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**David Atkinson, *The Message of Genesis 1-11. The Bible Speaks Today*; Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1990, 190 pages.**

As Series Editors J.A. Motyer and J.R.W. Stott affirm, "*The Bible Speaks Today* describes a series of both Old Testament and New Testament expositions, which are characterized by a threefold ideal: to expound the biblical text with accuracy, to relate it to contemporary life, and to be readable" [from the General Preface]. Thus these volumes give more attention to application and interaction with contemporary life than is the case in most commentaries, and also give more space to serious exposition of the text than is found in some sermons. David Atkinson, who is Fellow and Chaplain of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, authored not only *The Message of Genesis 1-11* in this series but also *The Message of Ruth*.

Atkinson's exposition is accessible, clear, and well-ordered. The main sections and subsections of the commentary follow the breaks indicated by the literary structure of the narratives in Gen. Within the subsections, the arrangement of the exposition is based on central motifs and themes which are organized in a logical and topical way. Atkinson has read widely. When dealing with exegetical and interpretive points he draws upon a wide range of ancient and modern theologians, and is well informed on all the difficult issues. More importantly, he integrates his interpretation of Gen 1-11 with the rest of the Old Testament and especially with the New Testament. In applying the timeless truths of Genesis to today, he evinces an astonishing breadth of familiarity and skill in addressing contemporary moral and social issues. He interacts with a broad range of modern authors, many outside of Protestant theology. His audience is the world of English readers, not an evangelical ghetto.

Yet, there is a certain unevenness in Atkinson's approach. At times one is impressed by elucidation both insightful and original, and based squarely on the text. At other times Atkinson begins by citing one of his favourite authors such as Jurgen Moltmann and carries the discussion forward more in the manner of dogmatic theology. A good example is a subsection on "Time" [p. 44-47]. The author begins by noting the Creator's division of time, allowing it to be ordered and certain segments to be invested with significance. The discussion expands, with reference to Roger Hargreaves' children's book about "Roundies and Squaries". Then the New Testament teaching is taken into account along with a comment from Karl Barth. The struggles of Augustine concerning time are described; further illumination is provided by a citation from C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*. Atkinson argues for the idea that God is lasting rather than timeless by referring the reader to debatable passages found elsewhere (Exo 15:18; Ps 90:1-2; Isa 40:28) when Gen 1 might well be used to establish the thesis that God is the Creator of Time. The discussion concludes with

a prayer from Augustine and one from Michael Quoist. Elsewhere an exposition on guilt is imported from Martin Buber without substantiation from the text [p.88]. Many comments appear as strange bedfellows like the citation from Gandhi side by side with one from the Apostle Paul [p.174].

In a number of places the author's attempt to be contemporary leaves him open to the charge of departure from the truth. When expounding on the divine image he develops the idea that "we become Real through relationships of love" which derives more from the children's book *The Velveteen Rabbit* by Margery Williams than from the Genesis text [p.38-40]. One wonders what implications this has for those who view an unborn baby as less than human. On the theory of evolution Atkinson attempts to distinguish between biological hypothesis and world-view, affirming that only the former is in conflict with Christian belief in the Creator [p.31]. There is no certain position taken concerning the Documentary Hypothesis and in a number of places Atkinson speaks of the editor(s) rather than boldly affirm an author, namely Moses, as did our Lord Jesus [p.123, 135, 137, 168,169]. The flood is not necessarily universal [p.120] and the long lives of the pre-deluvians need not be considered literal [John H. Walton has recently demonstrated the plausibility of these big numbers in *Ancient Israelite Literature in its Cultural Context*, p.111-134]. Atkinson's concern for singles is laudable but the following statement is hardly clear or helpful [p.73]:

Genesis 2 describes the human person at many levels of life: physical, emotional, relational, spiritual. Our sexuality covers all of these. If it is true, as we shall see, that what we may call 'genitality' belongs in marriage, it is also true that people who are not married are not for that reason non-sexual persons. There is a sexual dimension to our affectionate relationships with men and women of the same and the opposite sex, which needs to find appropriate and creative expression, even when 'eroticization' is inappropriate.

Homosexuality is a "falling short of the divine pattern" and cannot be endorsed as simply something "natural" [p.78] Atkinson affirms. Yet does Scripture really support the distinction which he draws between homosexual orientation and homosexual intercourse? Statements like the following stray in an effort to adapt to the modern scene [p.78].

Some would also wish to regard a committed loving homosexual relationship at a certain stage in a person's life journey as a 'least detrimental alternative' - and surely preferable to a life of sexual chaos, and in practical terms, certainly in the face of AIDS, *that may well be so*. But from Genesis 2 we are not at liberty simply to affirm homosexual relationships as an alternative to heterosexuality [italics added].

· Finally, in a section dealing with the roles of the sexes Atkinson states [p.71]:

There is no basis for the assertion of female inferiority that some seek to find in the fact that Adam says, '*She shall be called Woman*' (2:23). Adam does not 'name' his wife Eve until Genesis 3:20. Here, he does not use the standard naming formula which he used for the animals [italics in original].

This assertion is both unfair to the data of the Hebrew text and prejudiced. Atkinson considers the expression which includes the verb קרא ("to call") and the noun שם ("name") the standard formula - as in 2:19 and 4:25. Yet the formula קרא followed by ל prepositional phrase plus 'name' used in 2:23 is just as standard [see Gen 1:5,8,10, where the expression evinces God's discernment and authority over darkness, light, firmament, earth, and seas. See also George W. Ramsey, "Is Name-Giving an Act of Domination in Genesis 2:23 and Elsewhere?" *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 50 (1988):24-35. Susan Lanser has also clearly shown that the naming in 2:23 is no different from 3:20. See her "(Feminist) Criticism in the Garden: Inferring Genesis 2-3," *Semeia* 41 (1988),67-84.] Likely the noun שם in what Atkinson calls the standard formula is a generic substitute for the "name" in the alternative formula of Genesis 1:5, 8, 10. Moreover, an argument for male leadership indicates a different functional role which does not at all imply female inferiority. The argument presented by Atkinson and Phyllis Tribble before him is simply a feminist reading and a straw man.

It is difficult to commend Atkinson's exposition whole-heartedly. Being contemporary in our exposition of the Scriptures does not mean demonstrating a flair for liberal theologians and seeing how much sympathy can be expressed for the spirit of the age.

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**Oscar Stephenson Brooks, *The Drama of Decision: Baptism in the New Testament*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987, 177 pages.**

The author is Professor of New Testament at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in California. The rationale for the book is twofold: first, a personal curiosity about the meaning of baptism since the author's baptism fifty years prior to the book; and second, the author's conviction "that students of the Bible have overlooked the possibility that there is a common theme running through the baptismal texts of the New Testament" [p. x].

Brooks articulates this common theme as a dramatic declaration of a decision to enter a new lifestyle of obedience to Christ. In his words: "The act of baptism is that moment when the believer publicly dramatizes that he or she has come to know God and has accepted his offer of salvation" [p. 161].

Brooks develops this thesis through a lucid exposition of large sections of the New Testament surrounding explicit or implicit references to baptism. He begins by setting John the Baptist's ministry of baptism in the context of first-century religious movements, and then proceeds to explain Jesus' validation of John's ministry by his baptism at the hands of John. Jesus' baptism is seen as a pledge of obedience to God's call and as a means of clarifying his Messianic vocation. The apostolic doctrine of baptism is treated by expounding in turn the writings of John, Paul, and Peter. The account in John 3:5 of Jesus' reference to being born "of water and the Spirit" is taken as a reference to baptism, but as an act of "witness" to Jesus as Son of God, not as an efficacious sacrament. Paul's concept of the meaning of baptism is also seen as a witness of the individual, "an act dramatizing that by faith he belongs to Christ" [p. 111]. But it is Peter who says it most profoundly in his intriguing remark that "baptism now saves you" (1 Peter 3:21). This statement is interpreted as the logical centre of the epistle, and the entire epistle is seen as a baptismal homily. Brooks is quick to point out that Peter clarifies his statement with the remark that baptism saves not as an external action ("not as a removal of dirt from the body"), but as "a declaration of an appropriate awareness toward God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (his translation). This may be an accurate rendering of this difficult phrase, but it should be noted that "pledge of a good conscience" or "request for a good conscience" may also be the sense of the words. In any case, he rightly argues that Peter regards baptism as an event which mediates the personal experience of salvation through Christ, not by virtue of any power inherent in the rite, but as the event in which personal faith is concretely expressed [p. 142-143].

Brooks has given us in this book some very readable exposition of New Testament theology, but this asset is also the book's liability. Large portions of the book deal with interesting aspects of New Testament thought with little apparent connection to baptism, and the actual baptismal texts are not treated as rigorously as one would expect. So in the end, I am not sure that the book is really focused on baptism in the way that the author claims. This surprisingly superficial treatment of the actual baptismal texts is also seen in the relative lack of interaction with other scholarly treatments of baptism. I would have thought that a Baptist scholar would try to carry on a discussion with the work of G. R. Beasley-Murray and R. E. O. White, to mention only two Baptists who have written large books on baptism in the last generation. Brooks refers to such works in passing in some footnotes, but he does not interact with their arguments to any degree.

What surprises me most about the book is the author's claim that he has

uncovered something that has escaped the notice of students of the Bible. What is novel about the idea that baptism is essentially a personal declaration of faith and discipleship? Isn't this universally taught in Baptist (and other) churches? There is some solid and edifying material in this book, but it is hardly a groundbreaking piece of work.

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**Jacques Buchold, *Le Pardon et l'oubli*. Méry-sur-Oise: Sator, 1989, 178 pages.**

Jacques Buchold présente le pardon de façon très systématique. Il a divisé le "processus du pardon" en étapes précises et distinctes, qu'il intitule: l'offense, la colère, le pardon, la réconciliation. Développant chacune de ces étapes de façon très méthodique, l'auteur réussit bien à allier profondeur et sens pratique. Chaque domaine est aussi bien appuyé par d'abondantes citations pertinentes, ainsi que par des exemples bibliques appropriés.

L'étape de l'offense (chapitre un) est traitée de façon originale avec de bonnes nuances. Celle de la colère (chapitre deux) est traitée de façon équilibrée, en 29 pages. L'étape du pardon (chapters trois et quatre) couvre plus de 80 pages. La réconciliation (chapitre cinq) est plus succincte, couvrant 19 pages.

Certaines sections du livre sont à évaluer sérieusement. Il me semble que l'auteur a bien défriché le terrain, mais une étude plus complète est nécessaire. En page 17, l'idée selon laquelle l'offense implique toujours une relation d'individus et non de cultures, de sociétés, ne me semble pas assez nuancée. Un membre ne doit-il pas pardonner aux anciens, à l'Église, si ceux-ci l'ont offensé collectivement? De plus, Dieu n'a-t-il pas puni des familles, des villes, des peuples l'ayant offensé? De même, en page 20, l'auteur déclare que "nous ne pouvons pardonner que les offenses qui nous touchent personnellement." Au deuxième paragraphe, il écrit que les parents chrétiens n'ont pas à pardonner à l'individu qui offense leur enfant. Il m'apparaît que la notion de "propriété" des enfants aux parents, de l'homme à sa femme, du frère à un frère, etc., devrait être envisagée.

Enfin, une affirmation de l'auteur touchant la réconciliation doit être sérieusement évaluée: se basant sur l'exemple de Dieu envers l'être humain et sur Luc 17:3 (en page 120), il affirme qu'il ne peut y avoir de véritable pardon sans repentance de la part de l'offenseur. Cette idée a des implications très profondes. Je crois que M. Buchold vise juste en voulant éliminer le "pardon à bon marché", malheureusement abondant dans nos Églises. Toutefois, il nous faudra développer une position mettant en équilibre les textes de Luc 17:3 et de Marc 11:25.

