the Roman Catholic Church, the Magisterial Reformers, or both. Jeune’s interpretation seems to have led him to conclude that theirs was not legitimate heresy, and was deserving of a separate category altogether. One may agree with his conclusion regarding the Anabaptists, but must still acknowledge that in this case, his is a re-interpretation of historical events, rather than that which was understood at that time.

This same critique extends to the author’s identification of some who are clas-

sified as martyrs despite the fact that they were executed by the church as heretics. Though one might quickly come to the defense of Balthasar Hübmaier's accusation as a heretic, one cannot deny that was the charge for which he was executed. While Jeune lists Hübmaier as an Anabaptist rather than a Heretic, he does not account his death as martyrdom.

Despite these critiques, the *Theologian Trading Cards* will serve students well as they begin to navigate church history. Jeune strives to help students understand historical figures in their proper theological context, which demands he make certain interpretive decisions. While some may disagree with specific decisions, none can deny the strength of this resource for students of church history.

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***Athanasius.* By Peter J. Leithart. *Foundations of Theological Exegesis and Christian Spirituality.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011. 204 pages. Paperback, \$ 22.09.**

Leithart acknowledges the limited role of Arius in the development of Arianism and the theological diversity among Arians. But the Reformed writer believes that one could still speak of various Arians as a homogenous theological group in that all were anti-Nicene. Refuting the modern revisionists of Arianism, Leithart favors Jenson's reconstruction of the traditional judgment on Arianism, which is truly "a form of Hellenistic theology or metaphysics" (19). In opposition to the Arians' rejection of the term *homoousios*, Athanasius, based on his Christocentric typology, defines biblicism not as strict adherence to Biblical words but as theological faithfulness to "the overall pattern of biblical usage" (36) or "the sense of Scripture" (38). Therefore, Leithart endorses Athanasius' blame for the Arians' theological kinship with the Jewish monotheism as accurate. The Arians' error is not only their heretical Christology but also their heretical patrology, because the denial of the eternal Sonship of Christ logically leads to the denial of the eternal Fatherhood of God. The god of the Arians is not the eternal god but "a God-in-progress" (51). Arianism presents its followers a false hope of deification that is only possible through the God-man Jesus Christ alone who could grant humanity, immortality, and incorruptibility.

In contrast to Augustine, who allegedly distinguished the Father's being as God from the Father's being the Father by presenting nature as "something additional to relation," Leithart claims that Athanasius' argument supports the Father is God due to his relation to the Son, not in himself, which is more recommendable (76-77). However, for this reviewer, Leithart still seems to be under the influence of Du Roy's old thesis that Augustine begins his Trinitarianism with the abstract divine essence apart from relations. Indeed, for Augustine, deity is not the result of the relational unity of Persons. In order for the Nicene phrases such as Light from Light or God from God to be true, according to Augustine, the Father and the Son ought to be fully divine respectively, not collectively. Even Leithart admits that the Father in Athanasian Trinitarianism is dependent upon the Son, not for his begetting the Son, but for "his status as Father" (87). If this is the case, however, Athanasius seems to this reviewer to make the later Augustinian distinction between the Father's divine essence and the Father's personal property. Interestingly, Leithart points out a theological agreement between Athanasius and Augustine concerning the Holy

Spirit. There is a hermeneutical parallel between the relationship of the Father to the Son and that of the Son to the Spirit. As the Son is the image of the Father, the Spirit is the image of the Son. Sending means functional hierarchy. Athanasius speaks of the Father's dependence upon the Son and, therefore, of a mutual and "reciprocal Thou" relationship among the three Persons (86). For Athanasius, the divine Persons are "equal" but "not identical individuals," and, moreover, they do not constitute a social "egalitarian democracy" in the Trinity (88).

With regard to nature and grace, Athanasius saw nature as something that already received grace by virtue of its being created and participated in the Holy Spirit from its very beginning. However, according to Leithart, Athanasius would not accept the Reformed systematician Horton's argument that the pre-fall Adam did not need any further grace other than his creation when he had to prove his obedience. The ancient bishop never believed that the beatific vision could be achieved by Adam's own virtue or his received initial grace. On the other hand, the grace of the incarnation, grace that perfects humanity, is not that of external to or from the top above human nature but "*later grace*" (115). Rather, the incarnation is the fulfillment of humanity, which was open to "receive the increasing inflow [of] God's self-communication" (114). Therefore, Athanasius also refuses a Catholic anthropology, whether from de Lubac or Rahner, which preserves any dualism between the natural and the supernatural, and still presents grace as something extrinsic to nature. This reviewer agrees with Leithart that even the pre-fall Adam needed grace for his obedience but wonders how Leithart's Athanasian view of grace and nature could explain the imputed righteousness of Christ in justification, righteousness that will be alien to humanity in eternity. In contrast to a common critique of Athanasius that his Christology was a sort of Apollinarianism, because of his ignorance of the human soul of Jesus, Leithart defends the Alexandrian champion of the Nicene faith by asserting that Athanasius indeed taught the human soul of Christ, although he did not articulate the relationship between Christ's logos and human soul in a way a modern reader might expect.

Contemporary readers of Athanasius would find his lesson on the Christological typology of Psalms as one of the methods for spiritual discipline very attractive and helpful. Augustine and Luther also found the Savior Jesus Christ who provided the righteousness of God apart from the law and challenged them to imitate him by participating in the power of the Holy Spirit.

This work deserves attention by all theological students of Athanasius. Leithart's work is not simply about the fourth-century Arian controversy or a theological apology for Athanasius. Leithart's critical evaluations of contemporary Trinitarian theologies such as Rahner's axiom, the Hegalian concept of the suffering of God, and social Trinitarianism in light of Athanasius' Trinitarianism are also insightful.

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***The Trinitarian Theology of St Thomas Aquinas.* By Gilles Emery, OP. Translated by Francesca Aran Murphy. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. 440 pages. Paperback, \$ 45.**

Gilles Emery's present work is his historical, theological, and exegetical apology for Thomas' speculative or philosophical theology. His primary task here is

to show what Aquinas' Trinitarian theology really teaches in the *Summa Theologiae* by interpreting not only the medieval writer's theological but also philosophical arguments with regard to the triune God. In response to critiques of Thomas' Trinitarian theology as speculative and unbiblical, Emery contends that the medieval theologian's "speculative theology is not superimposed on or juxtaposed with the biblical texts, but is part and parcel of the biblical reading; it aims at disclosing the doctrinal meaning of the 'letter,' the literal sense, of the Gospel" (20). For Thomas, "it is not enough to produce Bible quotes" in clarifying the truth of the mystery of the Trinity and correcting Trinitarian heresies (27). If Thomas employs Aristotelian or Stoic terms and phrases, Emery points out, his intention is always to show the rationale of the truth of the Trinity, which the Bible presents and the church tradition defines.

This present work could also be a theological rebuttal to modern critiques of Aquinas' Trinitarian theology such as Karl Rahner, Catherine M. LaCugna, and Colin Gunton, who argue that Thomas dissolves the indissoluble connection between soteriology and the Trinity. By letting Thomas speak through his own *Summa*, Emery attests that like Athanasius, Aquinas' primary concern about the Trinity is soteriological. If Christ and the Holy Spirit are not God, we cannot be saved, or deified, through their ministries because salvation is the work of God. Like Basil, Thomas attempts to prove the divine personality of the Holy Spirit by demonstrating the divine works of the Spirit and to point out a theological parallel between Christ and the Spirit in their works. If Christ is God, the Spirit is necessarily to be God.

In answering the question as to why the deity has three Persons, not a single person, interestingly, Thomas rejects a rational approach of Richard of St. Victor and Bonaventure based on the divine fecundity and the divine goodness. Instead, Thomas is simply content that the threeness of the divine Persons is given to us as revelation. Like the Cappadocian Fathers, Thomas admits there is a Trinitarian order among the three Persons. However, for Thomas, the order that makes each Person distinct from the other is the order of opposed relations rather than that of origin. Departing from St. Victor and Bonaventure who saw the origin of being (generation and spiration) makes the Son and the Spirit distinct from the Father, Thomas sees the origin of being as the principle of constituting "the Son as a person" but relation as the principle of constituting "the Son in himself" (124). For Thomas, relation is not something that was "adventitiously added on to persons who have already been constituted in some other way" (125). Rather, relation is what God is. In other words, we cannot understand the Father apart from his paternity. The Father has never existed prior to his personal attribute of paternity. Each Person as a subsistent relation also denotes that paternity has no priority over filiation, and, likewise, filiation has no priority over the procession of the Spirit in deity.

Since the three Persons do not have their divine substance in a separate and material way that is applicable to humans, there is numerical unity of the divine essence preserving Trinitarian monotheism. The plurality of Persons in the Trinity is transcendental. Therefore, we do not have three gods but one God who is the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Despite his awareness that the Greek fathers used *aitia* [cause] or *archē* [beginning] in order to describe the relational, not ontological, priority of the Father, Thomas points out a danger of the theological misapplication of the Latin word *causa* when used related to the Father. In Latin language, *causa* could imply "dependence plus externality" (158). That is why the Latin Fathers

preferred *principium* which could be rendered as “a point of departure” without connoting “inequality” (157). Personally, Thomas prefers the Augustinian phrase “principle” and intentionally avoids using the term “hierarchy” in relation to the Trinity. There must be no hierarchy of any Person except the priority of relation. Like Augustine, Thomas sees the Father as the principle of the Son and the Spirit and also the principle to whom we Christians must return through the missions of the Son and the Spirit.

