

## BOOK REVIEWS

**W. B. Forsyth, *The Wolf from Scotland: The Story of Robert Reid Kalley — Pioneer Missionary*. Darlington: Evangelical Press, 1988, 239 pages.**

If you haven't seen the Welwyn Biographies before, start with this one, and you'll want to read the rest. It's a gripper. Forsyth unfolds the life-work of Robert Reid Kalley (1809-1888), gentleman Scot, converted atheist, medical missionary and sage evangelist to the nineteenth-century Portuguese world. And his fresh, crisp prose has something to teach everyone.

The would-be soul-winner is a model for wise, unobtrusive personal work, specially with Roman Catholics. Missions committees will appreciate the need to recruit, train and entrust gospel work to mature indigenous pastors and workers. Churches will grasp afresh the importance of Bible distribution, attractive literature and colportage—something the cults have never forgotten. The "good doctor"'s skilful use of education, benevolence, legal spadework and gospel witness should challenge us all.

Other wholesome, less welcome lessons meet us here. Kalley's converts willingly made full Sunday observance a powerful witness to Christ—often at a great personal price. Why not us? Kalley's churches were occasionally diminished and hurt by the unwise zeal of denominational proselytizing. Can we, like they, see past our immediate, sectarian interests?

A life-long communicant in the Church of Scotland, Kalley's sense of immediate call from Christ, his "independent" line of work, his missions experience and his childlike obedience to Scripture all led him to adopt congregational order in his churches, and come close to Baptist views. Only believers were sprinkled; at first no paedobaptist, Roman or Protestant, was admitted to membership or communion. Concession led to new principles, and an exception soon became the rule. Yet we can see the catholicity and grace which helped pioneer missionaries, (Congregational, Presbyterian, Baptist, Brethren, and Methodist) find their place on the harvest field side by side. C. H. Spurgeon (1834-1892) constantly helped Kalley's efforts, and trained his best students in his college.

We need better to know the heritage and life of evangelical churches whose heirs are finding their way into our multicultural mosaic in Canada. More books like this can help. Above all, we can see the investment of a life yielded to Jesus Christ, which over time has led to over 700 churches on two continents.

Forsyth has done well to write this tribute to Kalley's dedication; may all who read it find grace in their own place to "go and do likewise."

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**Robert H. Mounce, *Matthew*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1985, 288 pages.**

Robert H. Mounce's commentary on Matthew first appeared in the Good News Commentary series. Since then, according to W. Ward Gasque, the N.I.V. translation has rapidly become the accepted English rendering of Holy Writ for both pastor and student (p.vii). Therefore, Mounce's previous work now finds itself revised in order to accommodate this changing tide and is part of the New International Commentary series. The editor and author of this series have set for themselves some admirable goals. Their main objective is to "make the results of their [*i.e.* Biblical scholars] research accessible to the Christian community at large" (p.vii). Gasque admits that serious scholarship has its place, but should not be for the eyes of theologians only. "Thus, the authors who join in the presentation of this series write with these broader concerns in view" (p.vii).

My overall impression of *Matthew* is that Mounce, for the most part, has delivered exactly what the series intends. The commentary is readable and simple to understand; it does not inundate the reader with burdensome detail. However, in its simplicity lies its greatest weakness. This work should be used by the novice in order to acquire a basic appreciation and grasp of Matthew's Gospel. As a resource to settle sensitive issues one would be well advised to consult other authors.

For example, Matt 19:9 contains the exception clause which seems to allow a man to divorce his wife on the grounds of aberrant sexual misconduct. Any other reason for divorce would place her in an adulterous relationship should there be a subsequent remarriage. This particular passage and its mate in 5:32 are used by a number of Christians to support a variety of opinions on divorce and remarriage. According to Markus Bockmuehl, no other verse on this subject has sparked as much controversy in recent years as Matt 19:9. Bockmuehl has noted that there have been at least sixty scholarly publications dedicated to this question ["Matthew 5:32, 19:9 in the light of Pre-Rabbinic Halakah," *New Testament Studies*, 35 (1989), 291]. Mounce's treatment of the text, however, is superficial and ignores the complexity of the discussion. He has dedicated merely three paragraphs to a very painful problem.

Should there be another revision of this commentary, I would recommend that appendices be included for detailed discussion. Mounce, with his very clear writing style, could easily educate the broader community that well meaning Christians can and do disagree about areas where Scripture is unclear.

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Werner Neuer, *Man and Woman in Christian Perspective*, trans. Gordon Wenham. Wheaton: Crossway, 1991.

As a fog of exegetical legerdemain and theological relativism settles over the contemporary church, it is a rare treat to find a book on the role of women which sparkles with clarity of thought. *Man and Woman in Christian Perspective*, lucidly translated from the German by Gordon Wenham, demonstrates Neuer's remarkable ability in scientific analysis, biblical exegesis, and historical insight on this controversial issue.

Drawing on recent studies in psychology, biology and sociology, the first four chapters highlight differences between men and women which cannot be explained on the basis of conditioning. Neuer concludes [p.41]: "The totality of physiological differences between the sexes is symbolic of the totality of their intellectual and psychological differentiation." Chapters 5-8 present the biblical pattern of unity with role diversity found throughout Scripture. Neuer's concern to deal with what is patently present in the biblical text is a refreshing contrast to some recent reconstructions of key biblical passages, in which theories of historical occasion, based on selective scholarship, assume the status of fact, thereby reshaping the biblical text into the opposite of its plain meaning. Neuer probes the text with surgeon-like precision, dissecting individual passages with great skill while showing their interconnection with larger questions. It is this determination to combine exegesis with synthesis which leads to his conclusion that deep, fundamental unity of the sexes not only *can* coexist with role differences but *must*, if we are not to deny the historic, biblical doctrine of the Trinity, in which this same pattern is seen [see 1 Cor 11:3]. The concluding three chapters argue persuasively for the continuing relevance of this pattern in the contemporary church.