L'ouvrage de Jacques Buchold est un excellent livre, le meilleur que j'ai lu touchant le pardon. Un livre à recommander à toute ouvrier œuvrant dans le domaine pastoral. Mes remerciements à l'auteur pour un travail bien fait.

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**Charles W. Deweese, *Baptist Church Covenants*. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1990, 239 pages.**

Last fall this reviewer had the privilege of being the speaker at the anniversary services of Fellowship Baptist Church of Grand Valley. Before the closing benediction, Pastor Earl Ambrose led the congregation in an affirmation of their church covenant. It was a moving experience to watch and one which is a firm part of our Baptist legacy, as Deweese shows in this timely study of Baptist church covenants.

In the foreword, Deweese, currently director of publications and communications for the Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, explains his reasons for writing this book. Very conscious that a regenerate church membership is vital for Baptist polity, he is rightly concerned about the various ways in which this Baptist distinctive is currently threatened by such things as "little concern for candidates' qualifications for membership,...weak attention to defining and carrying out membership responsibilities, ...large numbers of nonresident members, and numerous inactive resident members" [p. vii]. Historically, the responsible use of covenants by Baptists has been a real help in maintaining a truly regenerate membership. As Deweese notes [p. x]:

Faithful attention to the contents of a carefully formulated, biblically based covenant can deepen the quality of a church's fellowship, sharpen a church's awareness of vital moral and spiritual commitments, clarify biblical standards for Christian growth, and create and maintain a disciplined church membership.

Not all Baptists, though, have been in favour of church covenants. Hanserd Knollys (1598-1691), the great English Calvinistic Baptist leader of the 1600's opposed their use [p. 26-27], as have other Baptists down through the years. Yet, as Deweese amply demonstrates, the use of covenants has been a central part of Baptist church life in England [p.24-38], especially among the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Calvinistic Baptists, in the United States [p. 39-97] and in Canada [p. 98-106]. English Baptists, for instance, found them especially helpful in creating a sense of community among church members, in emphasizing the place of discipline

in local church life, and in reminding members of their need for regular patterns of public and private worship [p. 30-31]. Deweese, moreover, maintains that early English Baptist concern with correct doctrine, as evidenced in their production of confessions of faith, was balanced by their use of covenants, which highlighted "the ethical side of life" [p. 38; see also p. viii]. Yet, some of the covenants do contain doctrinal assertions [e.g. , p. 126-127, 128]. A highly valuable aspect of this book is the inclusion of seventy-nine Baptist covenants, the vast majority of them from Great Britain (thirteen), the United States (forty-nine), and Canada (eight).

In this century Deweese notes a marked decline among American and Canadian Baptists in the use of covenants. Among the reasons for this decline, Deweese cites: (1) the widespread availability of a printed uniform covenant, in particular that of J. Newton Brown; (2) a reaction to the legalistic use of covenants; (3) the growing secularism of western civilization and the accompanying lowering of moral standards; (4) the failure of Baptists to take seriously the doctrine of the church as found in their major confessions of faith; (5) more concern with numerical growth than with a regenerate membership [p. 89-91]. Of these reasons, possibly the most important is the ignorance of many Baptists with regard to the implications of their ecclesiology. Under the pressures of western individualism, they have forgotten that the New Testament Christianity is a social religion. However, Deweese also observes that since 1960 there has been a definite renewal of interest, at least in Southern Baptist circles, in the use of covenants. It would be interesting to know if the same is true of Canadian Baptists, or whether this reviewer's experience at Grand Valley was an isolated one.

The epilogue is an excellent "how-to" chapter on "how to prepare a church covenant," and the best contexts in which to use it. A helpful index rounds off this valuable volume and resource tool.

On p. 104, lines 11, 12, 15, 21, 25, 27, 28, 35, and 37 all should end in hyphens.

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**Jonathan Edwards, *On Knowing Christ*. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1990, 276 pages.**

Sitting down to feast on a meal of the works of Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) is like eating a hearty dinner after a season of fasting. While there is a shock to the system after having been deprived of substance, there is also special delight in the splendid taste. These two elements -substance and taste- are the unique blend that set extraordinary books apart from the ordinary. Much of the modern Christian literature seems to have taste, but

tends to leave the reader rather emaciated from the lack of substance. Those who long for something better I invite to the rich fare found in *On Knowing Christ*.

In this recent title published by the Banner of Truth, ten select sermons of Edwards are reproduced in easy-to-read print. Selections include such works as "God glorified in Man's dependance," "Safety, fulness and sweet refreshment, to be found in Christ," as well as his well-known and immensely powerful "Sinners in the hands of an Angry God."

Edwards' sermons are a real contrast to much of modern Christianity which is so preoccupied with "self" that God seems to have become a secondary concern. Worship services are evaluated by our "worship experience," rather than if God was pleased and glorified. Entertaining programs are based on the appeal to the tastes of self-centered man rather than being established on the values and principles of Scripture. Indeed, a great deal of daily Christian living seems to have so little true godliness that one tends to wonder if God is a significant part of our lives at all. It is Edwards' God-centeredness that is so refreshing and edifying to our atrophied spirituality. Among our vast array of man-centered idols he boldly declares the way to the throne of God "by whom and through whom and to whom all things exist."

A fine example of this is Edwards' sermon "God glorified in Man's dependance". This sermon was Edwards' first published work, preached previously to a large company of people including many ministers. It apparently had such an effect on several of them that they earnestly urged him to publish it so that a wider audience might profit from it.

Through a forceful presentation that enlightens the mind while at the same time stirring the conscience, Edwards encircles the reader with God's omnipotent posture towards us. Each page draws us into a deeper realization of our utter helplessness and emptiness apart from God. Gradually the conscience is awakened to the depth of ingratitude we have to this great God to whom we owe everything. In a powerful paragraph regarding our dependence on God for all the good we ever hope to enjoy, Edwards entices us to seek more earnestly after God [p.41-42]:

He is the highest good, and the sum of all that good which Christ purchased. God is the inheritance of the Saints; He is the portion of their souls. God is their wealth and treasure, their food, their life, their dwelling place, their ornament and diadem, and their everlasting honour and glory. They have none in heaven but God. The glorious excellencies and beauty of God will be what will forever entertain the minds of the saints, and the love of God will be their everlasting feast. The redeemed will indeed enjoy other things; they will enjoy the angels, and we will enjoy one another; but that which they shall enjoy in the angels, or each other, or in anything else whatsoever that will yield them delight and happiness, will be what shall be seen of God in them.

God has arranged this total dependence on him for a grand purpose -that God might always and only be glorified, and:

That God should appear full, and man in himself empty, that God should appear all, and man nothing [p.45].

Numerous believers have spoken of the debt they owe to Edward's writings for influencing their spiritual lives for good. Those who are privileged to dip into these pages will soon see why.

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**William R. Estep, *Revolution within the Revolution. The First Amendment in Historical Context, 1612-1789*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990, xviii+214 pages.**

The current political conservatism of many North American evangelical Baptists is far removed from the political perspectives of many of their seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Baptist forebears. As William R. Estep, who teaches church history at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, shows in this valuable study, English-speaking Baptists on both sides of the Atlantic played a pivotal role in laying the foundations for the religious liberty we currently enjoy. Estep argues that this was especially true in the United States, where the achievements of the American founding fathers such as James Madison and Thomas Jefferson cannot be separated from the work of leading Baptists such as Isaac Backus (1724-1806) and John Leland (1754-1841). He convincingly demonstrates that Baptists historically have "called for the institutional separation of church and state" [p.9], and have been in the vanguard of the struggle for religious freedom.

Estep begins his examination with the experience of the sixteenth-century European Anabaptists, whom he regards as direct forerunners of English-speaking Baptists. The thought of Balthasar Hubmaier (1480-1528) and John Smyth (d.1612), the founder of the General (*i.e.* Arminian) Baptists, is central to Estep's discussion at this point. Smyth, for instance, refused to countenance the idea, common to his day, that the officials of the state had a decisive role to play in the life of the Church. In maintaining this position, Estep comments, Smyth "was simply echoing Balthasar Hubmaier" and other leading Anabaptists. In other words, "Smyth only articulated in English that which had been born and nurtured on the Continent" [p.48]. It should be noted that the organic link which Estep makes here between the Anabaptists and the Baptists is, in the opinion of this

reviewer, highly questionable. The origins of the English-speaking Baptists are better sought within the cradle of the English Puritan-Separatist movement. The fact that both the continental Anabaptists and the English Baptists reached similar conclusions does not in itself demonstrate a direct link between the two. Since both groups appealed to the Scriptures as the standard for the life of the church, it is quite possible that similar conclusions were reached independently. Moreover, an explanation for the emergence of the Baptists from the English Separatists (who, in turn, had emerged from the Puritan movement of the late 1500's) is readily available, while there is little concrete evidence to demonstrate that continental Anabaptism was decisive in the emergence of the Baptists.

Estep then turns his attention to three early General Baptist authors: Thomas Helwys (d.1616), Mark Leonard Busher (*fl.*1612-1642), and John Murton. Helwys' position on religious liberty, for instance, was quite remarkable for his day. Despite a real aversion for other religious positions but that of the General Baptists, he argued for complete religious freedom for all, including Muslims and Jews: "mens religion to God is betwixt God and themselves...let them be heretikes, Turcks, Jewes or whatsoever, it appertynes not to the earthly power to punish them in the least measure" [p.53]. Estep goes on to show that the seventeenth-century English Calvinistic Baptists had a similar commitment to religious toleration. Estep concludes this survey of the English Baptists by noting that while their advocacy of religious liberty and the separation of church and state did not find full implementation in their homeland, these principles did find a lodging place in the American colonies and eventually played a vital role in the birth of the United States [p.71].

An examination of the Baptist witness in the American colonies from its origins down to the time of the American War of Independence occupies the remaining chapters of the book. Estep begins with Roger Williams (1603-1683), who stands at the fountainhead of the Baptist movement in America, and whom Robert D. Linder has recently described as the "first champion of religious freedom" [*Dictionary of Christianity in America*, eds. Daniel G. Reid *et al.* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1990), p.1258]. Williams insisted, like his Baptist contemporaries in England and Wales, that faith cannot be coerced by the state: "can the sword of steel or arm of flesh make man faithful or loyal to God?" [p.81]. Although Williams eventually parted company with the Baptists, his tenacious commitment to religious liberty profoundly shaped the way that they subsequently thought about the relationship of the church and the state. For instance, Isaac Backus, probably the most influential American Baptist leader of the mid-eighteenth century, echoes Williams' insights when he argued that "the essence of the Christian faith, the faith by which one is justified before God, [is] its voluntary nature," and "to be valid, faith must be free from any coercive power of man or government" [p.115]. The other key eighteenth-century American Baptist leader who argues vehemently for the separation

of church and state was the "rugged individualist," John Leland, to whom Estep devotes his final chapter. He shows conclusively that Leland's views influenced Jefferson and Madison, with both of whom Leland was on friendly terms.

Estep's work has obvious relevance for American Christians, especially those whom Estep describes as "present-day evangelicals of the New Right" [p.178]. Yet, in the way that it graphically illustrates the outworking of eternally valid Biblical principles it has much to teach anyone who reads it. It is a salutary reminder that God's "kingdom is not brought about by the force of law or the arm of flesh but by the power of God" [p.179].