Thomas finds theological legitimacy of the doctrine of the eternal *filioque* from the Bible, in particular, the Gospel of John and patristic traditions such as Hilary, Augustine, and Didymus the Blind. While recognizing a theological distinction between the historic mission of the Holy Spirit and the eternal procession of the Holy Spirit, nonetheless, Thomas argues that the *filioque* in the economy must be “the eternal procession encountered in time at the behest of grace” (273). Thomas’ justification of the *filioque* in the immanent Trinity based on the Christological and soteriological ministry of the Spirit in the economy is continued in Karl Barth.

Emery’s contribution in this work is not only that he presents Thomas’ speculative Trinitarian theology in a way that beginners of theology can understand but also that his work provides a succinct analysis of medieval Trinitarianism prior to Thomas. Emery’s work will be a valuable reference to those who study Thomas’ Trinitarian theology.

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***Retrieving Doctrine: Explorations in Reformed Theology.* By Oliver D. Crisp. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP, 2011. 224 pages. Paperback, \$22.00.**

Oliver Crisp offers us an intellectually stimulating piece of theological engagement that is at once constructive and historical. Crisp’s method of theological retrieval is historically aware, presently engaged and philosophically articulate. Throughout *Retrieving Doctrine*, Crisp draws from Reformed Divines by transporting their thought into the contemporary dialogue. I mention three examples of Crisp’s method of retrieval.

In brief, Crisp covers the views of Calvin and Barth on “Creation and Providence,” in chapters 1-2; Edwards, Turretin, Campbell and Barth on “Sin and Salvation,” in chapters 3-6; and, finally, Calvin, Williamson-Nevin and Edwards on “The Christian Life” in chapters 7-9.

First, in chapter 1 Crisp argues that Calvin contributes to the recent attacks from “Open Theists” on traditional conceptions of God. Calvin held these related notions: God timelessly created with time; the creation radically depends upon God; God has “meticulous control” over the creation, and God’s glory is displayed in salvation history. Crisp shows Calvin’s distinctive model that upholds both God’s meticulous providence with man’s responsibility and freedom. The mechanism God uses is compatibilist freedom meaning that man is free to “act voluntarily” (20). Calvin’s system of Divine providence is contributory in that he sensibly integrates God’s aseity with meticulous providence that is dynamic because man is created in God’s image to participate in God’s glory through salvation history.

A second example of Crisp’s theological method in chapter 4 considers Turretin’s contribution to the contemporary philosophical-theological literature on the necessary or contingent nature of the incarnation. Crisp establishes Turretin’s

original argument for hypothetical necessity, responds to three contemporary charges and reformulates a slightly modified yet more satisfactory Turretin argument. Helpfully, Crisp mines the resources from Turretin and, also, draws from contemporary analytic philosophy, specifically modal philosophy, to achieve a more satisfactory argument in favor of the necessity of the incarnation.

A third example of Crisp's theological method is seen in chapter 7 from "The Christian Life." Here, Crisp considers Calvin's view on prayer and develops a metaphysically robust account that can handle the objection that a "Calvinian" God makes prayer pointless and redundant. Throughout, Crisp develops a view of prayer that is coherent, robust, satisfying and in keeping with the Reformed tradition. He concludes that there is no "two-way contingency (153)," which means that we are contingent upon God but he is not contingent on us. This view of prayer does have a two-fold value: it is individually therapeutic and prayer aligns our wills with God's will.

With all of its virtues *Retrieving Doctrine* has one potential problem that may stand out to many present-day protestant evangelicals. When offering a rational accounting of sin and salvation Crisp offers "realism" as a way of solving certain dilemmas (see especially chapters 3, 5, 8 and 9). This is the doctrine that we are somehow literally in Adam at the fall or literally in Christ at salvation; an attending benefit is that I am actually guilty or actually righteous. While it has some benefits many will find this to conflict with some deep-seated intuitions, such as my being distinct from Adam and Christ—where Adam is the federal head of fallen humans and Christ is the Head over the redeemed. This potentially minor shortcoming is an opportunity for evangelical theologians to think more carefully about federal headship.

Retrieving Doctrine has as its primary aim to encourage those in a broadly Reformed tradition to take seriously their historical roots and the extent of its theological legacy. Additionally, Crisp achieves other ends in the process. First, he demonstrates how to do analytic theology whereby theologians use analytic philosophy for clarity and detail. Second, he demonstrates how to do constructive theology. As evangelicals we must respond by taking seriously our history and interacting in the contemporary dialogue with lucidity and credibility.

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***A Following Holy Life.* Edited by Kenneth Stevenson. London: Canterbury Press, 2011. 220 pages. Paperback, 22.99.**

Kenneth Stevenson believes that one best understands Jeremy Taylor by reading his works rather than reading about them (28). To that end, Stevenson has introduced and edited some of Taylor's writings to allow readers to understand the 17th-Century Anglican priest in his words and context. In the brief introduction, the author tells the story of a life marked by scholarship, courage, and intrigue. He recounts how Taylor quickly rose to prominence and became chaplain to King Charles I. However, the victory of Oliver Cromwell over Charles I eventually cost Taylor his official position in the church. Taylor was later imprisoned on three occasions for supposed allegiances to the former King.

The book is primarily a collection of Taylor's writings with headings as the only interruption by Stevenson after the Introduction. The title comes from a dis-

course in Taylor's work, *A Great Exemplar of Sanctity and Holy Life*, which is not included in the excerpts of the book. The language of the title makes more sense in its original context, referencing a subsequent holy lifestyle one maintains upon genuine repentance and obedience to Christ. While Stevenson briefly acknowledges the source of the title of his book (31), a more clear explanation would have added clarity to the book and a stronger connection to the primary focus of Taylor's writing.

Stevenson's assessment of Taylor seems balanced. He details both strengths and weaknesses of Taylor's character and competence. The author seems impressed by the convictions and clarity with which Taylor wrote, though less impressed by how he spoke (3). He describes Taylor's interactions with others as sometimes disparaging (3) and, at other times, conciliatory (9, 37). Stevenson further notes that some of Taylor's works were written for an academic audience (14), yet was most known for giving theology to the laity (31).

The extracts recorded in the book suggest the primary heart of Taylor to be focused on a life changed by Christ. The book organizes the writings of Taylor into four sections, which are not always easily differentiated. Arranging the excerpts more clearly by topic and including a subject index in the back of the book would have greatly enhanced the work. In addition, a conclusion by the editor would have aided the work.

Two aspects of Taylor's style dominate the book: his theology and his focus on discipleship. At times in his theology, Taylor seems to read into Scripture (cf. 42), while at other times, suggests views that seem uninformed by the text altogether (cf. 52). However, his theology is nonetheless clear. Stevenson, citing Avis, appears to have described him accurately as something of a "liberal catholic" (16). His views on original sin, the work of the Holy Spirit in baptism, assurance of salvation, and Lord's Supper put him at odds with many theologians in his day.

Taylor's writing on the area of discipleship is the strength of this book. Stevenson includes selections from Taylor on humility, contentment, truth, faith, hope, love, fasting, prayer, worship, confession, simplicity, kindness, justice, holiness, the brevity of life, anger, self-examination, complaining, impatience, fear, care for the poor, guarding the tongue, and repentance. Taylor's writing style, though sometimes tedious, reflects a flowing and articulate style that earned him the nickname, "Shakespeare of English Prose."

One issue Taylor addressed more than once was on the issue of death bed repentance. Though his apparent complete denunciation of it seems beside the mark (176), his precaution that "God hath made no covenant with us on our death-bed distinct from that he made with us in our life and health" (59) is a point well-taken.

For anyone interested in learning about Jeremy Taylor's writing and theology, Kenneth Stevenson's work should be considered. It is likely the reader will finish wanting to know more about Taylor's life and read more of his writings. That appears to have been Stevenson's goal in the work.

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***Venture All for God: Piety in the Writings of John Bunyan.* Edited by Roger D. Duke and Phil A. Newton. Profiles in Reformed Spirituality. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011. 196 pages. Paperback. \$10.**

In the Profiles in Reformed Spirituality series (edited by Joel Beeke and Michael A. G. Haykin), Reformation Heritage Books seeks to help the reader discover all that our Reformed forebears in the faith can teach us “about Christianity, its doctrines, its passions, and its fruit” (xi). Each brief volume presents a short biographical sketch of a historical figure within the Reformed tradition alongside excerpts from lesser-known tracts and publications in the hopes of stirring the reader to further study and immersion into Reformed writings. This volume, edited by Roger D. Duke, author and professor at Union University, and Phil A. Newton, senior pastor at South Woods Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee, narrows its focus on the piety in the writings of John Bunyan, who authored almost sixty books and tracts in addition to his allegorical classic, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*.

Bunyan was born in the midst of the English Reformation, during the reign of Charles I. England was suffering the pains of liberation from the Roman Catholic Church, and each new monarch took the crown with different ideas regarding the direction of the Church of England. Unlike the relative religious peace under Oliver Cromwell, Charles II sought to bring about peace through standardization. In 1662, the Act of Uniformity dictated specific doctrine and liturgy to be followed by all clergy. Jailed for preaching illegally, Bunyan could have been released at virtually any point provided he agreed to cease such preaching. He refused to make such an agreement.