Neuer's work is studded with nuggets of compressed insight which reflect a remarkable mind at work [p.171]:

Often lurking behind the rejection of the biblical ordering of the sexes lies a rejection of central truths of the gospel. Behind many Christians' rejection of the subordination of women to men lies a fundamental reluctance to obey any human being. This mistrust receives apparent spiritual support from the call to obey God alone. That obedience toward God often in practice simply means obeying other people (parents, those in authority, state, church, pastors, *etc.*) is thereby overlooked.

Another appealing quality is his evenhanded readiness to reproach unbiblical distortions of the biblical message which affirms the fundamental

equality of men and women. On Christ's teaching about marriage, Neuer comments [p.101]:

God's rule spells the end of all egotistically perverted rule of women by men. In God's new kingdom, initiated by Jesus, there is still both authority and subordination... But in place of arbitrary male domination there is a reign of love, a humble leadership which is to be seen entirely as service given to the wife.

Not all Neuer's conclusions are convincing. He assumes [p.121] that the reference to Phoebe in Rom 16:2 describes the *office* of deacon, and sees 1 Cor 14:34-35 as a total ban on women speaking in church worship [p.117]. It is interesting to speculate if interaction with D. A. Carson's *Showing The Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987) or Chapter 11 of Wayne Grudem's *The Gift of Prophecy In The New Testament And Today* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1988) would have resulted in a different approach to these passages (particularly the latter), but Neuer's original German edition appeared before either work was available.

Such blemishes aside, Neuer has made an important contribution to the debate on the role of women. His readers need no longer wander in the fog.

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**Marjorie Reeves and Jean Morrison, eds., *The Diaries of Jeffery Whittaker, Schoolmaster of Bratton, 1739-1741*. Trowbridge: Wiltshire Record Society, 1989, lxiv + 117 pages. [Available from: Mr. Michael J. Lansdown, 53 Clarendon Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 7BS, England. £15, plus £2 postage (surface mail)].**

The last twenty-five years or so have seen the emergence of historical studies devoted to so-called "ordinary people." While many of these studies have emanated from Marxist circles, the need for and vitality of such studies cannot be debated. In the study of Church History, for instance, histories devoted to the "ordinary believer" are long overdue in a field dominated by the study of theologians, and so-called major theological and ecclesiastical events. And the type of primary source material needed by these newer historical studies is exactly that provided by this well crafted edition of the diaries of Jeffery Whittaker (1703-1775).

Whittaker was born into a family whose commitment to Baptist convictions appears to go back into the early days of Baptist expansion in the 1650s [p.xxvi-xxvii]. For most of his life Whittaker was a schoolmaster in Bratton,

Wiltshire, and his diaries provide valuable evidence with regard to the details of an eighteenth-century Nonconformist boarding school, about which little has been known [see p.xxxviii-xlv]. Whittaker was also "one of the pillars" and sometime deacon of the Baptist congregation in Bratton. The origins of this congregation and its close ties to nearby Erlestoke Baptist Church are well laid out in the "Introduction" [p.lii-lv].

In the diaries, which cover March, 1739 to July, 1741, Whittaker dutifully notes the Biblical texts on which the pastor, John Watts (d. 1747), preached week by week. Only twice does he actually write out the text in full: Ps 9:17 [wrongly referred to as Ps 9:7 in the "Introduction" (p.liv)]: "The Wicked shall be turned into Hell and all the nations that forget God" [p.6]; and Matt 28:9: "Jesus met them" [p.45]. The texts indicate that Watts was a topical preacher. Further examination of them would undoubtedly give a very rough idea of the sort of teaching given to a typical English Baptist congregation in the mid-1700s.

Whittaker mentions the celebration of the Lord's Supper three times in his diaries, but never with any "expression of personal religious fervour" [p.xxxviii]. This fact may well reflect the rather inconsequential role the Lord's Supper played in the piety of many eighteenth-century English Baptists. A baptism in "Bratton mill pond" is mentioned towards the end of the diaries [p.81]. Until the end of the 1800's this was apparently the "baptistry" of the Bratton congregation. Typical of the eighteenth-century Baptist calendar there is next to no mention of either Christmas or Easter. As heirs to the Puritans, Sunday was *the* only red-letter for the Baptists of that period.

Also of interest is Whittaker's mention of a day of prayer in July of 1739 [p.17], which had been appointed by the Western Baptist Association. Another day of prayer took place on November 7, 1740, which the editors see as related to an outbreak of smallpox [p.54, liv]. In fact, during this smallpox epidemic Whittaker stayed at home on Sundays with those boys in his school who had not had the disease and read sermons to them. The sermons which he read were by the well-known Puritan John Flavel (*ca.* 1630-1691) [*e.g.* p.59-60, 64, 66]. He also read portions from the martyrology of John Foxe (1516-1587).

It is interesting to find that despite Whittaker's commitment to the Baptist way, he also attended the local Anglican church [p.13, 15, 51], something that would have been cause for his being disciplined in the previous century. When he was not at home he made a point of hearing Baptist preachers in the locale where he was. For instance, on June 1, 1740 he was in London and went to hear Andrew Gifford (1700-1784), the pastor of Eagle Street Baptist Church. This pastorate began in 1735, not 1730 as stated on p.37, n.40. From 1730 to 1735 Gifford pastored Little Wild Street Church.

