

how the early church interpreted the transfiguration as a theophany and a revelation of Christ's divine nature. This historical approach is complemented by a strong theological framework, particularly in the author's use of Chalcedonian Christology to argue for the unity of Jesus's divine and human natures (chap. 4).

Written from a broadly evangelical perspective, Schreiner's *The Transfiguration of Christ* is a significant contribution to the study of this central yet often overlooked event in Jesus's life and ministry. Ultimately, the author succeeds in elevating the transfiguration's profile within Western Christian thought, challenging readers to see it not merely as a historical event but as a transformative reality with enduring implications for faith and practice. Schreiner's work invites others to allow the transfiguration's light to illuminate the path of discipleship, spiritual growth, and participation in God's redemptive plan.

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***One Grand Story: How the Bible Tells its Story & Why it Matters.* By Ched Spellman. Cedarville, OH: Codex Books, 2024, 175pp., \$14.99.**

Ched Spellman is Professor of Biblical and Theological Studies as well as Lead Developer of Online Bible Programs at Cedarville University. One of his interests is teaching others how to read the Bible according to its canonical shape. His stated purpose of this short book "is to introduce the exciting study of biblical theology to those in classrooms (college and Seminary students) and local churches (pastors, lay leaders, church members, and casual readers)" (17).

Part one begins by introducing the topic of biblical theology. Spellman presents it as reading Scripture with a "big picture" in mind rather than being focused on just the text at hand (seen in chapter 2). This big picture strategy is guided by the intent of the author and not the mind of the reader. In Spellman's view, the biblical authors were reading the scriptures as they wrote their own contribution to the canon. They intentionally connected the book they were writing to the larger picture of the biblical canon. Next, Spellman describes how each small unit of Scripture fits into the metanarrative of Scripture. In his view, the author intends for the

reader to experience the world of the narratives as if it is the real world.

Beginning in chapter four, Spellman offers some practical reading strategies for recognizing the canonical shape of the metanarrative of the Bible. He suggests that readers pay attention to things like a character's last words, the covenants, the gospel presentations, and more. Spellman then presents an example of how his method can be brought to bear through a reading of John's Gospel. For him, the payoff is in the way that the good shepherd of the Old Testament Prophets is presented as the Shepherd-King of the Davidic line.

In chapters seven through nine, he demonstrates how his reading strategy pays off with individual biblical texts. Spellman begins with an exploration of the Gospel of John to show that John is the sort of text one must read again and again in order to grasp its full significance. He illustrates his point by showing the way Genesis and Revelation also depict Jesus as "the Lion of Judah" and "the descendant of David". John's Gospel can be read as contributing to and benefiting from an entire biblical theology. In chapter nine, Spellman guides his readers through a theological examination of the idea of death, pointing us to Psalms of Lament such as Psalm 22.

Part one ends with a concluding chapter that encourages the reader to continue their study of the Bible through the lens of biblical theology. Part two presents some suggested questions for further research along with bibliographic material that will help students answer those questions. This section points the reader toward further study and growth in the use of biblical theology after one finishes the book.

Spellman does a fine job of accomplishing his purpose. For example, the second part of the book would be quite helpful for students in a college or seminary setting, but it is probably too heavy for most church members. Even so, the inclusion of this section might allow this textbook to work well as a college-level textbook for a course on biblical theology. This section could be incorporated into the class as a way of guiding students toward research topics for semester papers. For students this is a great primer on reading canonically, a method for biblical theology.

The other group Spellman focuses on is lay leaders. Professional theologians are not the intended audience for this book, so they would likely gain little from the book other than an appreciation for Spellman's style and economy of words. On the other hand, the people in the pews at most local churches would benefit immensely from this work. The way

Spellman introduces vocabulary and reading strategies to lay leaders in the first part of the book is outstanding. In addition to its usefulness as a textbook, this book might be a great resource for lay leaders or for pastors to have on the shelf to loan out.

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***2000 Years of Christ's Power (5 Volumes)*. By Nick Needham. Fearn, Ross-shire, Scotland, U.K.: Christian Focus Publications, 2016–2023, 2915 pp, \$149.95.**

Church History is an important field of study for anyone dedicated to gospel ministry. Every generation of Christians can (and ought to) learn from those Christians who have gone before. Yet, grasping even a summary knowledge of two millennia can be daunting. Many church historians have attempted single-volume, double-volume, and multi-volume summaries of Christian history. Each project reflects the doctrinal or methodological context of its author. Some histories privilege historical theology. Some focus on institutional development. Many English-language texts neglect Eastern Christianity after the Great Schism and Roman Catholicism after the Council of Trent. Publishing constraints and human finitude leave the historian with difficult decisions about which people, events, developments, and regions to include.

Nick Needham, lecturer of Church History at Highland Theological College, makes a grand effort to write a comprehensive and accessible account of Christian history in these five volumes. There is much to commend this new work in Church History. Though readers might balk at a nearly 3,000-page set, Needham has provided a great blessing to anyone interested in learning about the history and development of the Christian faith. Needham's chapters are divided into concise, cogent subsections of a few pages that make it an ideal option for those who wish to read more history but cannot dedicate hours at a time to uninterrupted reading. Needham is a master of taking complex events or ideas and distilling them into 3–5 pages of analysis. One would be blessed reading through these books for 10–15 minutes per day.

All approaches to church history reflect the context and priorities of