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**Timothy George and David S. Dockerey, eds., *Baptist Theologians*.  
Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1990, 704 pages.**

The genesis of this collection of essays lies in a conversation between the editors in Cave Hill Cemetery in Louisville, Kentucky during the summer of 1987 about the need to retrieve the thought of "the most notable shapers of Baptist theology," a number of whom lay buried around them in the cemetery. This interest in the recovery of the past is not an antiquarian one, for, as the editors assert, "by seeing how others before us have articulated the faith, we will be better able to formulate a proper theology for our turbulent times" [p. x]. Timothy George, the Dean of Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, and David S. Dockerty, currently an editor with Broadman Press, are especially hopeful that the book will act as a balm in the struggle between conservatives and moderates in the Southern Baptist denomination. Whether or not this particular aim is realized, the book is a much-needed exploration of valuable aspects of our theological heritage as found in the lives and thought of thirty-three Baptist theologians. The majority of these theologians are Americans - and Southern Baptists at that: of the thirty-three authors who are studied, nearly half are Southern Baptists, eight are English, and one (Clark H. Pinnock) is a Canadian. This heavy concentration on Southern Baptists could be considered a weakness, at least by Baptists not part of and not familiar with the Southern Baptist scene. Moreover, inclusion of one or two definitely minor Southern Baptist figures (such as Patrick Hues Mell [1814-1888]; see even the evaluation of this thinker, p. 218-219) only exacerbates this problem. However, the strength of the book more than offsets this weakness. There are fine analyses of such authors as John Bunyan (1628-1688) by Harry L. Poe, Isaac Backus (1724-1806) by Stanley Grenz, J.P. Boyce (1827-1888) by Timothy George, and

Clark H. Pinnock (1937- ) by Robert V. Rakestraw. The value of many of these studies is increased by the fact that they interact with contemporary scholarship, some of it in as yet unpublished theses. For instance, J. Barry Vaughn's study of Benjamin Keach (1640-1704) makes good use of Murdina D. MacDonald's discussion of the hymn-singing controversy amongst the late seventeenth-century Calvinistic Baptists in her superb 1982 Oxford thesis, "London Calvinistic Baptists 1689-1727: Tensions within a Dissenting Community Under Toleration." Bibliographies placed at the end of each of the studies are helpful for those who wish to examine the individual thinkers in more depth.

This reviewer's research interests in eighteenth-century English Baptists naturally led him to give Timothy George's essay on John Gill (1697-1771) and the one by Phil Roberts on Andrew Fuller (1754-1815) a close reading. Unquestionably Gill and Fuller were *the* leading Baptist theologians of this period. Yet, they have been remembered in markedly different ways. Gill has been traditionally portrayed as a leading proponent of the High Calvinism which helped to stifle much of the outreach and missionary vision of the English Baptist churches in the eighteenth century [p. 77]. George, though, dissents from this standard portrayal of Gill. He examines three areas of Gill's teaching which purportedly demonstrate that he was a High Calvinist: his defence of eternal justification, *i.e.*, the consideration of justification as an eternal act of God as distinguished from the personal application of justification to the elect believer in time and space; his supposed doctrinal antinomianism; and his view on preaching the gospel to all and sundry. George outlines Gill's defence of eternal justification, and admits that it is "a perilous teaching," for it encourages "sinners to think of themselves as actually justified regardless of their personal response to Christ and the gospel" [p. 92]. Yet, George argues that Gill's defence of eternal justification was never intended as a preëmption of the necessity for the believer to repent and exercise faith. As for the charge of doctrinal antinomianism, George rightly stresses that Gill "strenuously resisted the temptation to make light of the importance of good works in the life of a Christian" [p. 92]. In examining Gill's view of whether or not the lost should be indiscriminately urged to embrace Christ, George concurs with the conclusions reached by Thomas J. Nettles in his recent study of Gill's Calvinism. Nettles maintains that Gill did indeed affirm that it was the duty of all men to repent of sin and the duty of all who heard the gospel to believe it. While Gill thought that the phrase "to offer Christ" lacked theological foundation, he had no objections to encouraging sinners to come to Christ [*By His Grace and For His Glory* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), p. 73-107]. In a review of Nettles' book, Robert Oliver has argued that when Gill's writings are judiciously examined, the weight of evidence still supports the traditional view that he was a High Calvinist ["'By His Grace and for His Glory'", *The Banner of Truth*, 284 (May 1987), 31-32]. Another recent study of Gill's thought in the context of federal theology by Thomas K. Ascol confirms this

judgment ["The Doctrine of Grace: A Critical Analysis of Federalism in the Theologies of John Gill and Andrew Fuller" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1989)]. Nevertheless, George's essay indicates that there is a real need for a full-scale reëxamination of Gill's theology. George's concluding paragraphs, which deal with the vital piety of Gill in the face of the death of his daughter Elizabeth in 1738 are particularly moving, and reveal another side to this important eighteenth-century theologian.

In his article on Andrew Fuller, Phil Roberts, who teaches evangelism and church growth at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, provides a reliable introduction to the theology and life of one whom A.C. Underwood once described as "the soundest and most creatively useful theologian the Particular Baptists have ever had" [*A History of the English Baptists* (London: The Baptist Union Publication Dept. (Kingsgate Press), 1947), p. 166]. Roberts rightly notes that Fuller's main theological contributions lie in the realm of soteriology [p. 132] and that these contributions are "intensely evangelical and evangelistic" [p. 129]. Roberts takes note not only of Fuller's quarrel with High Calvinism, but also of his dispute with Sandemanianism, an eighteenth-century version of "intellectual believism" [p.129]. Fuller's decisive rebuttal of this version of the Christian life in his *Strictures on Sandemanianism* should be required reading for those inclined to the position of Charles Ryrie and Zane Hodges in the current debate over "lordship salvation." The bibliography of works about Fuller should include mention of the chapter on Fuller in Nettles' *By His Grace and For His Glory*. Ascol's work on Fuller (mentioned above), not available to Roberts when he drew up this essay, is also a vital piece of work on Fuller's theology.

Flanking the thirty-three studies in this book are two essays: one by George, a splendid plea for "The Renewal of Baptist Theology," and an essay by Dockery on some worthy Baptist theologians and authors not included in this book. George's essay well describes the state of Baptist thought today when he states that "we have lost touch with the great historic traditions which have given us our vitality and identity" [p. 13]. One solution to this dilemma, George advises, is to take this book in hand, become re-acquainted with some of our spiritual forebears, and "think theologically about the Baptist tradition" [p. 14]. This is solid advice, which this reviewer heartily endorses!

The year of birth under the picture of John Gill should be 1697, not 1679 [p. 79]; Thomas Scott's *Warrant and Nature of Faith Considered* was published in , not 1718 [p. 128]; the reference to C.H Spurgeon in *The World Newspaper* can hardly be in an issue from 1818, since Spurgeon was not born till 1834 [p. 273]; "Roland Hill" on p.283 should be "Rowland Hill." Finally, even if George's revised portrayal of Gill be fully adopted, by no stretch of the imagination can Gill be described as a leader in eighteenth-

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**William T. Kirwan, *Les Fondements bibliques de la relation d'aide.*  
Méry-sur-Oise: Sator, 1988, 261 pages.**

Le docteur Kirwan, avec ses deux doctorats, D.Min. de Union Theological Seminary (Richmond), et un Ph.D. en Psychologie clinique de l'Université de Saint-Louis, tente d'intégrer la psychologie et la théologie. Bien que sa formation dans les deux disciplines soit adéquate, il est difficile, dans un ouvrage du genre, d'exposer les principes de base pour faire cette intégration et de démontrer en même temps comment cette intégration se fait en pratique. Le présent volume montre plus particulièrement la façon dont l'auteur fait cette intégration.

Dans un premier temps, l'auteur présente quatre conceptions de la relation d'aide, en se basant sur le modèle de Carte. Il favorise la conception unifiée, car celle-ci correspond le mieux à l'enseignement de la parole de Dieu [p. 4]. L'importance de réaliser que l'observation scientifique ne contredit pas la Bible est fortement soulignée. Les chrétiens se doivent de faire la distinction entre les découvertes de la psychologie et les interprétations philosophiques non fondées. En terminant cette première partie, l'auteur mentionne brièvement les trois approches à la relation d'aide (analytique, humaniste, behavioriste), ayant pris soin au préalable de développer un modèle de compréhension basé sur les concepts bibliques touchant l'être humain et ses besoins.

La deuxième partie du volume touche l'impact de la chute sur la vie émotionnelle de l'être humain, ainsi que des conséquences de celle-ci sur son identité. Cette identité devra être restaurée dans ses aspects cognitif, émotionnel et volitif. Pour ce faire, l'auteur propose trois composantes indispensables au processus de restauration de l'identité personnelle [p. 124], soit (1) l'acceptation de soi-même, (2) la conviction de péché, et (3) la confession à Dieu. Ces étapes ne sont pas seulement religieuses en soi, mais les principes psychologiques permettant ces étapes y sont aussi traités.

La troisième partie du livre traite des principes fondamentaux de la relation d'aide chrétienne. Ces principes diffèrent très peu de ceux énoncés par Carkuff (voir Lucien Auger, *Communication et épanouissement personnel*, 1972, pour une description complète en français). Le but de la première étape est d'amener la personne conseillée à faire confiance et à éprouver le sentiment d'appartenance à la famille de Dieu. L'auteur a véritablement compris que ce qui aide, ce ne sont pas tant les conseils apportés, mais plutôt

le genre de relation que existe entre l'aidant et l'aidé. L'empathie, l'authenticité, l'accueil chaleureux et la spécificité sont les habiletés favorisant une relation saine conduisant à l'exploration de soi. Dans la deuxième étape, il faudra aider la personne à acquérir une vision objective, saine et cohérente de ses problèmes, de sa conception d'elle-même, des autres et du monde [p. 171]. Le dévoilement personnel, la confrontation et la spontanéité franche seront utilisés par l'aidant afin d'accomplir ces buts. La troisième étape est le service, où l'aidé est appelé à utiliser vers l'extérieur, envers la communauté, ce qu'il a appris. Je crois que cette étape est une véritable contribution de la littérature chrétienne à la psychologie qui a la réputation de centrer l'être humain vers lui-même.

Un livre à lire pour les personnes intéressées à la relation d'aide, spécialement pour ceux et celles qui cherchent à améliorer leur façon d'aider. Quelques-uns seront probablement froissés par sa critique de certains auteurs (p. ex. Adams), mais son respect et son désir de motiver les chrétiens à rechercher l'excellence dans leurs relations, aidera à faire face à ces critiques qui me semblent bien légitimes.

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**Eric Lane, *I Want to Be Baptised*. London: Grace Publications, 1986, 124 pages.**

For several years I have sensed the need for a basic book on baptism, one that is designed for persons who are considering baptism or those already baptized who just want to think biblically about baptism, one that is written with clarity but avoids the simplistic proof-texting so common in the books and tracts with which I am acquainted. This book is not the last word, but it goes a long way toward meeting this need. The author of this book is Eric Lane, but the book reveals next to nothing about his identity beyond his name. Given the publisher and the Foreword by David Kingdon, I would guess that he is British, but beyond this I cannot deduce much of anything. He appears to be theologically trained and may be a pastor, but what is clear is that he teaches a Baptist view of baptism.

Lane's purpose in the book is avowedly "neither academic nor polemical, but spiritual" [p. 10]. Nevertheless, the book is academic enough to wrestle with some nuances of the Greek New Testament, and polemical enough to say what baptism is *not* as well as what it is. This is not a criticism, only an observation that the book may be more ambitious (and necessarily so) than the author wants to admit.