In their "Introduction," Reeves and Morrison note that Whittaker's "piety was expressed in conventional eighteenth-century style," rarely

displaying religious emotion. Yet, there are a number of statements in the diaries that do indicate deep wellsprings of piety. For instance, during a bout of illness in June of 1740, he could say: "If God in his providence should think it fit that I should have the smallpox I hope I shall Rely alone on him for Support thro' Jesus Christ" [p.39]. Or, near the end of the diaries, speaking of his courtship to a Molly Adlam, he says that if he obtains her hand in marriage it will be in God's mercy [p.73]. As it turned out, she didn't accept his offer of marriage. Whittaker subsequently wrote that he was "greatly vext at my late disappointment" and that he could "hardly bear up under it. God of his infinite mercy either turn her heart or Support me under all trouble, this being the greatest I ever met with" [p.77]. God obviously supported him, for Whittaker was to remain a bachelor the rest of his life; and he finished his days as a highly respected member of the church. Future studies of eighteenth-century English Baptist life and thought will have to take account of such fine sources about "ordinary" Baptists as these diaries of Jeffery Whittaker provide.

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**Christophe Senft, *L'Évangile selon Marc*. Genève: Labor et Fides, 1991, 107 pages.**

Ouvrage posthume et inachevé d'un professeur (décédé en 1988) de la Faculté de Théologie de l'Université de Lausanne, *l'Évangile selon Marc* s'inscrit dans la ligne de pensée moderne qui préconise une lecture critique des évangiles.

D'emblée, soulignons que ce livre n'est pas un commentaire mais bien une analyse systématique de la structure narrative de l'Évangile de Marc. Le corps est divisé en trois parties d'inégales longueurs. Première partie: Marc 1:1-8:26 (45 pages); 2<sup>e</sup> partie: Marc 8:27-10:52 (20 pages); 3<sup>e</sup> partie: Marc 11:1-16:8 (6 pages). Une préface de F. Vouga et une annexe (La théologie de l'Évangile selon Marc) servant à pallier l'inachèvement de l'ouvrage complètent le livre. Cette dernière a d'ailleurs été écrite antérieurement à la présente étude.

Dans la première partie, l'auteur traite de trois éléments clés dans Marc: les miracles, les premières controverses, et les paraboles du chapitre quatre. Essentiellement, il s'agit de situer dans l'intention théologique propre de Marc le rôle de ces éléments fondamentaux. Pour Senft, leur utilisation par Marc sert à diriger son lecteur vers une connaissance "vrai" du Christ. Dans ce cadre, les miracles sont interprétés non comme des signes de l'avènement du royaume, mais comme des actes de libération qui signalent la manifes-

tation de l'autorité du Christ. Marc aurait ainsi modifié le statut des récits de miracles: il les fait objet de contestation de la part des adversaires et objet d'incompréhension de la part des disciples pour que les miracles ne soient pas vus comme des preuves mais, ultimement, comme des signes de la parole pleine d'autorité du Christ, lequel interpelle et invite à une réponse.

De la même manière, les récits de controverses ont pour fonction, dans la création de Marc, "d'illustrer l'autorité et la liberté de Jésus et le pouvoir libérateur de sa parole" [p.33]. Ils démontrent que Jésus n'est pas un libérateur quelconque que l'on peut utiliser à sa guise. Quant aux paraboles, elles constituent un signe palpable que l'enseignement de Jésus reste impénétrable tant que lui-même ne l'explique pas. Senft esquisse ainsi, à partir de ces indications que sont les miracles, les controverses et les paraboles, une problématique de la connaissance: "comment le Christ se donne-t-il à connaître et comment le connaît-on?" [p.48].

Si Marc 1:1-8:26 répond à la question: qui est Jésus?, Marc 8:27-10:51 répond à la question: comment suit-on ce Jésus? C'est le thème de la suivance: on y retrouve Jésus "en chemin" vers la croix. Dans l'optique de Marc, même l'annonce de la résurrection dans le cadre de la transfiguration n'a pas pour but d'enlever à la mort de Jésus son sujet de tristesse mais de montrer que la résurrection de Jésus est le point de départ des disciples sur le chemin de la croix, là où l'on suit Jésus.

Dans la dernière partie (11:1-16:8), Senft explique comment cette .  
entière section (qui pour lui est un texte liturgique des communautés chrétiennes primitives) est devenue, à travers le processus de rédaction de Marc, la conclusion de son Evangile. En d'autres termes, les dix premiers chapitres de Marc sont "en fait la lecture théologique, l'interprétation selon une optique clairement définie de ce texte liturgique, dont l'évangéliste a fait l'aboutissement de son histoire de Jésus" [p.83].

*L'Evangile selon Marc* est un ouvrage de qualité bien qu'il présente certainement de graves faiblesses. Dès le départ, le lecteur évangélique attaché à l'inerrance des Ecritures sera tenté de prendre sévèrement à partie l'approche critique de l'auteur, "héritier de la tradition allemande de l'histoire des formes et de l'histoire des rédactions...développées par Rudolf Bultmann" [p.7] et de rejeter le tout du revers de la main. Ce serait une erreur selon nous. En effet, si les lacunes sont grandes et sérieuses, les qualités n'en demeurent pas moins nombreuses.

D'abord, la lecture en est des plus stimulantes pour l'étudiant de Marc. L'auteur soulève certaines questions de fond qui incitent le lecteur à une plus grande réflexion. Son explication du rôle des paraboles chez Marc présente aussi un intérêt réel, de même que l'appendice —qu'il faut lire après la préface mais *avant* l'exposé sur le texte. Mais la grande force de l'ouvrage réside dans son souci constant de laisser parler Marc, de rechercher son intention théologique indéniable et de découvrir sa contribution originale à la christologie et à la théologie de la suivance. Cet effort se traduit par des observations pertinentes et souvent utiles pour retracer l'intention de Marc,

par des explications qui tiennent compte de l'ensemble de l'ouvrage théologique de Marc, et par une résistance (digne d'être imitée, croyons-nous) à une harmonisation facile voire simplette des Synoptiques.