His writing was clearly influenced by the political unrest and religious persecution by the English government of his day. Imprisoned for more than twenty percent of his life, much of Bunyan’s writing took place in the Bedford Jail. His writings attest to George Whitefield’s statement that “ministers never write or preach so well as when under the cross: the Spirit of Christ and of Glory then rests upon them” (41).

In *Venture All for God*, the reader gains insight into the thought and teachings of Bunyan. Collected under such headings as “Christ Our Advocate,” “Christ Jesus the Merciful Savior,” and “Hope for Sinners,” the first three sections reveal Bunyan’s meditations on the person and work of Jesus Christ. Imprisoned and deprived from all that is joyful in the world, Bunyan found his hope and satisfaction in savoring his Savior. Each word from his pen drips with the joy of one who has spent countless hours pondering the inexhaustible riches of Christ. The final four sections, entitled, “True Humility,” “Christian Ethics,” “The Gospel Applied,” and “Warnings,” provide the reader with examples of the manner in which Bunyan drew application from his meditations.

This collection is an enjoyable introduction to Bunyan’s life and writings. Upon completing the book, the reader is left pondering not that which is written of Bunyan, but rather, that which is written by Bunyan. The greatest strength of this little volume is not that it speaks of Bunyan to a new generation, but rather that it allows Bunyan himself to speak.

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***Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 2nd rev ed. By William L. Lumpkin and Bill Leonard. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2011. 548 pages. Hardcover, \$36.99.**

An unspecified contingent of second editions arrives on bookshelves *persona non grata*. The book under current consideration is no such book. There is a tremendous need, especially seen surrounding Baptist history and theology, to provide for accessibility into our theological predecessors and of those outside our sphere of familiarity. Professor Bill Leonard's revision, via addition, to Lumpkin's classic work of collecting and providing limited commentary on numerous major Baptist confessions of faith seeks to occupy this niche though allowing the 21st-century theologian ease in examining the formal documents of Baptist theology.

In this work, Leonard and Judson Press enlarge upon the 1969 version of Lumpkin's *Baptist Confessions of Faith*. Lumpkin acknowledges the pedigree of his volume in the forward to the present work. The two prior collections of Edward Underhill (1854) and Edward McGlothlin (1910) provided much of the material for Lumpkin's and, subsequently, Leonard's work. The continuity seen therein displays both positive and negative repercussions. On the positive side, historical continuity serves as an additional leg for Baptist theology upon which to rest. The Baptist movement is one born out of reading and seeking to apply the New Testament to the local church, nevertheless the movement has been given concrete manifestations in its statements of faith. Leonard's work allows us to see the continuity both of the confessions of faith themselves and of the desire to collate the confessions. Negatively, any weaknesses of prior collections are often passed on to later ones (i.e. Lumpkin's arrangement according to Associational/General confessions as opposed to the divisions of General/Particular Baptists and the omission of confessional preamble material) and dependence upon the original sources can be minimized.

Bill Leonard and the late William Lumpkin were both former professors at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Leonard currently teaches in both the Department of Religion and the Divinity School at Wake Forest University. In this work, he reformats Lumpkin's 1969 edition and adds two new sections. In the new introduction, Leonard continues the discussion regarding a (or *the*) Baptist position on the role of confessions and creeds in the modern Baptist church and the future roles for confessions. Therein, Leonard describes the "continuum of Baptist Identity" as including items such as "biblical authority" and "liberty of conscience" (4-5). These headings are helpful and also alert the careful reader to the tension in Baptist theology. Cases in point are the seemingly paradoxical positions of Biblical authority/liberty of conscience and congregational autonomy/associational cooperation.

Leonard does not present any new information in chapters 1-6. However, the typeset allows the reader a great comfort over the previous edition in reading the material and seeing the distinction between commentary, confession, and footnotes. The last chapter is entitled "Twenty-First-Century Confessions" and represents the only new material in the body of Leonard's book. The trend of global awareness seen in the 1969 edition of Lumpkin is continued in the present volume. Although the Baptist movement began in English speaking 17th-century Great Britain, the movement has mushroomed. Just as Baptists have spread, the awareness of Baptists in various countries around the world and their confessional formulations has also spread. Thus, the new chapter contains numerous confessions of chronological and geographic importance. The new additions range from the Nigerian Baptist Convention's statement of faith to documents from the Evangelical Baptist Convention

of Peru. This information proves very helpful to students of contemporary Baptist theology as it alerts readers to contentious areas of theology and practice for Baptists worldwide. An example would be the Nigerian statement containing four subsections (the fall of man, sin, Satan, and demons) under the title heading of “Evil” and the omission of an article on the church or ecclesiology.

Regarding the context of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), Leonard’s book leaves the 1963 *Baptist Faith and Message* (BF&M) in the section entitled “American Baptist Confessions.” The table of contents indicates the inclusion of the 1925 and 1963 BF&M’s, but this is misleading as the reader needs to go elsewhere to compare the 1925 and 1963 BF&M’s. The section on “Twenty-First-Century Confessions” includes a two-page introduction to the SBC and the body of the 2000 BF&M. The presentation is theologically even-handed. The reader looking for further information on the SBC and the “moderate” society founded in 1991 (the Co-operative Baptist Fellowship) will find footnotes only pointing to resources on one side of the theological divide (Leonard’s *Baptists in America* and Walter Shurden’s *The Baptist Identity: Four Fragile Freedoms*).

In summation, Leonard’s revised edition of Lumpkin’s now classic text deserves consideration by students of Baptist history and theology. Students without a copy of Lumpkin’s 1969 work *should* purchase this book. However, for those following the available collections of Baptist confessions of faith, we are still awaiting an entirely *new* resource book which would contain items such as confessions, confessional commentary, brief annotation regarding groups and movements, a bibliography, the inclusion of preamble material, the publication of signatures (where applicable and practical), clearer chapter designations, and extensive reliance upon the original documents.

Patrick G. Willis

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Studies in Ethics and Philosophy

***Is God a Moral Monster? Making Sense of the Old Testament God.* By Paul Copan. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2011. Paperback, \$14.99.**

Making Old Testament ethics accessible and understandable to academics, as well as non-academics, is a challenge. Paul Copan has tackled the job with a consistent clarity and forthrightness that leaves any who try to train pastors and lay leaders with a healthy hermeneutic of Old Testament ethical issues in his debt. His claim is that he bases his work on “thoughtful, credible scholarship that offers plausible, sober-minded explanations and angles that present helpful resolutions and responses to perplexing Old Testament ethics questions” (11).

One of Copan’s first efforts is to place this discussion in the postmodern context of a “new atheism,” which is attacking Christianity as if it were a radical sect, compared to radical Islam. Their attack is a “cool-headed, scientific rationalism” that reflects what Michael Novak calls a kind of desperate defensiveness. Some of the primary targets for these atheists are the ethical problems of the Old Testament, thus the need to clarify the context for Copan’s hermeneutical effort. Copan’s approach to handling these neo-atheists is to attack them in like kind, with a confrontational apologetic that treats their arguments (like those attacking the existence of God) as “flimsy, often resembling the simplistic village atheist far more than the credentialed academicians” (17). The reason for taking this approach is because these neo-atheists

reflect some of the common, unreasoned thinking, that unfortunately is expressed by some modern Christians, especially those with limited Biblical knowledge and understanding. This text was written to help sincere believers understand the ethical problems and conundrums of the Old Testament and thus be able to defend it against these modern-day attackers.

Essential to the hermeneutic of Copan is to show that the God of the Old Testament is the same as the one in the New, and that Jesus Christ is the same God as well. Considerable scholarship is shown through careful explanations of ancient near eastern cultures and customs, which are the background for most, if not all, of the problematic actions and teachings which are usually misunderstood and misinterpreted. Even though it is a limited volume of 252 pages, the vast majority of the ethical problem areas of the Old Testament are given fair treatment. This is as healthy and handy a document as a pastor can have for guiding his church leaders and teachers in dealing with non-believers and new believers who have doubts about the validity of the Old Testament for their faith in God.

William E. Goff

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Doing Philosophy as a Christian. Christian Worldview Integration Series. By Garrett J. DeWeese. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011. 352 pages. Paperback, \$22.

Garrett DeWeese has provided students with a nearly comprehensive introduction to areas of philosophical thought in which he tries to explain where Christian philosophers can, should, or must land on various issues. The book breaks down into four parts. The first establishes his method, the second involves first-order questions (metaphysics, epistemology, ethics and aesthetics), the third part involves second-order questions (philosophy of mind and of science), and the fourth part discusses philosophy as a means of spiritual transformation for the Christian. DeWeese operates within the boundaries of “canonical theism,” which he defines as “the broad stream of orthodoxy traceable to the church fathers and the ecumenical councils and creeds” (36).

This book does well to lay before the student various opinions within each field of thought. Thus, within metaphysics there is realism and nominalism, among others, and DeWeese does well to present such options within a framework of the history of philosophy as well as surveying the various arguments. The reader therefore gets a balanced perspective that is not solely based on arguments, but also shows how philosophical doctrines have unfolded through history.

One problem is that DeWeese, in attempting to determine what positions are distinctively Christian, utilizes much Scripture, but some applications will seem contrived to students of Biblical studies. For example, DeWeese uses Hebrews 2:17 (Jesus was “made like his brothers in every way”) as a proof text to argue against those who would allow anthropological dualism for Jesus while positing monism for all other humans (259). It is hardly likely that the author of Hebrews had philosophy in mind as he penned this verse. This should be taken softly, though, since the work inevitably required the use of Scripture, which can be difficult to integrate into complex philosophical debates with exegetical integrity.