The author argues that Matt 28:18-20 is the only true starting point for a baptismal theology [p. 28]. He argues from this passage and others that

professed disciples are the only proper subjects of baptism [p. 49-50]. He argues that immersion is the only appropriate mode, and that Paul's reference to "one baptism" (Eph 4:5) implies that there could only be one proper mode [p. 18-19]. He adopts a Reformed view of baptism as a means of grace (as opposed to a mere symbol) in which the grace of assurance (not the grace of regeneration) is conveyed [p. 119]. However, he concludes that "ordinance" is probably a better term than "sacrament" due to the accumulated connotations of the latter term [p. 57]. His concluding summary effectively explains the biblical conditions of baptism [p. 108-115] and the blessings of baptism [p. 115-124].

In my opinion this book illustrates the superiority of British Baptist thinking on baptism to the typical North American mindset. Eric Lane capably explains the basis for believer baptism by immersion and develops the ethical dimensions of baptism as a commitment to discipleship. Beyond this, he recognizes that New Testament language about baptism is strong enough to imply that God's grace is operative in the event, even though he rightly rejects the idea of baptismal regeneration.

Having said all this, I must state some concerns about the exegesis which undergirds some of Lane's conclusions. I agree with his conclusions about the meaning, subjects, and mode of baptism, but there are occasional statements which leave me perplexed. For example, it is not at all clear that Paul's assumption that all his Christian readers had experienced "one baptism" implies that there could be only one mode. This begs the question by assuming that mode is inherent in the definition of the rite, which may be true but needs to be demonstrated. One could just as easily argue that "one baptism" implies running versus still water or outdoor baptism versus indoor baptism as to argue that it implies immersion versus pouring.

In his attempt to prove from Matt 28 that the subjects of baptism are already disciples, Lane misuses the details of the Greek text. He rightly points out that the object of the verb "make disciples" is neuter (τὰ ἔθνη), while the object of "baptizing" is masculine (ἀνθρώπους) but wrongly infers that the second group must be a smaller group than the first, *i.e.*, the disciples who come out of the nations. That this is not the point of the change to ἀνθρώπους can be seen in Matt 25:31, where the same shift occurs in the description of Christ's judgment of the nations. There, τὰ ἔθνη are gathered before Christ, and he divides ἀνθρώπους. The distinction between the two terms is that of people groups versus individuals within the groups, but each term describes the same totality of persons.

Another interpretive move which is highly suspect is Lane's use of passages which supposedly speak of Spirit-baptism as proof-texts for what he wants to say about water-baptism. The need for this is clear when he writes: "It is almost always the case in the epistles that 'baptism' means Spirit-baptism" [p. 93], or "Paul never speaks explicitly about baptism in his epistles" [p. 96]. So, for example, the classic text of Rom 6:3-4 is interpreted as a reference to Spirit-baptism, but is then employed as a significant text

about the meaning of water-baptism. But if there is really no more than an allusion to water-baptism in such texts, then it hardly seems legitimate to build a theology of baptism on them.

In spite of these criticisms of certain details, I consider this book to be a significant contribution which can be very helpful as an introduction to a theology of baptism.

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**John F. MacArthur, *The Gospel According To Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 253 pages.**

Apparently from day one the evangelical camp has had mixed feelings about this book. Reportedly, Moody Press, the publisher of MacArthur's *New Testament Commentary* series, refused to publish it. Zondervan stepped in and the result has been to surface what is arguably the weightiest soteriological issue of our day, namely the nature of the gospel and particularly that of saving faith. MacArthur believes that Biblical salvation is "Lordship Salvation." While this term was first coined by those who believe that Jesus' lordship is a false addition to the gospel (just as their self-acclaimed "Grace Only" or "Free Grace" position implies), MacArthur is willing to concede its usage for the sake of argument [p. 28,29, n.20]. In no uncertain terms he is willing to agree with one of his opponents' definitions: "Lordship salvation ... is the view that for salvation a person must trust Jesus Christ as his Savior from sin *and* must also commit himself to Christ as Lord of his life, submitting to His sovereign authority" [p. 221, n.2, italics added]. For MacArthur faith and repentance are not two successive and sequential events, but "faith encompasses obedience" [p. 173]. He thus can say: "Saving faith is more than just understanding the facts and mentally acquiescing. It is inseparable from repentance, surrender and supernatural eagerness to obey" [p. 31]. In stronger terms he states it this way: "Saving faith is a commitment to leave sin and follow Christ at all costs. Jesus takes no one unwilling to come on those terms" [p. 87]. And: "Forsaking oneself for Christ's sake is not an optional step of discipleship subsequent to conversion; it is the *sine qua non* of saving faith" [p. 135].

According to the preface MacArthur is directly disagreeing with two personal friends, both former professors of Dallas Theological Seminary, Zane C. Hodges and Charles C. Ryrie. He describes their position and others of the same ilk in terms of an "easy believism that makes no moral demands on the lives of sinners" [p. 16] and "a tendency to view faith as merely intellectual assent to a set of biblical facts" [p.67]. But couldn't MacArthur

be charged with putting works into justification? No, for “repentance and submission are no more human works than faith itself. They are every bit the work of God - not elements added to faith, but essential aspects of God’s work of faith in a human heart” [p.88]. In this respect MacArthur is thoroughly Reformed.

The book is divided into five parts. In Part One he introduces the abandonment of “Lordship Salvation.” Historically, he lays the blame at the feet of this century’s Lewis Sperry Chafer (1871-1952) and by extension, other dispensationalists. While admitting that he is a traditional premillennial dispensationalist, MacArthur disagrees with their hermeneutical tendency to dichotomize truth to the point of making unbiblical distinctions (in particular law/grace; salvation/discipleship; carnal Christian/spiritual Christian). In Parts Two, Three and Four his thesis is advanced. Part Two centres on Jesus’ gospel ministry to individuals: Nicodemus; the woman at the well; Matthew; the blind man in John 9; the rich young ruler; Zaccheus; Judas’ betrayal and Matthew 11:25-30. Part Three discusses Jesus’ teaching ministry to the disciples. To illustrate salvation the following seven parables are examined: the four soils; the wheat and the tares; the pearl of great price; the labourers; the lost sheep; the lost coin; and the prodigal son. Part Four considers more thematically Jesus’ proclamation to the multitudes. Relevant terminology employed in Jesus’ preaching is defined, including repentance, true faith, judgment, discipleship, and the lordship of Christ. The book concludes with Part Five and two appendices. The first is a brief N. T. theology on “Lordship Salvation” and the second is a historical walk from the *Didache* through the patristic era, Reformers, Puritans and revivalists to this century’s A. W. Tozer. While the antiquity of a view doesn’t make it right, in this reviewer’s mind MacArthur convincingly substantiates his claim that “lordship salvation” is neither modern (*pace* Hodges) nor heretical (*pace* Ryrie) “but is the very heart of historic Christian soteriology” [p. 237].

Without depreciating the author’s thesis the following suggestions are offered so that this debate may continue to be productive. (1) Theologically, more reflection and less imprecision in syntax and the defining of terms is needed. For example, on the one hand, the author refers to faith as “the flipside of repentance” [p. 112]. But, on the other hand “repentance is at the core of saving faith” [p. 32]; it “is a critical element of saving faith” [p. 162]. He thus seems to say that repentance is both a bedfellow or companion of faith *and* an integral part of faith. Likewise, he seems to shift from saying obedience is synonymous with faith [p. 174] *and* that faith encompasses and produces obedience [p. 173,174]. Not that conceptual distinctions between two terms are impossible, but more systematizing and precision in logic is needed. (2) For a book on the theology of salvation one might hope stylistically for less dramatic overstatement. MacArthur has chosen a part commentary - part expository sermon approach. One only has to read Hodge’s *Absolutely Free* and especially Robert N. Wilkin’s writings in the

*Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society* (an entire journal edited by Wilkin to defend the "Grace Only" position) to realize that MacArthur's tendency to make an absolute assertion with subsequent footnote proviso or caveat has only created more heat than light. Accusations of a belief in perfectionism and works-salvation are unjustified. However, a plea is offered for a *systematic* theological treatment of "Lordship Salvation." (3) Exegetically, one glaring fallacy stands out. In order to demonstrate the continuing nature of saving faith he refers to nineteen texts using the verb πιστεύω in the present tense. Then he says, "If believing were (*sic*) a one-time act, the Greek tense in those verses would be aorist" [p. 172]. But to counter such an inclusive argument only one counterexample is needed (*e.g.* Acts 16:31). While his point may be valid it is certainly not sufficient to prove the case. (4) The following *errata* were noted: p. 97, n.2, 2nd line, the omission of the prep. "to"; p. 159, 19th line, the reference to Luke 5:31 should be Luke 5:32.

Without any obligation to adopt a Free Grace view of saving faith the above suggestions are offered to help strengthen MacArthur's position. May he be applauded for not buying into a false disjunction between grace and demand, and demonstrating they are not mutually exclusive for "salvation is a gift yet it costs everything" [p. 31]. Or as the Reformers put it: "Faith alone brings salvation, but the faith that brings salvation is never alone."

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**I. Howard Marshall, *1 Peter. The IVP New Testament Commentary Series*, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991, 184 pages.**

This new series of New Testament commentaries by InterVarsity, of which 1 Peter represents the first offering, seeks to distinguish itself by being "a series to and from the church that seeks to move from the text to its contemporary relevance and application" [p. 9]. Marshall, in his preface, notes that he has kept this objective in mind by continually asking himself, "What has 1 Peter to say to us today?" [p. 12]. The editors of the series sought to develop a "unique format that expounds the text in uninterrupted form on the upper portion of each page while dealing with other issues underneath in verse-keyed notes" [p. 10]. In this they have wonderfully succeeded. With most commentaries, one loses, or never establishes, the overall flow of the text because it is dealt with on a word by word or phrase by phrase approach. Readers are continually pointed to other articles, footnotes, or left to ponder cryptic theological comments that can only be fully understood by reading another book. This commentary, while working with the text on a verse by verse method, is very readable. Greek transliterations, scholarly

concerns and alternate understandings are most often dealt with in the lower portion of the page. The result is that one can read for pages on end without having to break for a reference. The other strength of this book is found in its emphasis on applying 1 Peter to today. Marshall at many points shows that, though we are separated by thousands of years from Peter's readers, "Peter's message does not really require translation for today" [p. 138]. For example, in the section on slaves and their masters (2:18-20) Marshall offers five areas of application to today.

A few things need to be said on the commentary itself. On page 43, after the heading, "The Prophecies of Salvation" (1:10-12), Marshall states, "The use of prayers to exhort the congregation, and even to educate the Lord Himself, is not exactly unknown in the church today, and those who adopt such practices can claim excellent precedents." I could not understand what the author meant by, "and even to educate the Lord Himself." I asked Dr. Marshall if he could elaborate on this statement, or if it might simply be an editorial oversight. I include part of his response in a letter dated July 12, 1991:

I am grateful to you for drawing my attention to the problem on p. 43 of 1 Peter. Yes, there is an editorial oversight here. People do use prayers a. to exhort the rest of the congregation and b. to teach the lord something; and of course 1 Peter provides a parallel to and backing for a. [but not, of course for b.]. I hope that readers will realise that this is what was really intended!

The author's theological position remains pretty much in the background. He notes that "foreknew" in 1:2 means that "God took the initiative and chose them before they had done anything to deserve it" [p. 31]. However, in discussing 2:8, the author strongly rejects the idea that this verse teaches "double predestination" [p. 71-73]. To understand 2:8 he states that we should be "guided rather by 2 Peter 3:9" [p. 71] and that the element of being destined refers not to people being destined to stumble, but that they are destined "to stumble if they disobey" [p. 73].