Malgré cela, il faut déplorer le fait que si Senft pose les bonnes questions au texte, son cadre théologique trop étroit (histoire des formes et de la rédaction) l'amène à formuler des réponses le plus souvent insatisfaisantes pour qui accepte l'historicité du matériel de Marc. En effet, l'auteur accorde trop peu d'importance à l'historicité et nie par trop facilement tant sa réalité que sa pertinence (voir sur les miracles en p.15, la confession de Pierre en p.63, et les annonces de la Passion en p.65). Il est vrai que bon nombre d'éléments de ses réponses peuvent être valides et contribuer à jeter un éclairage nouveau sur un texte de Marc qui a trop souvent été noyé dans les autres Synoptiques. Il est aussi vrai que l'auteur fait ressortir la cohérence de l'Évangile dans son ensemble, mais c'est au dépens de l'intégralité du texte qu'il y arrive. Le lecteur de ce livre devra donc user de discernement et savoir faire la part des choses. Une compréhension générale de l'histoire des formes et des rédactions, de leurs limites et, surtout, de leurs faiblesses est selon nous préalable à la lecture de cet ouvrage.

De plus, l'ouvrage pêche par son découpage arbitraire et excessif du texte de Marc en "traditions" et "rédactions." Noter les expressions utilisées dans ce contexte: "paraît," "semble" [p.62], "tout cela sent le fabriqué" [p.27], "c'est très probablement l'évangéliste qui a créé la scène" [p.71], "il est évident que [les versets] sont une adjonction rédactionnelle" [p.77]. On se trouve en présence d'un effort d'expliquer à tout prix une "rédaction" du seul fait qu'elle ne *peut* pas être une "tradition." L'on remarquera le cercle vicieux: l'intention théologique de Marc nous conduit à reconnaître les éléments purement rédactionnels de son Évangile, et ces éléments rédactionnels confirment et appuient l'intention théologique de Marc. Peut-être sommes-nous en présence de cet observateur proverbial qui, examinant les arbres d'une forêt, en vient à oublier qu'il est bel et bien en présence d'une forêt.

Senft attribue, avec raison, une forte teneur christologique à l'Évangile de Marc. Mais il nous semble que l'auteur pêche par excès dans sa lecture christologique de l'Évangile. Ainsi le passage considéré comme pivotale (8:27-30) n'est pour lui ni historique ni biographique: il ne fait qu'introduire la deuxième partie de l'Évangile, laquelle traite de la suivance. Dans son optique, "*suiivre* n'appartient pas au vocabulaire de la sotériologie (ni d'ailleurs de l'éthique)" [p.67]. Pourquoi refuser de reconnaître une intention sotériologique et éthique à ce passage (ou du reste à l'Évangile dans son ensemble)? Marc aurait très bien préserver une telle intention, comme en filigrane dans son Évangile (mais aussi en ronde-bosse, comme en 10:45), sans s'écarter de son intention christologique.

Autres points au sujet desquels le lecteur voudra croiser le fer avec l'auteur: d'abord une certaine lecture existentielle de Marc, qui sans entièrement falsifier les données du texte, tend tout de même à diluer une



interprétation qui ne fait plus justice ni à Marc, ni à Jésus, ni au lecteur moderne qui a encore besoin du salut de ses péchés plus que de "s'ouvrir à l'advenir de Dieu et à ses nouveautés" [p.70]. Ensuite: l'auteur fait parfois [p.51,68] une disjonction voire une opposition entre Marc et les autres évangélistes et entre leur christologie et leur théologie respectives. Il est pourtant parfaitement possible de discerner des intentions distinctives de la part des évangélistes dans la composition de leur ouvrage sans devoir les opposer théologiquement les uns aux autres.

En conclusion, ce petit ouvrage sera sans doute de peu d'utilité au prédicateur pressé par le temps qui recherche une explication ponctuelle du texte de Marc ou du matériel pour sa prédication. Mais pour celui qui veut mieux cerner la contribution originale de Marc et par là —dans les mots mêmes de l'auteur— "se faire une idée de sa remarquable cohérence et ...[de ressentir] plus vivement combien il est incisif et digne d'attention" [p.91], alors, oui, nous recommandons ce livre. Malgré ses lacunes et sa brièveté, il nous semble qu'il peut apporter une contribution réelle à l'intelligence du texte de Marc.

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**Daniel Schibler, *Le Livre de Michée*. Vaux-sur-Seine: Edifac, 1989, 152 pages.**

La publication d'un volume consacré à part entière à un des petits prophètes est déjà un événement heureux. Le fait que le volume soit en français, écrit par un savant évangélique, bien à l'aise dans la littérature critique en anglais, en français et en allemand, fait en sorte que sa parution soit une contribution importante à l'étude de Michée et un outil pratique pour le pasteur qui veut transmettre le message du prophète dans son Eglise. Daniel Schibler, d'origine suisse-allemande, était professeur d'Ancien Testament à l'Institut Biblique Nogent (Lamorlaye, France) jusqu'en 1989. Il est maintenant secrétaire général de la Société Biblique Suisse. Il détient le Doctorat en Etudes Orientales de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris. Sa thèse de doctorat, sous la direction d'Henri Cazelles, fut achevée en 1980 et traitait de l'arrière-plan historique des oracles de Michée.