DeWeese holds, probably correctly, that metaphysical “realism fits best in a Christian worldview,” because “[n]owhere in the Bible is there a hint that the ex-

ternal world is unreal, that something like Berkeley's subjective idealism, or Kant's transcendental idealism, is correct" (129). But the author surprisingly opts for epistemological internalism in order not to divorce epistemic justification from rational decision making (170). He briefly mentions Plantinga's externalist view of warrant, but mentions it only as an opposing option and leaves it at that. Such a position is surprising since metaphysical realism is generally admitted inherently to require epistemological externalism. Nevertheless, DeWeese does follow through in letting his metaphysics determine his ethical theory, opting for virtue theory as the best Christian view, which is inherently objective rather than subjective. Whatever disagreements one may have with DeWeese, he is at least charitable and cautious throughout the book, continually hedging his conclusions (e.g., "I could be wrong" [260]).

The rest of DeWeese's discussions are shorter and more elementary, but still benefit the reader by introducing the subject and choosing which option seems to be more coherent within a Christian worldview. He is able to be less dogmatic about some of the later chapters since they are secondary issues, such as philosophy of science, on which someone holding a Christian worldview could take multiple legitimate positions. This work could be used well in a philosophy of religion class or general philosophy courses in seminaries and Bible colleges.

Todd Scaewater

Westminster Theological Seminary

***If God, Why Evil?: A New Way to Think About the Question.* By Norman L. Geisler. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2011. 173 pages. Paperback, \$14.99.**

The problem of evil is one of the most pressing philosophical questions facing Christianity. The task of answering why evil exists if God is good has been the focus of many apologists. Unfortunately, much of the work on the problem of evil is just as difficult to read as the problem is to answer. The average reader may find himself drowning in a sea of philosophical argumentation into which even professional academics only carefully tread. By contrast, when someone attempts to develop a theodicy that is palatable for the average reader, it typically turns out to be less than satisfactory. For these reasons, the problem of evil remains an often unanswered question in the church pew or at the coffee shop. Norman Geisler has attempted to solve this conundrum in his book, *If God, Why Evil?: A New Way to Think About the Question*, by presenting a very readable, yet scholarly answer to the problem of evil.

Geisler divides the book into the major questions about evil—nature, origin, persistence, purpose, and avoidability of evil. Then he addresses some of the practical applications of the problem of evil, including physical evil, miracles, hell, and exclusivism. At the foundation of the book is a free will defense of the problem of evil. If one has read much of Geisler's other 70 books, then one is most likely not surprised that he approaches the problem in that way. Even though the chapters are not full of references to other scholarly works, it is clear that Geisler has condensed his own thoughts on the issue to make the book clear, concise, comprehensive, correct, and comforting (10).

Each main chapter of the book begins with a syllogistic presentation of a problem related to evil. Geisler first addresses the nature of evil by posing the problem this way:

God created all things.
 Evil is something.
 Therefore, God created evil. (17–18)

In keeping with an Augustinian approach to the nature of evil, Geisler then argues that the second premise is incorrect and that evil is actually “a real privation in good things” (25). This conclusion leads him to the origin of evil, which he argues is based in free will (28–30). Once Geisler establishes that evil originates in the free will with which God created humans and angels, he tackles the problem of the persistence of evil. Geisler believes that the argument against God from the persistence of evil “is one of the oldest and most difficult of all arguments” (36). At its heart, this argument asks why a good, omnipotent God has not destroyed evil. In answer to this question, Geisler proposes that “the only way God could literally destroy all evil is to destroy all freedom. However, to destroy all freedom is to destroy the possibility of all moral good. *All moral choices are free choices*” (38). Therefore, he believes that the question is posed in the wrong way. The way a Christian should look at this question is to ask whether or not evil is defeated, and Geisler’s answer is that evil has not yet been defeated, but it will be. In answer to the question of the purpose of evil, the author concludes that humans are unable to know all of God’s purposes, and that he has a good purpose in all things, even evil. Finally, he tackles the issue of the avoidability of evil. Geisler believes, “This present world is not the best of all possible worlds, but it is the best of all possible ways to the best of all achievable worlds” (68). In essence, a world without evil would be a world without free will, and Geisler believes that free will is a necessary element for a good world.

The book then moves from the major categories of the problem of evil to address the practical applications of evil, including physical evil, miracles, hell, and exclusivism. Geisler holds that physical evil, just like all other forms of evil, is the result of human free will and that God permits the existence of physical evil in part to accomplish his ultimate purposes. In response to physical evil, some have argued that God should miraculously intervene to prevent all physical evil. However, Geisler argues that “it is not possible to have a regular miraculous interruption of the natural order” (87). This would interfere with physical life, moral freedom, moral choices, moral improvement, moral warnings, and achieving the best world possible (87–91). The author then moves to address hell as an expression of God’s judgment. Some hold that the existence of an eternal hell denies the goodness of God, but Geisler argues that God’s justice, love, sovereignty, and human dignity demand an eternal hell (98–100). He also addresses several major objections to an eternal hell that have been offered throughout history. The main chapters of the book conclude with a discussion of exclusivism and universalism. He asks the question, “What about those who have never heard?” (115). In response, Geisler posits a very orthodox view on the exclusivity of Christ and rejects both universalism and inclusivism.

After the main chapters, Geisler adds three appendices that serve as more academic supplements to the content of the book. The first appendix offers varying views of the topic of animal death before Adam. Geisler never offers his own conclusion but provides various alternatives with both their strengths and weaknesses. The second appendix is a development of some of the classical arguments for God’s existence, including the cosmological argument, the teleological argument, and the moral argument. The final appendix is an in-depth critique of William P. Young’s book, *The Shack*.

Overall, Geisler superbly accomplishes his task of answering the problem of evil in a very readable fashion. Of course, there will be some who are not swayed by his free will defense, but his development of that particular defense for a general audience was excellent. The main drawback of the book comes only from the intended purpose of the book. Most works on the problem of evil provide ample documentation to historical and academic sources to build a case; however, Geisler provides only minimal references to other material. In fact, many of his references are to other books he has written. This is only a problem when this book is compared to other volumes on the problem of evil that are more academic in nature. Since Geisler was specifically trying to avoid an overly academic feel, the lack of outside references is understandable.

While this book may never become the standard academic reference text on the free will defense for the problem of evil, Geisler certainly accomplished his purpose. This is an excellent resource for the average reader looking for an understandable and easy-to-read book that will assist them in tackling one of Christianity's most difficult questions.

Evan Lenow

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

***Defending the Faith: Engaging the Culture—Essays Honoring L. Russ Bush.* edited by Bruce A. Little and Mark D. Liederbach. Nashville, TN: B&H, 2011. 266 pages. Paperback, \$24.99.**

Having the correct answer at the right time is a vital tool for all religious adherents and leaders. For those who follow “the Way, the Truth, and the Life,” having the correct answer can be life changing. In *Defending the Faith: Engaging the Culture*, Christian theologians and philosophers honor the late Baptist philosopher, L. Russ Bush, by writing timely essays that seek to give answers to a skeptical culture.

Russ Bush finished his career at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary as professor of apologetics and philosophy. Bruce Little and Mark Liederbach write, “L. Russ Bush was a noted apologist, author, professor, pastor, and friend to many people, and he left a wonderfully rich legacy in terms of his personal story, his intellectual integrity, and his personal devotion to his Lord. He spent his life serving the church as a staunch defender of the Christian faith within the organizational framework of the Southern Baptist Convention” (xiii).

This book is a compilation of essays in memory and honor of Bush's superior intellectual and apologetic works. Each essay is written by an evangelical academic defending the orthodox beliefs of Christianity. Some of the authors were students of Bush's, while others were friends and co-workers. The editors of the book, Bruce A. Little and Mark D. Liederbach, are professors at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (at the time of this writing). Additionally, Little was also the director of the L. Russ Bush Center for Faith and Culture at Southeastern.

The book is organized into four sections; each section focuses on a particular aspect of Christian apologetics. Section one, titled “Christianity and the Bible,” concentrates on defending the Bible against a reductionist or liberal ideology. It begins with a chapter by Russ Bush arguing for the inspiration and validity of Scripture. Other authors in the section are Daniel L. Akin, Paige Patterson, and Thomas Nettles. Akin discusses the connection between Jesus and the Bible. He argues that one's view of the Bible is logically inferred from one's view of Jesus. Patterson com-

poses a chapter that discusses the necessity of the atonement and liberal theology's distortion of what the atonement entails. Nettles, in a style apropos of a historian, presents a chapter discussing the ancient church's system of apologetics, specifically the church's method of defending Scripture.

Section two discusses Christian apologetics *simpliciter*, beginning with an article by Russ Bush in which he details a 10-step pattern to Biblical apologetics. Other contributors to this section are Norman Geisler, Gary R. Habermas, and David P. Nelson. Geisler gives simple, yet clear, arguments for the need and benefit of Christian apologetics. Habermas discusses his token topic: the resurrection of Christ. He expands the focus by also discussing Paul's encounter with the resurrected Christ on the road to Damascus. Nelson offers reflections upon the grand Biblical narrative of Scripture and its impact upon apologetics and missions.