In the section dealing with the relationship between husbands and wives (3:1-7), the author rejects seeing the commands and teaching presented here as being significantly culturally conditioned [p. 100]. He understands Peter to be primarily addressing a Christian woman married to a non-Christian husband. I believe that Peter's command at 3:1 applies to all Christian women, with a special application to those married to non-Christians. The "if" in 3:1 "so that, if any of them do not believe the word," emphasizes that the case of unbelieving husbands is not foremost in Peter's mind. Moreover, Marshall's comments in this section clearly put him in the camp of "Biblical feminists," who see a new relationship between men and women having been brought about by the death and resurrection of Jesus [p. 99]. In other words, the effects of the fall are undone. I do not believe this understanding fits the context of what Peter has to say to Christian women. If the command

of submission "may be transcended in a Christian marriage" [p. 100], why does Peter, in a positive manner, refer to the example of the submission of Sarah to Abraham? Surely this godly couple do not parallel the situation faced by a Christian woman married to a non-Christian man. Nor would this example serve any purpose if the command to submit "may be transcended in a Christian marriage."

Considerable attention is given to the discussion of 3:18-22. It is easy to get lost and become utterly confused trying to put together all the combination of how these verses have been understood throughout the ages. While presenting a number of alternative views, the author does a commendable job of leading the reader through this difficult section.

In summary, in view of its readability, clarity and emphasis on application this commentary is to be highly recommended for non-scholars. Pastors and teachers will also benefit from these areas. However, they would be best served by reading through this commentary prior to engaging in a lengthy expository ministry, in order to appreciate the flow of this epistle. Then, as they begin their detailed expository work, they would also profit by using the more detailed exegetical works on 1 Peter such as J. Ramsey Michaels, *1 Peter* (Waco, Texas: Word, 1988); Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1988); or Peter H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1990).

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**Richard A. Muller, *God, Creation and Providence in the Thought of Jacob Arminius*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991, x + 309 pages.**

Richard A. Muller's main purpose in writing this book is to provide the reader with a sense of the central place which Jacobus Arminius' view on God and the world have in his theology and to understand his thought in the light of its intellectual precedents and antecedents. Muller contends that, in spite of the historical and biographical work which has been done on him, "Arminius has never been accorded his rightful place in the development of scholastic Protestantism" [p. ix]. Most, if not all, attempts to understand the theology of Arminius have taken place, according to Muller, within the framework of the famous controversy which Arminius had with Reformed Orthodoxy over a constellation of theological issues associated with predestination. This has, in turn, "served to obscure the larger general outlines of his theology and to conceal utterly the positive relationships that existed between Arminius' thought and method and the intellectual life of post-Reformation Protestantism" [p. 4].

According to Muller, Arminius (1560-1609), like his Reformed contem-

poraries, was deeply dependent upon the resources of mediaeval scholasticism in his attempt to articulate a theology of God and God's relation to the world for presentation in the "scholastic" context. Indeed, Muller maintains that both Reformed theology of the late sixteenth century and the theology of Arminius could properly be viewed as modified versions of Thomism. Generally speaking, while the Reformed modified Thomist arguments in the direction of a more Augustinian view of the effects of sin and in a Scotist direction on epistemological issues, Arminius modified Thomist arguments on human sinfulness in a more optimistic direction, under the eclectic influence of Francisco de Suarez (1548-1617) and Luis de Molina (1535-1600), and thus proved more open to the "new" rationalism of the seventeenth century.

Several specific features of Arminius' theology lead him, according to Muller, in a different direction than his Reformed contemporaries. First, Arminius views *theology as a practical discipline*, as a discipline which aims at rather than grasps its object, oriented toward "the end of blessedness with God" [p. 64]. The doctrine of God is thus of decisive importance to his theology as both the point from which the whole emerges and toward which it is teleologically oriented. Indeed, Muller notes, Arminius' teleological arrangement of the various theological loci, lead him to order this theology in a direction which lends itself to a less predestinarian structure since it emphasizes God as the *final* rather than *first efficient* cause. In short, Arminius emphasizes God as the goal of theological discussion and indeed of all existence rather than as the One who causally directs and/or irresistibly orders all existence.

A second crucial feature of Arminius' theology which leads him in a direction different from his Reformed contemporaries is, according to Muller, his introduction of the category of middle knowledge (*scientia media*) into his understanding of the divine intellect. In his discussion of the divine life or the operative (*ad extra*) attributes of God (intellect, will and power), Arminius introduces the notion of middle knowledge which he borrows from a sixteenth-century Catholic debate on predestination. God's knowledge is, for Arminius and the Reformed scholastics, both necessary knowledge (*i.e.*, knowledge of all possibilities, exclusive of any determination by the objects themselves) and visionary knowledge (*i.e.*, knowledge of definite objects and states of affairs) - although the Reformed placed the certainty of visionary knowledge under divine causality rather than in the free determination of the object of knowledge. Arminius, however, maintains that God also knows *conditionally* as the result of a prior creaturely act. In the case of God's knowledge of the elect this means that God's knowledge is non-causal and contingent upon the creatures' acceptance of the antecedent condition for salvation which God has ordained, *i.e.*, faith. The introduction of this limitation to God's knowledge, Muller maintains, "qualifies the relationship of God to the entirety of the created order" [p. 165].

If God's knowledge is, in some ways, conditioned for Arminius, by the

free acts of his creatures, so is the determination of his will. Arminius rejects what he understands to be a contradiction in the Reformed system between the irresistible will of God which is hidden (*voluntas beneplaciti*) and does not will the salvation of all, and the "inefficacious" will of God which is revealed (*voluntas signi*) and wills the salvation of all. For Arminius, God's antecedent willing is congruent with his revealed will. His antecedent will is, however, a general will by which God ordains the means of salvation "without reference to man's good or evil use of his power of choice or to the work of grace upon the human will" [p. 189]. God does not thus appear to offer salvation to all while withholding it irresistibly from some. Rather, he ordains the means of salvation to which he universally, though not irresistibly, induces the human creature by the grace of creation and providence.

Arminius' view of creation and providence is likewise significantly divergent from the Reformed theology of his time. According to Muller, Arminius views creation as the communication of the goodness of God and he therefore rejects the view of the world implied by supralapsarianism, *i.e.*, as a subordinate goal in the ultimate goal of the reprobation of some. Creation is understood within the practical or teleological orientation of Arminius' theology as "the foundation of that right by which God can require religion from man" [p. 233]. In this way creation and grace are cojoined so that creation establishes the context within which the divine relationship to the world is understood. God's providence, which Arminius restricts to the realm of time, is understood in congruence with the limitations which he has placed on divine knowledge and willing. While providence operates solely within the temporal order to preserve goodness by means of universal grace which enables the creature to abstain from sin, it permissively concurs in creaturely acts of sin. For God does not grant, Arminius writes, "the power and will of the creature to commit an act" and then "deny the concurrence without which the act cannot be done" [p. 263].

Muller's work is carefully written and developed. He is judicious in his dealings with the material and makes his points modestly without overplaying the evidence. Muller obviously wants us to see the philosophical and theological tendencies and sympathies in Arminius' theology which lead him in the distinct direction he travels over against his contemporaries. His argument resorts to neither polemical bantering nor simplistic Biblical appeals. In what remains we want to consider two theological points - one which might have helped Muller's discussion and another which Muller's discussion raises.

In *God, Creation and Providence* Muller has interpreted some of the dominant motifs within the theology of Arminius in the light of the intellectual context within which they were developed. It is Muller's conviction that the eclectic borrowings of Arminius result in a theology which emphasizes God's relation to the world as an intellectually, volitionally and temporally self-limited one. It is, nevertheless, a theology which views God as providentially active under these limitations within creation

for the salvation of the world. Indeed, it seems that Arminius so emphasizes the temporal operation of providence within creation for the salvation of the world that it becomes the primary mode of God's gracious activity. The language which Arminius uses with reference to creation and providence is in some ways identical to that which theologians have used of the incarnation (*i.e.*, as a self-limiting communication of the goodness of God which effects our salvation). It is this feature of Arminius' theology, a feature to which Muller draws our attention [p. 266-268], which raises some questions about the role Christology plays in the overall development of his theology. If God is providentially (and primarily) active within creation for the salvation of the world, what is the role assigned to the reconciling act of Christ? Unfortunately, while we are given some clues within Muller's discussion, there is no major section devoted to the role of Christology in his development of the way in which God is related to the world in the theology of Arminius. This might, moreover, have been easily included since Muller has already done some work on the Christology of Arminius [see p. 14, n.40].

Finally, one of the central problematics out of which Arminius worked, according to Muller, is the contradiction which is posited in God by the Reformed Scholastics when they maintain that God's will (*voluntas signi*) is only penultimately committed to the salvation of all. Behind this apparent universal beneficence is God's determinative will (*voluntas beneplaciti*) which is, according to the Reformed Scholastics, restricted to the efficacious salvation of some. Arminius' answer to this seeming contradiction is to limit God's determinative will to the means of salvation and to grant all - through the grace of creation and providence - the "power" to meet the conditions which God effectively declares.

The commonality between both of these views, which is curious to note, is that they are each able to address the issue of the scope and effect of salvific grace apart from a serious consideration of the universal propitiatory work of Christ. For the Reformed Scholastics, God's effective salvific grace is limited to some - the determination of whom is logically distinct from the work of Christ. For Arminius, God's effective salvific grace is limited to those who exercise the power of choice in meeting its preordained conditions - a power which is not grounded in the work of Christ. What the dispute between Arminius and the Reformed Scholastics highlights, I think, is the need for a more Christocentric consideration of the way in which God is related to the world for its salvation. If Christ's propitiatory sacrifice was for the salvation of all then we might consider the scope and effect of salvific grace in this light. By beginning with the Word of salvation which God speaks in Jesus Christ we can avoid some of the speculative hypotheses about God's eternal decrees and native human powers which result when our thinking in these matter operates without due theological constraint.

An error in printing occurs on p. 276 in which the same material is printed in successive paragraphs. The material beginning with "in particular, Ramus' denial..." is included in both the middle and final paragraphs. It

probably should have been included only in the latter position.

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**Albert de Pury, éd., *Le Pentateuque en question. 2e édition.* Genève: Labor et Fides, 1989, 421 pages.**

Voilà un ouvrage utile pour celui qui navigue en suivant les méandres que lui propose le Pentateuque. Dans ce texte, né d'une convention entre les Universités de Suisse romande, douze collaborateurs de renom visent à faire le point sur les recherches actuelles dans le domaine du Pentateuque.

Deux thèmes centralisateurs occupent le livre: le premier constitue une enquête des "couches" littéraires ou rédactionnelles, et le second est un examen de grands thèmes ou traditions du Pentateuque. Les quatre sections composées d'articles se présentent sous les titres suivants:

1. Position du problème et bref historique de la recherche. Est établie la situation présente de la recherche en soulignant le bouleversement qui s'est opéré au sujet du consensus autour du système de Wellhausen. Faut-il rappeler que celui-ci distinguait trois couches rédactionnelles dans cet ordre chronologique: le Jéhoviste (J/E), le Deutéronome (D), et la source sacerdotale (P). Or, une secousse a ébranlé ce système par la parution des ouvrages de H. H. Schmid et R. Rendtorff, eux-mêmes dépendants d'idées déjà fécondées par des chercheurs non-conformistes.