L'ouvrage de Schibler suit la forme classique des commentaires: une bibliographie détaillée, une introduction générale, la critique textuelle, l'authenticité et la théologie du livre, suivies d'un commentaire du texte. Schibler étale d'emblée ses hypothèses de travail. Il n'admet aucune transposition dans l'ordre du texte. Il trouve l'agencement du texte sous sa configuration canonique ni aléatoire ni désordonné. Les oracles de jugement

et de bénédiction s'adressent à deux événements: les invasions assyriennes et les efforts unificateurs d'Ezéchias vis-à-vis du "reste" du Royaume du nord. La méthode synchronique est adoptée. La section sur le messianisme au sein de la théologie royale d'Israël, ainsi que les présupposés théologiques des prophètes et leur mise en pratique, mérite une lecture attentive. Le messianisme vétêrotestamentaire est trop souvent traité d'une manière complètement insensible aux réalités historiques dans l'enseignement et la prédication dans l'Eglise!

La force principale de ce commentaire est son exégèse détaillée. Le traitement de 2:12-13; 4:1-5:5, par exemple, démontre les compétences de l'auteur dans les domaines tels que la philologie, l'analyse structurelle, la grammaire, ainsi qu'un dialogue avec la littérature critique. Il en est de même pour son analyse du rôle bicéphale du "reste" en 5:6 et le devoir de l'homme en 6:8. Les considérations historiques et géographiques relatives aux oracles sont indiquées. L'exégèse est faite sous l'angle d'une théologie biblique de l'Ancien et du Nouveau testaments, et avec quelques mots sur la mise en pratique dans l'Eglise contemporaine.

Deux points historiques traités par Schibler mériteraient une étude plus approfondie. D'abord, l'auteur maintient que l'importance attribuée à Ezéchias en 2 Rois et en 2 Chroniques est due au fait que "les éditeurs de ces récits se situaient dans le même courant théologique que ces 'anciens du pays' du temps de Jérémie qui sauvegardaient des paroles de Michée" [p.23]. Nous trouvons cette suggestion tout à fait vraisemblable en ce qui concerne 2 Rois, mais pour le livre des Chroniques, nous émettons des réserves. Ensuite, nous aimerions voir comment Schibler développerait son idée d'un lien entre les déportations de Sennachérib et celles décrites dans le livre d'Esaië.

A notre avis, cet ouvrage devrait faire partie de la bibliothèque de tout pasteur sérieux, ainsi que de celle de tous ceux qui veulent prêcher et enseigner la parole de Dieu avec fidélité et honnêteté. Il peut également fournir une bonne introduction à cette série de commentaires à la fois évangéliques et de haute qualité.

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**George Smeaton, *The Doctrine of the Atonement According to the Apostles* (1870; Repr. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1988), xii + 548 pages.**

George Smeaton (d. 1889) is probably best known for his classic work on the Holy Spirit. However, now that Hendrickson Publishers have seen fit to

reprint his study of the atonement he may well come to be recognized as the scholar of great breadth and erudition that he was. This volume is the sequel to an earlier work that focused on Christ's sayings regarding the nature of the atonement.

Smeaton makes his purpose in writing this volume clear in the preface when he states that his object is to "exhibit the entire New Testament teaching on the nature and fruits of Christ's death" [p.v]. He goes on to state his conviction that "we cannot attain a full view of the New Testament doctrine on the subject, except in a biblico-historical way" [p.v]; and that he has abstained "from the artificial construction to which systematic theology has recourse, as well as from merely subjective combinations" [p.v]. In other words, Smeaton wants to make it clear that what follows is a Biblical rather than a systematic theology of the atonement. This, in my view, makes this an extremely valuable and somewhat timeless contribution.

The book is organized along the lines of a commentary except that it is focused exclusively on the doctrine of the atonement. Beginning with Acts Smeaton examines his subject matter book by book, and chapter by chapter through to Revelation. All in all there are over 500 pages of close, careful analysis concerning this foundational doctrine. Smeaton's command of koiné Greek and wide reading in secondary sources is evident on every page and revealed by the many footnotes found throughout the book. If you are looking for an extensive study of the atonement from a biblico-historical perspective this offering from George Smeaton is well worth investigating.

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**John Stott, *La Croix de Jésus-Christ*. Mulhouse: Editions Grâce et Vérité; Wallstrasse: Editions Brunnen Verlag, 1988, 369 pages.**

John Stott est bien connu pour sa facilité à simplifier des sujets complexes. Il réussit une fois de plus à bien communiquer à ses lecteurs l'importance doctrinale et pratique de la croix de Jésus-Christ dans la vie chrétienne. Divisant son ouvrage en quatre parties, Stott fait le tour des questions doctrinales reliées à la croix dans un style clair, simple, mais riche en contenu.

La première partie de son ouvrage, "Une approche de la croix," est une mise en contexte. En trois chapitres, Stott montre la place centrale de la croix dans l'histoire humaine, plus spécifiquement dans la pensée de Jésus et dans celle de ses apôtres. Le chapitre deux passe en revue le rôle spécifique des personnages liés à la crucifixion de Jésus (Pilate, Caïphe et Judas), et démontre que la mort de Jésus n'a pas été un accident de parcours: c'est Dieu lui-même qui a livré son Fils à la croix, par amour pour des pécheurs [p.50].