Section three branches off into philosophy of science by discussing the impact of modern science upon the orthodox Christian faith. Again, as with every section in the book, an article by Bush begins the section. In the chapter titled "Is Evolution True?" Bush questions naturalistic evolution and points out certain incompatible features of evolution and the Christian faith. Other contributors to this section are James K. Dew Jr., Kenneth D. Keathley, and Robert B. Stewart. Dew writes on the current status of natural theology, specifically focusing on the work of Alister McGrath. Dew generally respects McGrath, though he has several concerns regarding McGrath's stance that theistic evolution is concurrent with an orthodox view of Scripture. The next chapter by Ken Keathley looks at the fine-tuning argument for the existence of God. Keathley argues that the parameters for life to exist as it does are so narrow that the best explanation for its existence is an intelligent designer. Stewart's chapter titled "How Science Works and What It Means for Believers" is a detailed dissemination on the limitations of modern science.

The last section of *Defending the Faith* best embodies the purpose of the book by focusing on Christianity's role in the culture. The purpose of the section is to argue that the church must engage the culture and the culture's array of ideas. The contributors are Russ Bush, Mark Coppenger, Richard Land, and Udo W. Middelman. Bush's chapter hones in on cultural aesthetics and the place of art in Christianity. Coppenger's chapter discusses virtue ethics in relation to friendliness. Land's chapter is one of applied ethics, discussing nuclear weapons and why America must possess such arms. Middelman's chapter, the last of the book, details the development of culture—both secular and Christian.

Defending the Faith is a popular level book that is readable by anyone interested in argumentation that defends orthodox Christianity against an onslaught of secular and humanistic philosophies. In this reviewer's opinion, *Defending the Faith* fulfills its purpose by disseminating thoughtful, yet readable, essays on the truthfulness of Christianity and its impact on the world.

Chad Meeks

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

***As Christ Submits to the Church: A Biblical Understanding of Leadership and Mutual Submission.* By Alan G. Padgett. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011. 151 pages. Paperback, \$20.00.**

In the debate over gender roles in evangelicalism, there have been few books written with a more provocative title than Alan G. Padgett's *As Christ Submits to the*

Church. At first glimpse, the title drips with heretical undertones, and controversy may certainly be intended with the selection of such a title. Rather than embracing full-blown heresy, Padgett, who serves as professor of systematic theology at Luther Seminary, sets out to redefine the understanding of submission in this contribution to the gender-role debate.

In the opening pages of the book, Padgett asks the central question of his work: “Does Christ submit to the church, his body and bride?” (xiii). In order to offer an affirmative response to his question, he acknowledges that a specific definition of submission is required for Christ to submit to the church. As a central tenet, he proposes two types of submission—type I refers to obedience to an external authority while type II refers to giving up power voluntarily and taking the role of a slave (xiii). It is the second type of submission that Padgett believes has bearing on his central question.

With the key concept defined in the opening pages, Padgett uses the rest of the book to give a historical overview of the gender-role debate among evangelicals, to contemplate the place of Scripture in defining roles, and to address the key Biblical passages related to submission. In so doing, he wrestles with difficult concepts, such as dominion, sex, head coverings, and justice. While these concepts are not new to the debate, covering all of them in such a brief work is an ambitious task.

Padgett’s work is very readable, and he offers clear definitions for the concepts he employs in the book. The book is clearly written from an egalitarian perspective, and the author does not attempt to disguise his presuppositions. He acknowledges that the development of the egalitarian position was influenced by the women’s rights movement of the 1960s (7) and even goes so far as to call the position “revisionist” and “influenced by modern thought” (10). On the latter, he does so by comparison to the complementarian position, claiming that it too is revisionist and modern. In essence, he makes no claim that the egalitarian position is the historical or traditional understanding of gender roles in the church. Nonetheless, he argues that it should be considered the most Biblical position.

In order to reach his conclusion that Christ does indeed submit to the church, Padgett employs some unfortunate methods that undermine his claim that egalitarianism is the most Biblical position. First, Padgett completely redefines the term “submission” for the sake of avoiding a misstep into outright heresy. Traditionally speaking, submission has generally referred to a form of obedience to authority and implied an order or hierarchy of position. When related to the classic gender roles passage found in Ephesians 5, submission has historically been understood as a wife submitting to her husband’s authority as the church submits to Christ. However, Padgett desires to make submission in Ephesians 5 mutual. In order to do so, he has to deal with the issue of Christ’s relationship to the church. Thus, a new definition of submission is necessary to avoid placing Christ under the authority of the church. The result is a definition of submission that is characterized by servanthood. Even though this is the best definition that Padgett can offer, he is still not satisfied because the book occasionally acknowledges that “mutual submission and servant leadership are not identical” (32).

Second, Padgett promotes imaginative, midrashic interpretation as his model of hermeneutics. When discussing 1 Timothy 2:8–15, the author makes two consecutive statements that appear contradictory. He first states, “I suggest that we pay careful attention once again to what the text itself says instead of to what we already believe it says” (89). At this point, the reader is led to believe that the focus of this

section will be on exegesis of the words of the text. However, his very next sentence suggests, "Read carefully in its larger social and intellectual context, the teaching of Paul in this passage can be understood, but only with a bit of imagination and careful reflection" (90). He goes on to encourage imaginative, midrashic interpretation as the appropriate hermeneutic for interpreting Paul's letters (90–94). Freed from the rigors of meaning in the words of the text, Padgett finds hermeneutical license to interpret these texts within his pre-existing belief structure—in essence, committing the very mistake he previously admonished his readers to avoid.

Finally, Padgett exhibits inconsistency in his own application of submission. Throughout the book, he painstakingly applies his version of mutual submission through servanthood to every area of life. As he draws the book to a conclusion, the author focuses his attention to the commands of Christ to love God and love one's neighbor (127–28). He infers that believers have an obligation to abide by these two commands from Christ. In essence, Padgett places an obligation upon believers to obey an external authority. According to his definitions, this is type I submission, which he finds to be a violation of mutual submission. Padgett cannot have it both ways. Either the church submits to Christ's commands in obedience to an outside authority, or submission is simply servant leadership.

In conclusion, Padgett's work is a clear and readable example of the egalitarian position. He also offers an honest look at the logical implications of mutual submission for the relationship between Christ and the church. However, his work fails to deliver an internally consistent and exegetically faithful argument for egalitarianism.

Evan Lenow

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

***Moral Formation According to Paul: The Context and Coherence of Pauline Ethics.* By James W. Thompson. Grand rapids: Baker Academic 2011. 272 pages. Paperback, \$25.**

A number of books are currently being written on Biblical issues which spend considerable energy in investigating if the Biblical documents were really all that original or to what degree they reflect the thought world of the times in which the authors lived. This text is one of those types of investigations. The primary concern is to determine the impact of contextualization in the presentation of the concepts addressed. The focus seems to be that the author of this kind of text wants to prove, or disprove, the reliability of the Biblical text in question. The sense in this volume is that James Thompson wants to prove the reliability of the Biblical text. That is, although he spends the majority of his time exploring the contemporary literature of the Biblical writer, his conclusions generally indicate that Paul's uses of concepts and word choices generally reflected a uniqueness that underscore that his writings were essentially faithful to the concepts of the Law and the Prophets of the Old Testament. Thompson's perspective indicates that Paul's ideas also were used dynamically to express concepts that made those who lived in his times, and who knew the kind of literature and teachings of that epoch, able to recognize the uniqueness of his insights. Paul's concepts and word choices would make his first readers stop and reflect on the newness or freshness of his thought. Nevertheless, at times this kind of investigation proves to test the reader's faith in Thompson's quest to verify Paul's unique contribution in his inspired writings. The most interesting of this kind of exercise is chapter 8, in which he deals with Ephesians and Colossians, which are

“disputed letters of Paul.”

Thompson’s conclusion is that Paul’s letters were aimed at forming communities of Christian faith and challenged Christians to reject the culture of their time, while adapting their moral lives to create churches of righteous living people. His assessment is that Paul’s ethic only is functional in a cohesive moral community of believers, who live together in harmony, holding one another accountable and supporting each other. Thompson sustains that Paul’s “ethic of community cohesion is irreconcilable with the focus of individual autonomy in our culture and relevant only for those who live in a corporate identity of the believing community” (212). He asserts that Paul did not provide a comprehensive moral code, but he did set forth an important model for ethical reflection through interpreting the Old Testament in the light of the Christ event.

One of the most interesting contributions of Thompson’s text is that he analyzes the different kinds of moral constructions that Paul utilized for his writings. His introduction focuses on one of Paul’s key moral phrases: “Living worthily of the Gospel.” He then develops chapters that explore Hellenistic Judaism, moral instruction and formation of moral communities, the theology and ethics of the catechesis in 1 Thessalonians, and the role of lists of vices and virtues in the development of moral formation teaching (catechesis). He devotes two chapters to studies on Paul’s use of the Law, in the senses of moral formation of the churches and instruction on the proper use of human passion. He also includes a chapter on the classical issue of love and its proper practices in the formation of Christian communities. This text provides considerable opportunity to explore the thematic concepts in Paul’s writings, even if the underlying methodology is that of a literature comparison with those of his contemporaries.

William E. Goff

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Studies in Evangelism and Missions

***A Light to the Nations: The Missional Church and the Biblical Story.* By Michael W. Goheen. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011. 242 pages. Paperback, \$22.99.**

God’s purpose for his people as displayed in the Biblical narrative is for them to be a light to the nations, a people on mission to spread his fame throughout the earth. So argues Michael Goheen in *A Light to the Nations: The Missional Church and the Biblical Story*. Goheen notes in the preface that although books on missional ecclesiology abound today, none of them base their conclusions on “sustained biblical-theological and exegetical work” (ix). He therefore intends to fill this particular lacuna in current missions scholarship, and suggests that the primary audience is “pastors, theological students, and educated church members” (ix).