Rendtorff part de la constatation que le Pentateuque, sous sa forme actuelle, se compose d'unités majeures qui toutes sont caractérisées par une grande cohérence interne et par une indépendance presque totale à l'égard des autres unités, des unités incubées en vase clos qui auraient progressé jusqu'à une rédaction finale. Il a donc fallu, durant la période exilique ou postexilique, faire converger toutes ces traditions isolées par le biais d'un gabarit rédactionnel pour atteindre la forme finale, canonique. Outre l'in vraisemblance que représente un développement autonome de chaque unité littéraire, un grand nombre de questions demeurent inexplicées par cette hypothèse: Comment reconnaître la rédaction finale? S'agit-il d'une réinterprétation, d'une réadaptation d'une Pentateuque encore touchable?

A l'autre extrémité de la chaîne qui aboutit à la rédaction finale, nous rencontrons le problème des origines. Deux questions se posent pour distinguer les deux aspects bien différents du problème. On peut s'interroger soit sur l'origine des ensembles littéraires soit sur l'origine du "Pentateuque" en tant que projet littéraire global. Ces questions nous apparaissent intéressantes puisqu'elles sous-tendent de nouveaux *a priori*.

Une fois exploré, le Pentateuque ne révèle pas d'emblée son itinéraire,

malgré les recherches de la nouvelle critique. L'appréciation de cette première partie du livre, qui révèle les enjeux exégétiques, suscite déjà l'émergence d'autres lectures de l'A.T. Cette brèche dans la forteresse du système de Wellhausen ne pourra être colmatée.

2. Les couches littéraires. Les articles de cette deuxième partie proposent une nouvelle approche où le texte est abordé dans sa configuration présente. Cependant, il ne faudrait pas conclure que la nouvelle critique ait adopté sans réserve la forme canonique du Pentateuque. Au contraire, les auteurs soulignent l'erreur de concevoir le texte biblique comme uni et original; cette lecture est qualifiée de naïve ou de fondamentaliste, une équation qui ne nous réjouit guère. En revanche, nous saluons le commentaire de Rendtorff qui définit la tâche de l'exégète comme étant le repérage de grandes unités littéraires. Cette approche favorise en premier lieu la vision synthétique qui relativise la vision analytique, et met en second plan l'analyse diachronique, c.-à-d. génétique; donc, on accorde la priorité au texte reçu.

J. L. Ska touche à l'identification et à la fonction de P, vu traditionnellement comme un rédacteur possédant la connaissance de sources anciennes. Pour Ska, les textes de P se lisent mieux comme étant le produit d'un concepteur, en définitive l'architecte du Pentateuque.

Viennent ensuite les contributions de J. Vermeylen et H. Seebas qui, à l'inverse de Rendtorff et Ska, s'interrogent sur les premières étapes littérales de la formation du Pentateuque et sur la pertinence des hypothèses Yahviste et Élohiste (mise à l'écart depuis un certain nombre d'années). Ils apportent peu d'éléments nouveaux au débat puisqu'ils emploient encore les mêmes méthodes de soustraction du texte pour arriver à des "familles de textes", une démarche qui demeure très attachée au système Wellhausen.

3. Thèmes et traditions. Dans le débat sont abordés des problèmes exégétiques de détail qu'il n'est pas possible de résumer ici sans risquer de tronquer les analyses. L'article de Samuel Amsler a retenu particulièrement notre attention puisqu'il réexamine les textes narratifs comme adjoints à un enseignement, une Torâh dans le sens dynamique du mot (une instruction). Aussi voit-il le Pentateuque non comme une histoire des origines où la loi est accessoire, mais comme un texte législatif, certes complexe, qui a la portée d'une révélation vivante de Dieu. D'autres articles occupent cette partie, alimentant le débat de façon intelligente (la tradition patriarcale, Israël à la montagne de Dieu, la sortie d'Égypte).

4. Essais de synthèses. Cette dernière partie conclut que la recherche actuelle porte son attention sur les forces qui, à partir des éléments plus anciens, ont créé l'ensemble du Pentateuque. D'où une application à l'étude de la forme finale du texte en vue d'une compréhension globale. Ce retour vers la vision globale soulève en même temps la question d'une théologie du Pentateuque. Comment doit-on aborder l'ensemble? Le Pentateuque est-il une Torâh, une narration? Toutes ces questions exigent une théologie qui fusionnera les grands ensembles littéraires. L'ouvrage s'achève avec un

index des citations bibliques sans compter qu'une riche bibliographie en bas de page accompagne le texte.

Un livre recommandé, une lecture incontournable pour tout étudiant sérieux qui s'intéresse aux questions vétérotestamentaires, et qui désire comprendre les enjeux de l'exégèse contemporaine. Toutefois, tant que le Pentateuque sera en question, il n'offrira guère de réponses.

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**Daniel G. Reid, Robert D. Linder, Bruce L. Shelley, and Harry S. Stout, eds., *Dictionary of Christianity in America*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1990, xxx + 1305 pages.**

In his recent history of the London Library John Wells takes note of the phenomenon of "creative laziness."

People forget how important it is to be lazy in libraries. Not of course idle; idleness means day-dreaming. Laziness means reading the books one ought not to be reading, and becoming so absorbed in them and following the trails along which they lead you, so that at the end of the day you still have most of the reading to do that you had before that morning. Creative laziness broadens the mind. [Cited Alberto Manguel, "A heaven, a haven, a library in London", *The Globe and Mail*, (Saturday, February 1, 1992), p. 16.]

The stimulus that libraries offer in this regard is also present, albeit to a much lesser degree, in dictionaries. And the contents of this new dictionary of North American Christianity offer a rich feast for anyone who occasionally indulges in "creative laziness." Needless to say, it is also an excellent resource tool for information about the history of Christianity on this continent. Here are superb articles on such major items of this history as the "Pentecostal Movement" (R. G. Robins), Protestant piety ("Spirituality: Protestant" by D. G. Reid), and "World War I (1914-1918)" (R. D. Linder), as well as solid pieces on more minor items like Sarah Edwards, the wife of the well-known New England divine ("Edwards, Sarah Pierpont (1710-1758)" by R. A. Tucker), the "Huguenots" (R. D. Linder), the Confederate army general "Stonewall" Jackson ("Jackson, Thomas Jonathan ("Stonewall") (1824-1863)" by D. B. Chesebrough), William McMaster, the Canadian Baptist philanthropist ("McMaster, William (1811-1887)" by I. S. Rennie), Sidney Rigdon, a Baptist minister who became first a Campbellite, then an early Mormon leader ("Rigdon, Sidney (1793-1876)" by T. L. Miethe), and the "Salem Witch Trial" (H. S. Stout). Bibliographies

appended to nearly all of the 2400 or so articles in the dictionary increase its value.

Inevitably, in a work of this size and nature, there are some articles which fall short in one way or another. It is surprising that in the bibliography for J. H. Edwards' article on Jonathan Edwards, the most recent book listed is the excellent 1966 study of Edwards' theology by C. C. Cherry (a book which has recently been reissued in 1990 by Indiana University Press). A good number of very fine scholarly works on Edwards have appeared in the last twenty-five years: Harold P. Simonson, *Jonathan Edwards: Theologian of the Heart* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974); Iain H. Murray, *Jonathan Edwards: A New Biography* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1987); Miklós Vető, *La pensée de Jonathan Edwards* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1987); Robert W. Jenson, *America's Theologian. A Recommendation of Jonathan Edwards* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Nathan O. Hatch and Harry S. Stout, eds., *Jonathan Edwards and the American Experience* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Allen C. Guelzo, *Edwards on the Will* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1989). Similarly, J. R. Fitzmier's article on Asahel Nettleton (1783-1844), the New England evangelist who was a leading figure in the Second Great Awakening, fails to mention in its bibliography the most recent major biography of Nettleton by John Thornbury: *God Sent Revival* (Welwyn, Hertfordshire: Evangelical Press, 1977).

It is a well-known fact that the English Calvinistic Baptists emerged from the womb of the Jacob-Lathrop-Jessey church (so named for its first three pastors: Henry Jacob, John Lathrop and Henry Jessey) in London in the 1630's and 1640's. The various groups that came out of this church to form the nucleus of the Calvinistic Baptists did so peacefully and with the full blessing of the mother church. J. T. Spivey is thus not entirely correct when he states that the Calvinistic Baptists emerged through "several schisms" in the Jacob-Lathrop-Jessey church ["Particular Baptists" (p. 870)]. Then, N. A. Hardesty's article on the "Ordination of Women" is a somewhat tendentious treatment of what is currently a highly volatile issue. She avers that there is "textual and artistic evidence from the early centuries of the church" portraying women as deacons, presbyters, and bishops [p. 847]. Sources from the early church with regard to the role of women must, however, be used with considerable caution. There is abundant evidence for deaconesses, and clear evidence from heterodox groups like the Gnostics that women served as presbyters. However, in orthodox congregations it is highly debatable that women ever functioned as ruling or teaching presbyters, let alone bishops. For further discussion on this issue, see especially the extensive study by Roger Gryson, *The Ministry of Women in the Early Church*, trans. Jean Laporte and Mary Louise Hall (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1980). Also helpful is the brief discussion by H. Wayne House, *The Role of Women in Ministry Today* (Nashville, Tennessee:

Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1990), p. 79-99. But these are only isolated problems. This dictionary is a marvellous resource tool, one which will undoubtedly become a standard reference work in the years to come.

Atticus Greene Haygood (1839-1896) was elected bishop in 1890, not 1990 [p. 515]; on p. 927, the second column, line 8, "Scripture" should be preceded by the word "of." The book "Freewill Baptists for Half a Century, 1780-1830" [p. 1049] lacks any mention of its author, should be in italics and not bold print, and should be preceded by the word "Bibliography."

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**R. C. Sproul, *Abortion: A Rational Look At An Emotional Issue*. Colorado Springs, Colorado: Navpress, 1990, 207 pages.**

**Randy C. Alcorn, *Is Rescuing Right? Breaking The Law To Save The Unborn*. Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1990, 249 pages.**

Both of these books approach the emotionally charged abortion debate with the admirable intention of avoiding any further stoking of the coals by inflammatory rhetoric. Yet neither draws back from adopting a forceful "pro-life" stance with respect to the different aspects of the abortion issue they address.

The central thesis of R. C. Sproul's *Abortion: A Rational Look At An Emotional Issue*, which is published under the auspices of Ligonier Ministries, is that "abortion-on-demand is evil" [p. 7]. Although the purpose of Ligonier ministries is to renew the minds of Christians through "seminary-level biblical teaching," Sproul recognizes that the need for an ethical middle ground on which the religious and non-religious might join forces against abortion is not well served by appealing exclusively to the Bible. Consequently, he sets out to demonstrate that abortion is not simply "against the law of God," but also "against the laws of nature" (which he sees as underlying the American Constitution) and "against reason" [p. 7].

He begins this by exploring how the Bible, natural law, and the American constitutional tradition strongly affirm the "sanctity" of human life. But can the fetus - and Sproul regards this as the core question in the abortion debate - be regarded a living human person? After a detailed review of the Scriptural evidence (which, he acknowledges, provides no *explicit* answer to the question) and the testimony of medical science, he concludes that both clearly see the life of a human person as beginning at conception. Having established that the fetus is a living human person, Sproul next plunges into the always dangerous mire of politics. Arguing that Romans 13 regards one of the fundamental obligations of government to be the protec-

tion of life, he proceeds to insist that the Church has the right - the "disestablishment clause" of the American Constitution notwithstanding - prophetically to remind the state of this fundamental obligation and to call on it to "outlaw" abortion [p. 90].