Le chapitre trois est une description vivante et à l'allure soutenue, des événements qui ont précédé et accompagné la croix (Cène, Gethsémané, le cri "Eli, Eli") et qui donnent à la croix tout son sens rédempteur. Stott présente ses arguments de façon logique et claire, en examinant les différentes interprétations possibles de plusieurs textes bibliques, et en défendant adéquatement ses conclusions. Ce chapitre montre en particulier que si le salut nous est accordé gratuitement, il n'a pas été gratuit pour Jésus-Christ. Ceux qui refusent la croix comme centre de l'histoire du salut agissent en fait comme le dit l'Écriture: ils trébuchent sur cette pierre d'achoppement.

La deuxième partie, "Au cœur même de la croix," est la première de deux parties doctrinales. Le chapitre quatre analyse la nécessité de la croix de Jésus-Christ à la lumière de quatre concepts bibliques fondamentaux: la gravité du péché, la responsabilité de l'être humain, la vraie et la fausse culpabilité, et la colère de Dieu. Stott présente les thèses contraires aux siennes (p. ex. celle de C. H. Dodd, suivi de A. T. Hanson) et y répond avec clarté, logique et solidité, en particulier en ce qui a trait à la substitution pénale de Jésus à la croix. Ce point est développé au chapitre cinq, où l'auteur présente la mort de Christ en termes de "satisfaction pour le péché," non pas une satisfaction du diable, de la loi, de l'honneur ou de la justice de Dieu, ou encore d'un ordre moral, mais de Dieu lui-même; "c'est Dieu lui-même, dans tous les aspects de son Être, notamment sa justice et son amour, qui doit être satisfait" [p.121-122]. Désirant nous pardonner mais devant nous punir, il a fallu que Dieu lui-même se substitue aux pécheurs que nous sommes (objet du chapitre six).

La troisième partie, "l'œuvre accomplie à la croix," est également une section doctrinale, mettant l'emphase sur les conséquences de la croix de Christ. La croix est le moyen de salut des pécheurs, tel qu'illustré par quatre métaphores: la propitiation, la rédemption, la justification et la réconciliation (chapitre sept). Elle est le moyen par lequel Dieu a révélé sa gloire, sa justice, son amour, sa sagesse et sa puissance (chapitre huit), elle est le moyen par lequel Dieu triomphe du mal (chapitre neuf).

La quatrième partie, "La vie sous la croix," présente en quatre chapitres les conséquences pratiques de la croix dans la vie chrétienne, d'abord sous l'angle collectif d'une "communauté de célébrants" (chapitre dix) vivant dans l'assurance, l'amour et la joie, et symbolisant leur union par la Cène. A ce sujet, Stott rejette explicitement la doctrine catholique romaine de l'Eucharistie comme étant un renouvellement du sacrifice rédempteur accompli une fois pour toutes à Golgotha; toutefois, les traducteurs français de l'ouvrage de Stott ont conservé le mot "Eucharistie" pour désigner la Cène, plus communément appelée le "repas du Seigneur;" à notre avis, le terme Eucharistie porte à confusion, non pas au niveau doctrinal, mais dans l'usage, et c'est pourquoi il aurait été préférable de traduire, avec l'accord de l'auteur, par une autre expression. Le chapitre onze est particulièrement intéressant au niveau personnel: il présente un juste équilibre entre l'abnégation de soi et la valorisation de soi qui, lorsque bien saisies, nous

conduisent à un amour semblable à celui de Christ: un amour qui se sacrifie pour les autres. Le chapitre douze développe plus en détail un de ces aspects: aimer ses ennemis. Finalement, le treizième chapitre tente de jeter un peu de lumière sur un problème réel, celui de la souffrance; et bien que "la Bible ne propose pas de solution complète au problème du mal" [p.312], elle apporte une consolation et donne un sens à la souffrance, elle nous présente un Dieu lui-même sujet à souffrance. "S'il n'y avait pas eu la croix, jamais je n'aurais pu croire en Dieu... Dans notre monde de souffrance, comment pourrait-on adorer un Dieu qui en aurait été exempt?" [p.336]

En guise de conclusion, Stott parcourt l'épître aux Galates, dans lequel l'apôtre Paul présente un évangile fortement lié à la croix. Il termine son ouvrage en invitant ses lecteurs à vivre sous la croix, à prêcher la croix, plutôt qu'à chercher à être populaires.

Nos critiques ne touchent pas au contenu du livre, mais plutôt à la forme de l'ouvrage tel qu'il est traduit en français. Bien que l'on doive féliciter les éditeurs d'avoir mis à la disposition des lecteurs un ouvrage indispensable, et que les traducteurs aient fait un effort louable d'utiliser les traductions françaises de la Bible, ainsi que les ouvrages de référence de langue française, certains éléments à notre avis essentiels pour une meilleure utilisation de cet ouvrage sont absents de l'édition française. Ainsi, la préface, les index (scripturaires, auteurs, sujets), la bibliographie, tous présents dans l'édition anglaise, n'ont malheureusement pas été inclus. Il aurait aussi été préférable d'inclure les notes en bas de page, et non à la fin du livre (la lecture en aurait grandement été facilitée), et de fournir les informations bibliographiques complètes pour fins d'études subséquentes. Enfin, de nombreuses fautes de typographie rendent la lecture malaisée; nous en donnons une liste pour les éditeurs: Page 52, ligne 41; page 105, ligne 12; page 109, ligne 12; page 129, ligne 25; page 137, ligne 4; page 155, lignes 7 et 13; page 185, lignes 14 et 15; page 188, ligne 19; en page 199, la dernière référence devrait se lire *Rom* 3:25-26. Ce livre mériterait certainement une deuxième édition en français, reliée avec une couverture rigide cette fois.

Malgré quelques fautes de présentation, l'ouvrage de Stott mérite d'être lu et relu, et sera utile autant aux pasteurs qu'aux chrétiens des Eglises, aux conseillers qu'à ceux qui cherchent des réponses précises et bibliques à leurs questions au sujet de la croix de Jésus-Christ.