The organization of the book is straightforward. Goheen introduces the issues, namely his definitions for mission and ecclesiology and the misunderstandings the church has about these terms, in chapter one. In the next six chapters he follows the contours of the Biblical narrative from Genesis 12 through the NT epistles and notes how that narrative demonstrates missional identity of the people of God. Chapters two and three focus on Israel’s calling, chapters four and five on Jesus’ work in gathering the church and the implications of his death and resurrection for missional ecclesiology, and chapters six and seven on the church in the NT story and images for the church in the NT epistles. Chapters eight and nine offer a summary

of the previous material and practical implications for the contemporary church.

In retelling the Biblical narrative, Goheen comes to a number of conclusions about missions and ecclesiology. First, mission defines the people of God in that it is God's purpose for them. Second, the Biblical narrative possesses an eschatological shape in which OT Israel, although given a missional identity by God, largely failed in its calling to be a light to the nations. This results in Jesus calling an eschatological people of God, a renewed Israel, who proclaims salvation to the nations. Goheen also notes here the more centripetal calling of Israel. Third, because redemption has been accomplished for the entire cosmos, the church is called visibly to demonstrate Christ's victory over the evil worldly powers at the cross and the restoration of all things in his resurrection. Fourth, and based on the previous points, the ontological nature of the church is the most important aspect of ecclesiology as opposed to polity and praxis. Finally, the dominant missional model for Goheen appears to be the attractional and contrastive community that simultaneously demonstrates God's restoration through Christ and the call of God to live holy lives in the midst of pagan nations.

A Light to the Nations is vitally important for scholars and pastors alike for a number of reasons. First, Goheen is careful in his attention to the Biblical narrative. He does not rush to conclusions but grounds his description of the missional identity of the church in a mostly comprehensive reading of the Biblical story. Second, Goheen aptly combines scholarship and pastoral sensitivity by having both an eye toward the Biblical text and an ability to apply it to the contemporary church. Finally, Goheen offers a number of correctives to today's sometimes individualistic, colonial, dualistic ideas about ecclesiology and mission. His picture of the church and of mission as communal, attractional, and comprehensive is at times refreshing and necessary.

Two serious omissions, though, stand out to this reader. First, there is a paucity of material on verbal proclamation. Although Goheen finally discusses preaching and evangelism, it is only in the last fifteen pages of the book and in certain places he seems to swing the pendulum to the opposite pole of a totally attractional model of evangelism. This is inexplicable in light of Romans 10 and its emphasis on the Gentiles coming to faith through hearing the gospel proclaimed verbally. Second, Goheen fails to root mission in the Adamic commission to be fruitful and multiply. The entire Biblical narrative, and especially the mission of Israel and the church, is predicated on the fact that Adam and Eve were created by God to be his image bearers and fill the earth but then failed at that task. Goheen only mentions Genesis 1–11 very briefly and there is hardly any focus on Genesis 1–2 as the foundation of mission in the creating purposes of God. This is puzzling given Goheen's constant attention to the grand narrative of Scripture.

Despite these two omissions, Goheen's book is still important and in many ways groundbreaking. He has firmly rooted the missional identity of the contemporary church in the Biblical narrative of God's people, a daunting task, but one that he deftly completes. It should be read and engaged by any who want to understand the Biblical theological foundation for the purpose and mission of God's people to be a light to the nations.

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Studies in Preaching and Pastoral Ministry

***Preaching and Teaching the Last Things: Old Testament Eschatology for the Life of the Church.* By Walter Kaiser. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011. 208 pages. Paperback, \$19.99.**

With his usual style of consistency to the text and careful exegesis, Walter Kaiser has produced another excellent volume on preaching and teaching the Old Testament. The focus of this volume is on preaching and teaching the last things. Driven by the conviction that the Old Testament is too often overlooked in our communication of God's Word, Kaiser has addressed a critical issue in Biblical studies that will serve as an asset for preachers and teachers alike. Indeed, he reminds the reader that the Old Testament is replete with references to the future which implore diligent explication.

The book is divided into six parts beginning with a general discussion on how the Old Testament addresses the issue of last things. The next five parts deal with the specific eschatological issues of the nation of Israel, the new Davidic King, the Day of the Lord, the events of the last seven years, and the millennial rule of Christ.

Kaiser introduces the work with a curious statement. He contends that "almost one-half of the teaching of Scripture focuses on disclosures about 'last things' and prophecy" (ix). While Kaiser doesn't expound on that statement in the Preface, he proceeds to discuss briefly this "inaugurated eschatology" in the Introduction (xvi). Later, the author more thoroughly addresses what he means by the use of that phrase. He defines the "last days" as a reference to the coming of the Messiah for a second time on earth, but also includes the events related to the first coming of Christ (56). Indeed, his use of the Kingdom of the Lord as both inaugurated and anticipated is key to the understanding of the book. Kaiser uses the concept of the "Now" and the "Not Yet" (xii, xvi, 56, 66, 79) at several points to submit that both aspects are simultaneously present and work together.

One strength of Kaiser's work is that he doesn't simply pick and choose selected verses out of context, but addresses chapters and extended pericopies to demonstrate the Old Testament's grappling with things related to the "Last Things." The chapters develop and outline the passages under consideration and then provide insights to the truths of the text and how to communicate them.

Some of the important points Kaiser reveals in the book are how resurrection is taught in the Old Testament (9), a list of twenty passages from the Old Testament that figure in the discussion of the doctrine of the resurrection (14), how the Old Testament reveals two comings of the Messiah (52, 135), how the nation of Israel fits in God's plan (89), what will happen when the Messiah returns (138-41), and an explanation of the New Covenant (155).

The book is well-written with frequent cross-references throughout both the Old and New Testaments. Each chapter concludes with summary points in bullet form. These concluding points are informative, though more elaboration on them would have strengthened the application of the book. Additionally, a concluding chapter summarizing and applying the findings of the book would have helped the reader draw all the points of the work together.

This volume continues a consistent theme by the author related to the "promise-plan of God." Its insights are timely, the writing is compelling, and the foundation is firmly established in Scripture. It will not only be an encouragement to believers of the hope that we possess, but an asset to preachers and teachers in dem-

onstrating the authority of Scripture in its teachings related to the future.

Deron J. Biles

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Studies in Christian Education

***C(H)AOS Theory: Reflections of Chief Academic Officers in Theological Education.* By Kathleen D. Billman and Bruce C. Birch, eds. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2011. Pp. xii, 399. Paperback. \$38.**

This collection of essays published by members of the Association of Theological Schools' Chief Academic Officers Society (CAOS) is appropriately titled *C(H)AOS Theory* as it represents the reflections and experiences of those serving in position commiserate only perhaps with the air traffic controller. In 33 chapters organized in three broad headings, "Reading Institutional Context," "Nurturing Commitments," and "Developing Competencies," this volume addresses a variety of issues facing those serving as Chief Academic Officers in the specific venue of theological education. Many of the authors cite Jeanne P. McLean's *Leading from the Center* (1999) as one of the more helpful interpretations of how the role of the CAO had grown in importance for theological schools in the late twentieth century. *C(H)AOS Theory* provides a up-to-date reference handbook for the student, the faculty member, the newly appointed dean, the veteran CAO, presidents, and board members. Particularly concise and worth reading are the chapters by Willie James Jennings of Duke Divinity School, "Leading from the Middle," on relating to the CEO, Dale R. Stoffer of Ashland Theological Seminary, "Lessons from the Anabaptist-Pietist Tradition," on faculty leadership and development, and Robin J. Steinke of Gettysburg Theological Seminary, "The Budget as a Mission Tool: Vision, Principles, and Strategies." Rare is it that compilation volumes offering reflections and instruction from a diverse group of people provide a finished product with a majority of recommendable chapters. *C(H)AOS Theory* has chaotic chapters worth skimming to be sure, but overall the interested reader will find help and wisdom here for the task.

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Technology

***BibleWorks 9: Software for Biblical Exegesis & Research.* BibleWorks. Norfolk, VA. \$359.**

BibleWorks continues to impress with new features and databases added to this affordable high-end software program. Among the most important new features are instantaneous usage statistics in the Use tab, instantaneous highlighting of differences between Bible versions, and an optional fourth column. Major new databases include the *BibleWorks* Manuscript Project and the Center for New Testament Textual Studies Critical Apparatus, both of which are included in the base cost of the program.

With the new Use tab, simply hovering over a word instantaneously reveals how frequently that word appears in the current book and in the entire version. Settings may be adjusted to show either the current form or the lemma (lexical

form). More than just lightning-fast information, this feature provides a significant psychological boost for the language student. While it can be discouraging not to know instantly the definitions for words when you translate, in reality there are many words which most students should not know. Of the 5,393 words in the Greek New Testament, 4,351 occur ten times or fewer, 3,767 occur five times or fewer, and 1,932 words occur only once (data quickly available through the Vocabulary Flashcard Module). While professors will disagree on the appropriate cut-off, there is a point at which vocabulary study is not time well spent. It is sometimes more effective simply to look up words when you don't know them, and with instant usage data, one can quickly determine if the word is one which he should have known or not.