There is much more in Sproul's book, including a lengthy critique of various pro-abortion and pro-choice arguments, a sympathetic defence of the view that abortion is not an unpardonable sin, and an elaboration of how a pro-life strategy of speaking up might usefully target different groups on behalf of the unborn. Yet his approach to the abortion issue is not without its difficulties, even for the already converted. One difficulty lies in Sproul's call for "special treatment under the law" in cases where pregnancy is caused by incest and rape [p. 133]. However compassionately motivated, this exemption of incest and rape cases from the proposed legal ban on abortions cannot be easily reconciled with the author's repeated insistence on the sanctity of life. Equally problematical is his approval of the passive action of letting "nature" kill the mother rather than having "man" actively intervene to kill the child when only one may be saved [p. 134]. Even though he is not "zealous" to make this a matter of law, his willingness automatically to sacrifice the lives of women in such cases raises, and not merely for feminists, deeply disturbing questions about what value he really attributes to women's lives. Moreover, Sproul fails to explain how his approval of a passive response to this life-threatening situation can be squared with his claim elsewhere that Jesus "positively" commands us to "do all that we can to promote life" [p. 36]. Another kind of problem arises from Sproul's misunderstanding of the ethical foundations of the American constitution, which lie not in the doctrine of natural law (as he claims), but in the doctrine of natural rights. A strong argument can be made that this latter doctrine, with its powerful emphasis on individual liberty, entails a "right" to abort. If this is so, then there is a much greater distance between the foundations of the American polity and the heart of the Christian gospel than Sproul realizes.

Despite these difficulties, *Abortion: A Rational Look At An Emotional Issue* is a useful addition to the pro-life literature, particularly for those looking for a comprehensive and thought-provoking treatment of the abortion issue free from the abstruse details and complexities of a book designed for scholars. Sproul's welcome willingness to confront difficult issues, his direct and readable style, and his helpful inclusion of summaries and questions at the conclusion of each chapter make this book very suitable for the kind of group study for which it was intended.

One question which Sproul leaves unresolved is whether Operation Rescue with its attendant strategy of civil disobedience is a legitimate position for "pro-life" forces. In his *Is Rescuing Right?* Randy Alcorn confronts this question head-on, arguing that "biblically and morally" Christians may engage in non-violent civil disobedience to save the unborn and that Operation Rescue is an appropriate vehicle for doing so.

After briefly setting out the biblical and scientific grounds for regarding the unborn as human persons worthy of protection and recounting his own reluctant conversion to “rescuing,” Alcorn focuses in on the central question: May Christians morally and biblically rescue? Believing that most Christians will say “no” in the abstract to this question, he presents 15 “test cases” to enable his readers to discover their real feelings about whether civil disobedience is ever right. His strategy is effective: few Christians, I think, will read through the test cases without saying “yes” to civil disobedience at least once. Alcorn follows this up with a detailed examination of seventeen biblical examples in which civil disobedience is approved of for God’s people. The bulk of these, the author concludes, justify “the refusal to take innocent human lives, and intervention to prevent innocent human lives from being taken” [p. 51].

Subsequently, Alcorn turns to an exploration of the basis of the authority of the state, seeking to head off any objections to his argument arising from Paul’s call in Romans 13 for submission to the ruling authorities. Romans 13, Alcorn argues, really implies that a government “gains its authority from properly representing and carrying out the will of its divine master” [p. 59] and that this divine will mandates the protection of people, especially the vulnerable, from the evil actions of others. Contending that good lawmakers do not “make,” but rather “discover,” a (natural) law which God has placed in man’s heart, he criticizes *Roe v. Wade* as an “arbitrary” decision by justices who failed to understand that their real job was “to discover and apply the already-existing law of God regarding the unborn” [p. 80]. Rescuers, then, are simply trying to model obedience to the higher authority of God’s law.

Candidly acknowledging that some of the criticisms of the Rescue Movement are justified, Alcorn evenhandedly calls on it to turn away from tactics - for example, harsh criticisms of non-rescuers or deceptive methods - that are inappropriate for followers of Christ. But he is no less certain that many of the Biblical, social and personal objections to rescuing (including the interesting charge that rescuing is “post-millennial”) are unjust and he devotes two useful chapters meticulously responding to them.

Alcorn’s book is not likely to allay all of the concerns Christians may have about rescuing. His assertion that various Biblical examples of civil disobedience justify the refusal to take, or the intervention to prevent the taking of, “innocent” human lives is questionable in light of the Scriptural evidence suggesting that no human being is “innocent” even at birth (see, for example, Psalm 51:5). The author does not consider another possible interpretation of the examples he cites in this respect, namely, that civil disobedience is justified only for preventing the killing of God’s people or people who reckon in His plans for redemption. If this alternative interpretation is valid, then Alcorn’s Biblical defence of civil disobedience to protect all unborn children is seriously weakened. Another difficulty with his book lies in the ambiguous nature of its views on politics. Alcorn’s assertion that

the obligation of Supreme Court judges (some of whom may not be believers) is to discover and apply the already-existing law of God reveals an essentially theocratic view of politics. This not only belies his claim that his position is not “post-millennial,” but it also represents an implicit rejection of the liberal-democratic tradition practiced in the U.S., which seeks to avoid divisive disputes about what God “really” wills by a constitutional provision separating religion from politics. Elsewhere, however, Alcorn draws an important distinction between sins that should be legally proscribed (such as murder) and those that should not (such as sexual immorality), which appears to accept the fundamentals of liberal-democratic politics. For he makes this distinction rest on the issue of “*whether an innocent person is victimized, and even whether he lives or dies*” [p. 197, emphases in original], thus unwittingly replicating in barely disguised form the core liberal-democratic principle that the state can rightfully intervene not when it is a matter of protecting a person from his or her own harmful behaviour, but only when it is a matter of protecting a person from the harmful behaviour of others.

Nevertheless, *Is Rescuing Right?* is a very engaging book, capable of severely challenging its readers’ consciences and forcing them back to the Scriptures for a reassessment of their views on rescuing. Its power to engage its readers is largely a result of the author’s genuine ability to infuse his passionate commitment to rescuing with generally careful argument, balanced judgement, and a sensitive concern for preserving a bridge of fellowship to those who might disagree with him. Alcorn’s book successfully demolishes the prevailing prejudice that rescuers must be “ ‘off the wall,’ militant people, unbalanced rebels, shouters or malcontents” [p. 24].

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**Wayne F. Shirton, *Workmen who need not be Ashamed*. Burlington, Ontario: Welch Publishing Co., 1991, 124 pages**

While recovering from a serious illness, Pastor Wayne F. Shirton used his convalescence to pen a useful but all too brief guide to pastoral ministry, *Workmen who need not be Ashamed*. Shirton covers all the usual concerns such as personal holiness, integrity, the peril of burnout, and the role of the church. His most interesting sections and perhaps the most controversial discuss calling and visitation.

According to Shirton, calling and giftedness are not to be separated. Rather, they are indissolubly linked to form a thoroughly equipped servant of the Gospel. “We tend to think that God equips the called. The evidence seems to strongly indicate that God calls those who are equipped for

ministry" [p.9]. In other words, according to Shirton, it is highly unlikely that an individual, void of any pastoral skills, can legitimately claim that God has instructed him to seek vocational ministry. Unfortunately, Shirton spends a number of pages detailing discernible skills that might mark someone for leadership but only contributes a handful of paragraphs outlining the so-called "call". Shirton admits the difficulty in identifying a call to ministry "yet it should be just as evident in the life of a believer, because it can only be identified through human personality" [p.9]. Little is presented to shed light on this elusive topic.

Shirton's discussion on visitation may spark some much needed renewal in congregational outreach. He has identified several areas of visitation which compete for the pastor's schedule. The minister, according to Shirton, must continue to call on the aged, infirmed, and troubled. However, gifted competent leaders can be entrusted with the responsibility of following up visitors, establishing new community contacts, and serving the fringe adherents. "Since a pastor must divide his time among administration, counseling, study, sermon preparation, funerals, weddings, visitation and evangelism...it is incumbent upon the spiritual leadership of the church...to see this as their primary responsibility" [p.94-95].

Shirton's monograph is certainly not exhaustive. This seems a shame since there is a great deal of practical insight that will benefit anyone considering ministry or currently employed in Christian service. The book's greatest weakness is that it consistently introduces interesting concepts but none of them are ever thoroughly developed. Nevertheless, it is still a highly useful tool that should be utilized as a supplementary text in any comprehensive study of pastoral theology.

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**Paul Tournier, *Learning To Grow Old*. 1972 ed.; repr. New York: Harper & Row, 1991, 241 pages.**

Paul Tournier, the renowned Swiss psychiatrist "effectively blended the insights of modern psychotherapy with the Christian gospel" in his practice and his writing.

Tournier reflects the early optimism about modern technology and psychosocial sciences which have proven disillusioning in the last decade or two. Still, he didn't come by his reputation by happenstance. His ability to absorb the best in the spurious speculations of the social sciences with the gospel teachings, can be attributed to the genuineness of his faith and a fine intellect. His humility and love for his patients was likely somewhat unique among clinicians.

But the book opens like a dry, unimaginative rehearsal of second-hand

knowledge gained by reading other people's books. Tournier admits this is the first book he wrote at the request of a publisher rather than in response to a burning inner light. The dryness of second hand information and clichéd insights (albeit with some keen personal observations offered by Tournier), is exactly what he himself says it is - "nothing new."

The book not only dates Tournier as a clinician of a previous generation, it also is directed at too narrow an audience to warrant the generalized philosophical title of *Learning To Grow Old*. The civilized modern world seems to be convinced, against all experience of history, that individuals can plan their lives wisely from cradle to grave. While the author admits there are things we cannot anticipate or circumvent, his book is nevertheless another book of tips on wise living for people who have retired from a career and now must learn a "new culture" of creativity to find meaning in life.

Writing for a specific audience is not bad in itself but this book is too all-encompassing in its statements about modern society and aging. It reflects an almost naive middle and upper class preoccupation with ourselves, with grasping control of our lives through paperback wisdom.

The familiar chapter titles are all there: Work and Leisure, Towards a More Humane Society, The Condition of the Old, A Second Career, Acceptance and Faith.

Tournier quotes Jean LaCroix who projects that the retired of the future will be younger, still vigorous people who will not suffer the stress of loneliness and boredom as do today's aged. They will have retired earlier and will have opportunity to learn a "retirement culture" of new activities, philosophical reflections - and the usual idyllic romanticism which accompanies some of our strange views of leisure, retirement and the aged. What neither LaCroix nor Tournier anticipates is that many retired people of the future may not have government pensions or work pensions to rely on as the major countries in the West seem to be going bankrupt. The problems of a disintegrating Western society and global upheavals may make retirement and leisure the preoccupations of a rapidly passing affluent subculture.

It is a bit puzzling and frustrating that Tournier almost takes for granted the coming of an affluent world society predicted by economists, "a wonderful and merciful gift from God, who already foresaw it when in creating man gave him the right, the duty, and the power to dominate nature and to exploit it intelligently" [pg. 53]. Does human greed function with such intelligence?

And what of "the poor you will always have with you?" What of the people freezing to death on the sidewalks and in the alleys of Washington and Toronto as the rich and governments hoard our wealth? And how does the hoped-for affluent society speak to the experience of Third World countries?

Still, his underlying thesis that the best way to prepare for good retirement, aging, and death is to live a good life can hardly be dismissed as irrelevant simply because it is not new. His counsel, spoken to a client of any

age, would still be sage advice and may be helpful to some readers, especially the 40-50 year olds whom he specifically targets. His contribution is not to a body of knowledge, but to individuals in a specific, but large, subculture. He does so eloquently, with the wisdom, experience and faith of a gifted, aging man.