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**David Thrower, *No Looking Back. The Story of a Missionary to India.* London: Grace Publications, 1986, 150 pages. Distributed by Evangelical Press.**

As I write this book review I am living in a country vastly different from those of the west. In the west we tend to be drawn to Christian "superstars" who prove their status by what they accomplish. Western Christians believe that it is these who can teach the rest of us about the Christian life, so we flock time after time to sit at the feet of the latest "guru" and discover his keys to success. Here in Japan, however, things are somewhat different. Japanese are more impressed by the character of someone than their particular accomplishments —what one "is" rather than what one "does."

Now, of course, in the west we give lip service to this as well but our Conferences, Seminars, books and even how we select a "Pastor" often reveal something else. It is for this reason especially that I am grateful for this new biography of David Thrower (1900-1985). In the introduction Paul Helm writes the following [p.5-6]:

The story is not what you might expect. There is no account here of great preaching, of the opening of new fields for the gospel, of doctrinal controversy or of vigorous church growth. There is no dramatic pioneering, no great acts of missionary statesmanship...But then why publish his story?...What is remarkable about David's story —worth recording and worth knowing about—is what it reveals about Christian virtue and character.

*No Looking Back* lets David tell his own story (in his self-effacing manner) regarding his more than 60 years of missionary service in India. He died in the country he loved so much on July 13, 1985.

David Thrower was a man who displayed remarkable discipline throughout his life, evident in his early years as a teenager. This disciplined, responsible attitude is one of the hallmarks of the book, especially when one views the kind, self-effacing man who possessed such qualities. There are also some precious accounts of God guiding David and his wife Marty in their secret ministries of giving and prayer —things that are better read first-hand than in a book review.

David Thrower was to become a virtual expert in the Tamil language and produced the first Tamil Concordance ever written, a task requiring over 20 years' hard work. Again and again we see this hard-working, disciplined man against the backdrop of a gentle and kind personality. It is remarkable how much ill-health both he and his wife endured, even to the point of being separated for up to a year to allow for recovery back home. One incident in this regard especially moved this reviewer when he realized how difficult it

was for them to be separated and the great sacrifice they made for Jesus' sake.

In many ways the life of David and his wife was very remarkable, but not in the "sensational" way we are frequently subjected to. The impression left on the reviewer is that they grew more and more godly as time went on. It is this especially that lingers in the mind after finishing the book: godliness, day-by-day godliness. Near the end of his life David was granted a wider and more influential ministry to both Indians and missionaries alike. The eye-witness accounts of their deaths are truly special —God's seal of approval on their lives given to him.

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Toyama City,  
Japan

**Thomas F. Torrance, *The Trinitarian Faith: The Evangelical Theology of the Ancient Catholic Church*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988, 345 pages.**

The same scholarly excellence and deep Christian spirituality that is shown in all the work of Thomas F. Torrance is quite evident in the book at hand. It serves as a good example of scholarship in the service of the truth of the gospel.

The focus of the book is the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed and its carefully worked out trinitarian faith. What Torrance makes clear is that good theology does not come easily and it is produced only by godly people. The Fathers display theological acumen informed by godliness and pressed into the promotion of godliness. The "deposit of truth" is protected by godliness (*cf.* 2 Tim 1:14; 1 Tim 4:6-7).

*The Trinitarian Faith* brings to our attention certain matters of great contemporary relevance. First, there is the missionary and evangelical thrust of the Creed:

That Jesus Christ *is* God's Son...and that God's Son *is* Jesus Christ was the central evangelical truth which the Council of Nicea affirmed...The Church refused to weaken or compromise faith in Jesus Christ as God and man in one Person, for if he was not really God then there was no divine reality in anything he said or did, and if he is not really man then what God did in him had no saving relevance for human beings [p.115].

At stake here as well is our knowledge of God, the matter of "access to the Father" (Eph 2:18):

For Nicene theology...the mutual relation of knowing and being

between the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ constitutes the ontological ground for our knowing of God... Thus through union with Christ we are given access to knowledge of God as he is in his own being [p.59]... In accordance with the apostolic tradition the church concentrated upon the primacy of the Father/Son relation which it found in the Gospel and high-lighted it in the Creed, for it was precisely on and around that relation that everything else in the gospel seemed to be built [p.48-49].

Orthodoxy is not a matter of being inflexible or intransigent—it is an indispensable component of the gospel and its very foundation.

Second, the central theme of Torrance's work is that the true God is the Triune God. The doctrine of the Trinity is essential to the Christian faith. It is not the product of the Hellenization of Christianity, much less something imposed upon Scripture, or a departure from the simplicity of the gospel. The "basic revolution in knowledge of God that had taken place in Jesus Christ" requires that we view God as Triune [p.67]. In the incarnation of the Son in Jesus Christ, God

has opened up himself to our knowledge in his own being as Father, Son and Holy Spirit for what he has revealed of himself to us through Christ and in the Spirit he *is in himself*... To know God in this way does not mean that we can know *what* the being of God is, but it does mean that we are given knowledge of God that is directly grounded in his eternal being. Epistemologically, that is what the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is about... (The) astonishing condescension of God in Jesus Christ has made possible, accurate but devout knowledge of God in accordance with his divine nature [p.67-68].

No small wonder, then, that the Puritans much later affirmed that the doctrine of the Trinity is "the foundation of our communion with God and comfortable dependence upon him" [*The Savoy Declaration* (1658)]. Quite simply, "the knowledge of God the Father to which we are given access through the Son and in the Spirit is a knowledge of God as he eternally is in himself as Father, Son and the Holy Spirit" [p.59].