The new fourth column allows one to view an additional set of data. While my recommended display order includes search results, the Biblical text, lexicons, and usage data, the third and fourth columns can be easily rearranged to show any of the available tabs (including the new images of Biblical manuscripts), or one may easily turn off the third and fourth columns. Instant difference highlighting can be turned on or off with a simple click in the browse window menu.

The *BibleWorks* Manuscript Project provides manuscript images and transcriptions for a growing number of important manuscripts such as Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Alexandrinus, and Bezae, among others. When studying any verse, one can instantly see manuscript images by clicking into the Manuscripts tab. In addition, the manuscripts can be opened full screen and viewed with an impressive variety of visual filters. The transcriptions of each manuscript may be used in the same way as any Bible version, and morphological tagging of each manuscript is ongoing. Transcription and tagging tools accompany the manuscripts.

The CNTTS database is an extensive user-friendly critical apparatus which can be viewed in either the third or fourth column. In addition to a listing of variant readings and manuscript support, the data for each verse can be easily expanded to show manuscripts sorted by date and text type. Aside from the usefulness of the manuscripts and the apparatus, what is particularly amazing is that these items are added to the base package at no additional cost, while in another program the apparatus sells for \$100 and manuscripts sell for \$40 to \$60 each.

Among the 22 new Bible versions, notable additions include the 2011 NIV, the second edition of the Holman Christian Standard Bible, and updates to the NET Bible. New morphological versions accompany the Byzantine text, Westcott-Hort text, and Scrivener text. *The Moody Atlas of the Bible* is included at no additional charge, and new additional-cost modules include *The ESV Study Bible*, Bavinck's *Reformed Dogmatics*, and Grudem's *Systematic Theology*.

Ongoing needs for the program include the ability to turn off parsing information while viewing lexical entries in the analysis window, modified morphological texts including second aorist and second future forms, and a syntax database along the lines of Wallace's *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (which is still included for free). Along with the new fourth column, users would benefit from the ability to create new tabs such as an additional lexicon or manuscript tab so that one could view multiple lexicons or manuscripts at the same time. Furthermore, since some of the tabs include submenus, this option would allow submenus to be moved to their own tab.

Most significantly, *BibleWorks* has not yet entered into the mobile world. Apps for phones, and more importantly for tablets, are desperately needed in order for *BibleWorks* to remain competitive with other companies. Since *BibleWorks* is

designed for Windows and since phones and tablets use other platforms, *BibleWorks* has chosen to wait for devices which use a Windows platform. Given *BibleWorks*' resources, this is a risky but likely a necessary decision.

BibleWorks remains my first choice for those who want to dig into the original text, yet I am becoming increasingly convinced that for the serious student of God's word, investing in multiple software programs is a wise investment indeed. Given that *BibleWorks* and *Logos* have different yet significant strengths, I find myself using both on a daily basis. While some may object that purchasing two programs is unrealistic, we live in a world where people regularly have two TVs, two suits, and two cars. If the combination of the two programs makes a qualitative difference in ministry (and it does), then how could one justify not spending the money?

As a final note, the time has come for churches to invest in the ministry of the Word by equipping all of its ministers and Bible teachers with software programs such as *BibleWorks*. We recognize that chairs and projectors and air conditioning are part of our costs of doing business for Bible study, yet somehow we have neglected to provide the tools which can best increase the quality of this ministry. It's time for our thinking to change. *BibleWorks* should be standard issue. The next time you are faced with the choice between new chairs or *BibleWorks* for your teachers, please choose *BibleWorks*.

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***Pictorial Library of Bible Lands.* By Todd Bolen. 18-volume collection. 4 DVDs. Revised and Expanded. BiblePlaces.com, 2012. \$389.**

High quality pictures can add an indispensable dimension to teaching and preaching the Bible. However, finding appropriate, accurate, and high-quality pictures can often be beyond one's computer and Internet abilities or available time.

BiblePlaces.com comes to the rescue. This vast collection is an excellent resource with over 17,500 high-resolution photographs from Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Crete, and Malta. The original collection is from Todd Bolen, Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at the Master's College. He taught in Israel for ten years, and his picture collection spans the last twenty years; however, there are also pictures in this collection from over forty other photographers.

Accuracy is extremely important in showing Biblical pictures. One can use Internet search engines to find pictures; however, a typical Internet search will give a number of false findings. For instance, searching Google Images for "Peter's house excavations Capernaum" produces only nine accurate results out of the first twenty. So, unless one has physically been to a site in order to recognize its picture, verifying accurate pictures from an Internet search engine can be a daunting task. However, in the *Pictorial Library* one can quickly find accurately identified and labeled pictures.

Accessibility is another helpful aspect of this DVD collection. The pictures are in two formats: jpeg (up to 2420 x 1600 pixels) and in 400 ready-made PowerPoint presentations. Most users will probably use the PowerPoint pictures because they are easy to add to one's PowerPoint presentation, and they have the caption and notes already attached to the slides. The pictures in the slide shows are 1029 x 768, which are the finest quality most projectors can display. One can build a professional picture slide show on a given Bible subject in mere minutes.

The annotations are a valuable feature of the *Pictorial Library*. They appear

in the Speaker's Notes section under a number of the PowerPoint slides. Not every slide has notes. For instance, they appear in the first picture in a group of pictures on the same subject. The notes are sometimes extensive, giving: (1) Biblical information, such as nine actions of Jesus in Capernaum from Mark 1-2 (Capernaum, slide 23), (2) historical citations, such as a translation of a quotation from Egeria's 4th-century diary that Peter's house was turned into a church (Capernaum, slide 26), and (3) archeological information, such as a discussion of the original location for Bethsaida: et-Tell, el-Araj, or el-Misadiyye (Bethsaida, slide 8). The notes attached to the last slide in most slideshows lists some helpful resources for further study; however, it would be helpful to give a larger list of resources and include a list in all slide shows.

Most of the slide shows begin with helpful maps that identify the cities and areas that appear in the slide show. Sometimes aerial views have labels that identify where ancient buildings once stood, such as the aerial picture of Hierapolis from the west (Hierapolis, slide 12). However, in the slide show the bare picture appears first, and the labels appear with the next mouse click. This arrangement is well thought out and handy for teaching purposes.

The pictures are of excellent quality. Each shot is well composed, with sharp images and vivid colors. Not only are they much better than the average shutterbug can take, they include 400 aerial shots that are beyond the ability and resources of most people. There is also a sufficient variety and quantity of pictures in this collection. This reviewer has led groups to most of the cities and countries that appear in the *Pictorial Library*, and Bolen has well covered each site.

Volume seventeen, *Cultural Images of the Holy Land*, is a noteworthy collection. One could visit the Holy Land on a tour group many times and not see many of the excellent cultural scenes in this collection. There is a wide range of subjects, such as a host of animal and bird pictures—each one properly labeled. Grouped pictures appear in sequence, ranging from the interesting process of sheep shearing to the bloody skinning and gutting of sheep in Jericho. Both Christian and Jewish holy days and holiday celebrations in Israel are well photographed and documented. The scribe slide show depicts a number of modern scribes copying the Hebrew Scriptures as well as tools of their trade and the finished product—certainly of interest to anyone who loves God's Word.

There are occasional typographical errors, such as "Bethsaid" (Bethsaida, slide 8, line 16) and "didrachamae" (Bethsaida, slide 21, line 4), and inconsistent capitalization ("el-Araj" and "El-Araj," Bethsaida, slide 8, lines 15, 18). However, Bolen welcomes feedback on errors or updates via e-mail. He plans to make corrections and update archeological information in future editions ("Annotations," line 17).

Here are three more suggestions for improvement. For pictures not covering an entire slide, a black background is easier on the eyes than the white background provided in these slide shows. Of course, one can easily change the background with PowerPoint editing tools. Next, there are times one could use more description, such as identifying the areas of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in the Easter processional (Christian Holidays—Easter), identifying the location of cities such as Kom Ombo—a city in Upper Egypt (Pottery Making, slides 11, 13-15), and explaining how an olive beam press works (Olive Harvest, slides 36-43). Finally, when conditions calm down, complete this collection with volumes on Syria, Iraq, and Iran.

Although anyone can view the PowerPoint slides with a free reader, one must

own the full PowerPoint software to read the annotations. One can also view the slides on free programs, such as OpenOffice, but there are sometimes issues with reading the slide labels. However, purchasing PowerPoint is a good investment and will give one the best usage of the *Pictorial Library*.

This collection of high-resolution pictures and PowerPoint slide shows is a superb resource for pastors and Bible teachers (ranging in effective use from Vacation Bible School to sermons to seminary classes). It is also a valuable tool for anyone interested in learning more about the Bible. Viewing each slide, reading its annotation, and looking up relevant Bible verses can provide weeks of valuable learning about the Bible. This is an excellent resource with a wide range of applications.

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***Logos 5*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2012.**

With the release of *Logos 5*, Logos Bible Software has offered the latest in their digital-library-based program. The software offers a plethora of tools which collate information from the user's library database with just a few clicks. Whether a user needs sermon ideas, basic exegetical information, or a thorough word study, Logos offers tools for each of these and much more. *Logos 5* makes a wealth of information accessible in seconds, though the sheer amount of material can occasionally make the search for relevant information laborious.