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**Edward P. Wimberly, *Prayer in Pastoral Counseling*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 1990, 122 pages.**

During the past twenty years, Edward P. Wimberly has successfully taught and practiced pastoral counseling. The fruits of his vocation are captured in his book *Prayer in Pastoral Counseling*. The title may appear somewhat misleading. Unlike many popular writers of today, Wimberly avoids the pitfall of prescribing a "once for all time" rote formulation. Nor has he presented prayer as a magical spiritual bandage that cures any and every ill. Best of all, prayer has not been debased to a mere self-examination exercise with the ultimate goal of stress relief. Wimberly views the function of prayer as a cooperative enterprise in an intentional way with God's healing actions (p. 11). He refers to this as the "discernment model". Though his semantics in Chapter One may be confusing and disturbing to some, one must read how this discernment model actually unfolded in the lives of three real case studies. It becomes plainly obvious that prayer, despite Wimberly's semantics, functions as a means of intercession, petition, thanksgiving, and commitment.

Throughout Wimberly's book is an underlying assumption that the Holy Spirit is working in and through Christians. He recognizes that the Spirit is sovereign, healing is a work of God, healing is more than physical, and human suffering is not a trivial matter [p. 12]. Particularly appealing is his discussion of Romans 8:26 [p. 55]:

However, in the midst of present suffering, they could experience some of the rewards of the new age in the present through the work of the interceding Spirit. In Paul's view, what the Spirit did was to help them affirm and accept themselves in spite of suffering.

In Wimberly's understanding of the work of the Spirit, the Christian who suffers need not blame himself, or providence, or find his faith lacking since hardship is a cold hard fact. By so doing, Wimberly has correctly debunked what is known as "Christian Triumphalism" which maintains that regeneration coupled with subsequent acts of commitment will successfully ward off

trouble in the same manner that garlic chases away vampires.

As practical as this book is, Wimberly has left some areas untouched. According to Wimberly, prayer united with faith in what God is doing will lead to a cooperative venture and bring about God's healing. The question that remains unanswered is: what if God sovereignly chooses to do nothing? 2 Corinthians 12:7 indicates that Paul had a permanent affliction in spite of repeated petitions for relief. Wimberly's book does not address this all too realistic scenario. Nor is the question of sin discussed. A Christian may not cooperate with God's healing action, according to Wimberly, and thus thwart God's intentions. Is this strictly a cerebral choice or does the fallen nature have any bearing? It might also be interesting to know to what extent his "discernment model" could assist in cases of demonic influence and severe disorder such as paranoid schizophrenia.

My overall reaction is that this book is realistic in its perception of human woes and sensible in its approach to counseling and subsequent prayer. I recommend it as a useful aid and a practical guide for most counseling situations.

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## BOOK NOTICES

**John Brine, *A Treatise on Various Subjects*, ed. J. A. Jones. 1851 ed.; repr. Paris, Arkansas: The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc., 1987. Available from: The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc., No.1 Iron Oaks Drive, Paris, Arkansas 72855, U. S. A.**

This is a welcome reprint of a work by the influential eighteenth-century English Baptist divine, John Brine (1703-1765). The "various subjects" of the book are of perennial concern to believers, *e.g.*, the fallen nature of men and women, the work of the Spirit in regeneration and conversion, the life of faith, Christian assurance, and communion with God. In the light of the so-called "Lordship salvation" controversy, his remarks on what constitutes real conversion are very apropos. He rightly stresses that regeneration must precede conversion [p. 48], and that out of a regenerated heart inevitably flows a sanctified life [p. 59-61]. He takes his contemporary John Wesley (1703-1791) to task for wrongly supposing that assurance is part and parcel of saving faith [p. 76-77]. The chapter on "the temptations of the present age" [p. 173-192] is of particular interest. The rationalistic attacks of the Deists on Christianity are especially noted when he says that "the gospel, since the reformation in England, never met with more violent opposition...than at this time" [p. 176]. Indeed, the preservation of the

Calvinistic Baptist denomination in England during this "Age of Reason," owes much to the labours of Brine and his good friend John Gill (1697-1771). A small memoir of Brine is placed at the beginning of the book, while an account of the life of his first wife, Anne (d. 1745), concludes the volume. In the latter account, there is a discrepancy as to the exact date of Anne Brine's death. Was it on August 11 [p. 233] as asserted by Brine's nineteenth-century editor, John A. Jones, or on August 6, as stated by John Gill in the funeral sermon he preached after her decease [p. 239]?

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**D. A. Carson, ed., *Teach Us To Pray*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991, 326 pages.**

"In almost 500 years of evangelical praying, there has never been a book like this," announces the publisher on the back cover of this collection on prayer. I agree. This book on prayer is entirely unique in its style and scope. It is perhaps the only evangelical collection of essays on prayer by international scholars. Moreover, it is a highly academic work whereas the vast majority of evangelical works on prayer have been for the laity, that is, very devotional, biographical and inspirational, like the recent and valuable work by Wesley Duewel, *Mighty Prevailing Prayer*. In many ways, *Teach Us To Pray* is to our Christian prayer life what a vehicle manual is intended to be to our next new car: a very strategic, detailed and sometimes erudite publication.

Carson has done a superb job of guiding a team of international authors and participants of the World Evangelical Fellowship in composing this collection. The team has focused on four aspects of prayer: a Biblical theology of prayer; prayer and spirituality; some lessons in prayer from the worldwide church; and the challenge to pray. The authors range from professors to missionaries, from pastors to para-church executives. They write from 5 continents and a host of denominations. It would be fair to say that their primary audience will be (and was probably intended to be) ministerial peers. Otherwise put, those who have not gone to Bible Schools will not find this easy bed-side reading. However, the abundance of Bible Schools in North America will guarantee that this work will find a place of esteem in any course dedicated to prayer or spirituality.

*Teach Us To Pray* is therefore not an exhaustive exegesis of the disciples' original question which led to the giving of the Lord's Prayer, nor is the book a "how to pray" guide like Patrick Johnston's *Operation World*, nor again is it a pastoral work aimed at explaining unanswered prayer and the blessings of prayer for a church. What it is, is a modern evangelical

resource book on world-wide prayer with something for everyone in ministry. Those burdened to do a series of pulpit messages on prayer will find this an excellent source. Those in missions will be particularly interested in two parts: the Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim and Latin Catholic concepts of spirituality, and second, the lessons in prayer from churches in Korea, China, Latin America and Africa. The essay on prayer and leadership formation is excellent for Bible Schools, or as said earlier, a course on spirituality. If the work has a shortcoming, it lies not so much in its technical, encyclopaedic style but in what my African colleagues will say with humour and discernment: "We do not *talk about* prayer, we pray." For us Westerners, this rebuke is as much needed as perhaps this book.

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**Sunil Kumar Chatterjee, Hannah Marshman. *The first woman missionary in India*. Sheoraphuli, Hooghly, West Bengal: Sri Sunil Chatterjee, 1987, 106 pages.**

In this study of Hannah Marshman (1767-1847), Sunil K. Chatterjee the librarian of Carey Library at Scramapore College, has sketched the life and vital contribution of this courageous Baptist missionary to the work of the Serampore Mission in India. Her husband, Joshua Marshman (1768-1837), was a key figure in the establishment of this Mission alongside his more famous colleague, William Carey (1761-1834). But, as Chatterjee ably shows, Hannah also played an indispensable role in the work of the Mission, a fact which has been generally ignored by both Western and Indian historians. She ably took charge of the "home department" of the Mission, raising a number of the missionary children, whose fathers or mothers had died. For instance, it was her firm hand which safely directed Carey's two older boys, Felix and William, through their rebellious teenage years to missionary careers. As Marshman's son later said of Felix: "From being a tiger, he was transformed into a lamb."

Her close involvement with schools established by the Mission for both Europeans and Indians was probably her major contribution to the work of the Baptist Mission. She was particularly concerned about the sad plight of many of the Indian women in West Bengal. As Chatterjee notes in detail, her contributions to the introduction and development of female education in Bengal were by no means insignificant. In time, Hannah "supervised what became... a veritable education empire" [Timothy George, *Faithful Witness. The Life and Mission of William Carey* (Birmingham, Alabama: New Hope, 1991), p. 144]. There are numerous grammatical infelicities and typographi-

cal errors, and the sources cited in the notes are not as full as one would like; notwithstanding, Chatterjee has done a good job in rescuing the labours of this zealous Christian missionary from obscurity.

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**David Allen Hubbard, *Joel and Amos: An Introduction and Commentary*. Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 1989, 245 pages.**

Those familiar with the Tyndale series will be acquainted with the brevity by which this series is characterized. Hubbard writes his introduction and commentary on Joel and Amos within the space of merely 245 pages. These intentional limitations placed upon the size of each commentary within the Tyndale series definitely restrict the amount of exegetical material contained within each volume. The result is a summary statement of most exegetical issues within the Biblical text. This commentary is a good place to begin study of these two Biblical books, and the serious student will find Hubbard's commentary a convenient stepping stone to more detailed works.

Hubbard acknowledges his indebtedness to other commentators such as Wolff, Mays, Mannerschaimb, Weiler, *et. al.*, and indeed anyone familiar with these other works will readily see their influences on this volume. On more than one occasion, Hubbard's work serves as a summary of these other, more extensive commentaries. While this aspect of the commentray has some advantages (the reader is able to benefit from the insights of many other writers), it also has its disadvantages. For instance, Hubbard was unable to utilize the most recent work on Joel and Amos, thus making his small volume already a bit out of date. For instance, if Hubbard were to rewrite his commentary he would need to refer to the work of Andersen and Freedman, Paul, Hayes, and Stuart, all of which fail to appear in Hubbard's present volume.

Hubbard's work is a handy summary of exegetical work produced by scholars on both Joel and Amos. The commentary gives sufficient historical background to the text without overwhelming the reader with excessive technical information. Likewise, the linguistic material contained in the commentary is helpful without being overbearing. The brevity of the work, however, precludes Hubbard from devoting much attention to the significance of the message of the text for today's reader. For this reason, some readers may find it beneficial to use Hubbard's work in tandem with J. A. Motyer's commentary on Amos, *The Day of the Lion*. I know of no similar

work on Joel to use with Hubbard's volume.

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**R. C. Sproul, *The Mystery of the Holy Spirit*. Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1990, 191 pages.**

In this unbalanced age, few areas of classical theology provoke more discussion among evangelicals than the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. In some circles, one would think that he is the only member of the Trinity, and in other circles, that he is not a member of the Trinity at all. A balanced volume written at a level understandable by all in thus welcome. Such is R. C. Sproul's *The Mystery of the Holy Spirit*.

Sproul is a master at communicating deep theological issues at a simple level. He begins what is obviously a theological book with a story of his wife's discovery of the Holy Spirit, but then shows his intellectual stripes by dissecting his wife's statement, "Now I know who the Holy Spirit is." From there, he proves from Scripture the Holy Spirit's personhood and deity, with appropriate lessons from church history. With surprising simplicity, he discusses the doctrine of the Trinity, answering the objection that the doctrine is contradictory. He then deals with the Holy Spirit's work in creation, regeneration, and perseverance, before tacking the baptism and the fruit of the Holy Spirit. His discussion is concise and brisk, but presented with depth and with clarity.

Theologians will find nothing new in this volume on the Holy Spirit, but it is a helpful review. I would suggest that such a primer is useful given the confusion often present around discussions of the Spirit. Lay people will benefit from theology presented on a thoroughly understandable level. Like all good theology, *The Mystery of the Holy Spirit* leads us not only to a deeper understanding of the Spirit, but to better worship of the Spirit. The real importance of the book is summarized by a quote used by Sproul in the first chapter: "He who does not know the Holy Spirit cannot know God at all" (Thomas Arnold).

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