The point is that God *is* Father: God was not always Creator, but he has always been Father [p.84]. And this is pertinent for our situation, where, in some quarters, in the interest of placating the "feminists," the Trinitarian formula is made to read "Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier." Such declarations describe what God does, whereas Father, Son and Holy Spirit define who God is. Before God created, redeemed and sent forth his Spirit to sanctify, he existed as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The designation "Father" is indispensable, for it is God's self-designation, and to omit this designation leads to a truncated view of God:



The fact that God has named himself to us a Father in and through Jesus Christ his incarnate Son means that we cannot and may not seek to have knowledge of God or express it in such a way as to by-pass his self-naming [p.70].

Two things are involved here: the nature of the language of Scripture and the thrust of the gospel. Torrance has dealt thoroughly with the former in an earlier work, emphasizing that the words of Scripture convey a true and real and completely adequate knowledge of God [*Reality and Evangelical Theology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1982)]:

(The) Holy Scriptures are the spectacles through which we are brought to the true God in such a way that our minds fall under the compelling power of his self-evidencing reality [p.64].

The "human forms of thought and speech employed in the Scriptures are harnessed to God's creative self-revelation" [p.109]. The latter is emphasized in the present volume: the point of the gospel is to bring us in the Spirit through the Son to the Father. The Christocentricity that characterizes Nicene theology is one that serves "Patrocentricity" —it is the Father we know in the Son— and, even more, it gives unreserved place to "the Spirit of the Father who is conveyed to us through the Son on the ground of his saving and reconciling work" [p.64]. Evangelicals, with their keen interest in Christology and soteriology, and Pentecostals with their emphasis upon pneumatology, have forgotten that the work of Christ and the Spirit are to restore us to the Father and make us aware of the Father. As they have forgotten the Father, they are inclined to be less than Trinitarian [*cf.* Thomas Smail, *The Forgotten Father* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1980)].

What is not sufficiently noted is the fact that Reformed confessions with their focus on soteriology presuppose the theology of Nicaea. In other words, soteriology is rooted in and stems from the doctrine of God. As children of the Reformation, we are inclined to begin with its confession and accents. It is important, however, that we step back into the time of the Fathers and take note of their struggle to define and defend the biblical doctrine of God against error. At stake was not only the doctrine of God as Triune, but soteriology as well. Without a true doctrine of God we have a false soteriology. It is God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit who saves. Thus we are not left to try to somehow save ourselves at any point. God *is* Saviour throughout the whole process of salvation: The Father gives, the Son atones for sin, and the Holy Spirit applies and draws us to the Son in whom we are restored to the Father.

*The Trinitarian Faith* repays careful study, and I highly recommend it as an exceptional piece of historical theology that places before us what is at issue in the doctrine of God as Triune. We stand indebted to Thomas F. Torrance. He is reported as seeing himself as an evangelist to scientists *and*

theologians. In *The Trinitarian Faith* he is an evangelist to theologians, uncovering what is absolutely essential to the gospel.

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**William Williams, *Christianity among the New Zealanders*. 1867 ed.; repr. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth, 1989, vi + 384 pages.**

*Christianity among the New Zealanders* is a gripping and inspiring account of the work of God among the Maoris in the early 1800s. The author was himself sent out by the Church Missionary Society and he, along with others, carried on the work initiated by Samuel Marsden. In 1807-1808 the latter persuaded the CMS to consider New Zealand and in 1814 he led a missionary party to the islands. Others followed, and this volume offers a stirring account of their labours.

The reader will come away from this book convinced of the depravity of the human heart: slavery, treachery, cannibalism, infanticide, polygamy, along with a savage addiction to inter-tribal war characterized Maori life prior to the introduction of Christianity. The author paints graphic pictures of Maori life and offers many illustrative examples of the savage nature of their existence.

The reader will also find in the description of the labours of the missionaries striking examples of perseverance. This was no easy road. Rather, that road was marked by hard hearts, false professions, the destruction of property, the threat of physical violence, and innumerable other difficulties. Yet the author and his brother Henry Williams were each to give about half a century to the Maoris in their efforts to see them won to Christ.

And then the reader will come away thankful for the promise of what God can do. The book's title is accurate: this is Christianity among the New Zealanders. This is God invading the darkness and bringing light. Certainly there were false professions. Many Maoris were interested only in the possibility of obtaining firearms with which to perpetuate their tribal wars. Nevertheless, the author gives numerous examples of those whose professions were marked by sincerity and he is able to say, by way of conclusion, "the multitude is large of those who, after having afforded during life a sufficient reason for believing that they were true converts, have in their last moments given a clear testimony that they died in the Christian's hope" [p.376]. The sins of our society are not the sins of the Maoris, but the darkness is just as deep. They waged war on each other; our society chooses to wage war on the unborn. Yet we read here that the light of the gospel shone into the hearts of multitudes of Maori people. The Christian turns away from this book and faces his own depraved generation with renewed hope and

conviction that "salvation is of the Lord."

The inclusion of a map and a glossary would have been of some help to the reader unacquainted with New Zealand and with Maori terminology. However, these are minor deficiencies, and the book as a whole is to be highly recommended. It offers us in the lives of these valiant men and women examples of consuming zeal, passionate godliness, and sacrificial love. It offers us in the lives of converted Maoris reminders of the fact that the wickedness of the human heart is no match for sovereign grace. We need to read of such things and learn.

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Books mentioned above may or may not be reviewed later in *The Baptist Review of Theology*. La mention de ces livres sous cette rubrique n'inclut ni n'exclut une récénsion ultérieure dans *La Revue Baptiste de Théologie*.