The *Logos* interface primarily functions as a customizable desktop of open books. The format of the digital books on *Logos* is easy to read and easy to navigate. Though some digital formats can be awkward to read and difficult to browse, *Logos* makes reading easy with an overall aesthetically pleasing design with easily-legible fonts and straightforward navigation. For example, each open book includes an expandable sidebar for contents as well as searchability both within volumes and among the entire library. The search function for the entire library allows the user to access quickly all of the material in the library on a certain topic (including journals like *Themelios* and even collections like *Perseus*). References within a volume to other volumes within the library are even linked for quick access. Moreover, users who need to document their research can toggle page numbers on and off and access footnotes simply by hovering the cursor over the superscripted number. *Logos* also includes a bibliography document creator which will automatically format according to a variety of major style guides (including SBL, Chicago, and Turabian). The bibliography can then be printed, exported, or even opened in Microsoft Word. A user's digital library can be expanded by upgrading to higher base packages or by purchasing from Logos' enormous selection of individual titles and special bundles. The base packages, however, include a significant number of out-of-date and seemingly nugatory works which sometimes can make it difficult to find just the right book when searching for a resource. Bundles can also frustrate, since they often will include either several volumes already owned or unneeded alongside a few especially useful ones.

Logos can make working with Greek and Hebrew extraordinarily streamlined. Browsing the NA28 or the BHS is easy on the eyes, and the user can quickly obtain morphological information by hovering over individual words with the cursor (lexical information is also available here for Greek, but not for Hebrew). Keeping the Exegetical Guide tool open in an adjacent window gives the user easy access

to grammatical and syntactical points relevant to the passage, further lexical data, and an at-a-glance translation. Perhaps the greatest feature is the ease of performing word searches from a text. Right clicking on a word opens a user-friendly, yet elaborate window of options for word searches based on lemma or morphology, or a variety of other possibilities, like opening to the selected word in a certain lexicon or simply opening the Bible Word Study tool. This latter tool displays basic lexical resources on the chosen lemma, a chart depicting how the lemma is translated in various editions, and links to some basic textual searches of the lemma in, say, the New Testament or Apostolic Fathers. Starting a word study from scratch, however, can be a challenge since *Logos* does not have built-in Hebrew and Greek keyboards, and its transliteration search can be a bit cumbersome at first. Searching for Greek or Hebrew words, thus, is easiest if the user has a base text in mind from which to start. On the other hand, when searching in Greek or Hebrew, *Logos* clearly displays the codes needed for basic searches and it guides the user through even long, complicated morphological searches.

An additional nice feature, the sentence diagramming tool, enables users to create text-flow or line diagrams with a simple, customizable interface. For example, it is easy to move lines of text around for a text-flow diagram without dealing with the troubles of tabs and spacing that can arise in a word processor. As a major drawback, though, these files can only be exported as XPS documents.

Logos 5 is generally user friendly, but sometimes the sheer amount of information overwhelms. The number of tools available means that there are several different utilities where the user can find desired information, though some of these utilities are better than others. For example, it is easier to ascertain a good list of commentaries on 1 John by simply searching the library rather than by utilizing the commentary list in the Passage Guide. Or, employing the Bible Word Study tool can be an ineffectual first step if a user simply wants to see how a word is used in a certain corpus. Sometimes the simplest information, like Biblical cross-references, seems difficult to find. The Explorer tool shows cross-references, but it also shows much additional material of mixed value. As an example, the Explorer tool lists a plethora of cross-references for Hebrews 2:4, but nothing for 2:6, which is an Old Testament quotation; information on the OT quotation can be found, however, in the Passage Guide under "Parallel Passages" amidst a long list of other data. A user might wish to see the specific cross-references listed in, say, the NASB or the NA28, but these are not available. Thus, *Logos 5* can feel like a shotgun approach to information retrieval. Numerous media can provide a given set of data but not all of the media are of equal value.

Ultimately, *Logos* provides a phenomenal tool for interacting with a virtual library. The display reads easily and the program enables swift movement among and within resources. However, finding the right information and sifting through the extraneous can prove tiring if the user chooses the pre-designed guides and tools. So, for the user interested primarily in exegesis, *Logos* can sometimes get in the way of the helpful information, and other software may prove more straightforward. But for the user primarily interested in a digital library, *Logos* proves indispensable.

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Camtasia Studio 8.1.0. Software. Okemos, Michigan: TechSmith. Released June 18, 2013. \$299.

Camtasia Studio is a screen-capture, video-editing software. This reviewer has created over six hundred short videos using Camtasia 6 and 7. It is a versatile, reliable, and easy-to-use product. However, with the new features in version 8.1.0, a great product is now even better.

There are a number of free screen-capture recording programs available online (such as *Jing* that TechSmith makes), but they all have no or very limited editing capabilities. However, *Camtasia Studio* has robust editing capabilities, allowing one to make a professional product fitting for any school, church, business, or personal setting. Here are the basics of what *Camtasia Studio* does. Anything viewable on a computer screen can be captured and edited in *Camtasia*: a PowerPoint slide show, a YouTube video, a webcam recording, a television show, a lecture while sitting at one's desk or standing in front of a class, a demonstration of how to use software, or the playback of a video recording. In addition to editing, such as omitting one's "uhs" and "ums," one can add music, audio, and callouts (such as arrows, underlines, highlight boxes, or text boxes, just to name a few). The Zoom-n-Pan feature allows one to zoom in to show small text better or pan across a picture, allowing for a nice Ken Burns effect. Also, a professional-looking cover screen then can be nicely transitioned (with twenty-five different effects) to the main body of the show, such as an effect in which the cover screen rolls up like a scroll to reveal the main video. One can insert markers into the video which enable the viewer to jump to specified sections of the video, such as various sections of a Table of Contents.

Editing is quick and easy. This reviewer has made videos for training faculty members in how to use software, training students how to do homework assignments, such as to explain how to use the *Logos* Bible study software or how to color code a passage in a Gospel harmony, and training students about grammar and syntax in Koine Greek. However, several features in release 8.1 make *Camtasia Studio* even more useful, and this reviewer is looking forward to producing many videos with this product.

The standout new feature is Hide a Color, also known as Green Screen or Chroma key, and it is an improvement over its Picture in Picture option. This tool allows one to insert a video of oneself into another video or picture because the original green background is erased, although any color background can be used. All of a sudden the person is lecturing by the Coliseum in Rome without ever leaving Bug Tussle, Texas. Or, he appears in a PowerPoint presentation, pointing to an important text, explaining a picture, or pushing text away text with a swishing of his arms. This is a professional, studio-quality effect now put into the hands of the average Joe for a reasonable price. With a four dollar, 6' x 6' green cloth from WalMart and no special lighting, this reviewer had great results. It may be asking too much, but it would be nice to remove more than one color. Then one could remove a background as well as one's shirt and just be a floating head to add to a picture of a Roman statue.

Two other very useful new features are quizzing and hot spots, and they make the completed video interactive with the user. Quizzing allows insertion of quizzes at any spot in the video. The producer can choose multiple choice, true-false, short answer, or fill-in-the-blank questions. This helpful feature allows the producer to help ensure the viewer understands the material. Scores can be sent to the teacher

via e-mail or using SCORM in a learning management system, such as Blackboard. Hot spots are another helpful feature. For instance, a video can contain instructions for how to do a project in a PC or Mac. At any point in the video, a message can appear with two buttons. Click on one button to jump to the PC instructions. Or, click on the other button to jump to the Mac instructions.

Other nice features are useful as well. Now there are an unlimited number of tracks one can add to a video. Each new video file, audio file, or image goes on a new track. The new Grouping feature allows one to group several images, such as a superimposed arrow, box, and a circle, treating them as one image so they can easily be repositioned. Stitching enables the merging of two video clips into one clip so that a special effect (such as a zoom in) can span across one clip to the next clip. Also, the TechSmith Smart Player is a nice tool one can use to view the completed video and use all of its special features. However, one can save a *Camtasia Studio* video in the following formats: MP4/FLV/SWF – flash outputs, Windows Media Video, QuickTime Movie, AVI, M4V, MP3, RM, CAMV, or GIF.

Adding more question types in the quiz option would be nice, such as a matching or a hot spot question. Also, it would help to give more quiz use options, such as an answer percent a person must achieve before proceeding to the next section of the video.

Here are four ways any classroom teacher can use *Camtasia 8.1*. First, flip the classroom. Record a lecture for students to watch prior to class so that they can discuss the subject in class. The lecture can be video only (using a camcorder or webcam), a video merged with a screen presentation, such as PowerPoint, or an audio added to a screen presentation. Insert quizzes on the video to keep students actively engaged in the learning process. Second, record a homework or assignment explanation. For a difficult assignment, it is nice to be able to let students rewatch the instructions as many times as needed. Third, record training videos on how to use software needed in class or how to use the learning management system. Fourth, produce a video about how to do good research on the Internet (yes, it is possible).

Camtasia 8.1 has many uses in church ministry. Put videos on the church website which introduce the church's staff, ministries, and special events, such as Vacation Bible School. A video can walk a visitor through the nursery and preschool policies and procedures of the church. A pastor or Sunday School teacher can post a video introducing a new sermon or Bible study lesson series. Transform the routine camp or mission trip slide show pictures and music to involve audio testimonies or video testimonies of participants as the pictures display.

For both the classroom and church ministry, *Camtasia 8.1* can easily change a YouTube video into a format that can be shown without an Internet connection. One can also involve students in video production. For instance, use *Hide a Color* to let students create a video placing them in biblical scenes.

This software is highly recommended for classroom, church, and personal use. It puts full-featured, studio-quality editing tools into an affordable, easy-to-use product. It has an excellent series of free training videos on the Internet—made, of course, using *Camtasia 8.1*.

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