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A table of contents for *The Baptist Review of Theology* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_brt.php

BOOK REVIEWS

David S. Dockery and Robison B. James, eds., *Beyond the Impasse? Scripture, Interpretation, & Theology in Baptist Life*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992, 319 pages. ISBN: 0-8054-6036-5.

This volume makes an important contribution to the latest and most virulent debate among Southern Baptists over biblical interpretation and inerrancy. Through its use of a debate format, this book allows its authors to state their view and respond to criticisms put forward by others. This approach has a number of advantages. First, it creates a dialogue between scholars with opposing viewpoints. Second, it underscores for the reader the strengths and weaknesses of each position. Finally, it offers the reader the freedom to read the articles in any order. Each of these characteristics makes *Beyond the Impasse?* a valuable resource for both student and scholar.

In addition to its flexible nature, this volume contains articles that are, with a couple of exceptions, thoroughly researched and well written. The first four articles in section one are particularly strong. They cover the major themes (biblical authority, historical criticism, literary hermeneutics and theological renewal) that orient the discussion found in the rest of the book. The last four articles in section one take as their focus the merits of moving beyond the impasse and methods by which Southern Baptists can accomplish this difficult goal. The ideas presented come from a wide range of perspectives, and significant theological and hermeneutical differences are clearly evident in the both the articles and the responses.

Despite the obvious disagreements among the contributing scholars the tone of *Beyond the Impasse?* is respectful and sincere. One gets the impression that these scholars are making a serious attempt to put behind them the personal attacks and acrimonious debates of the past thirty years and come, through their dialogue with each other, to an understanding of one another. This is not to suggest that there is an attempt here to "paper over" the substantive theological differences that remain at the heart of the Southern Baptist Convention's troubles. In fact, the views expressed in this volume are at times surprisingly candid. The primary achievement of this book is that it facilitates a healthy debate on the key issues without sacrificing candour or creating the false expectation of complete reconciliation.

While the difficulties that have troubled the Southern Baptist Convention will undoubtedly continue to produce their share of

bitterness and resentment, *Beyond the Impasse?* has begun the process of healing the deep wounds of the past. Through its commitment to facilitating honest and open dialogue between theological adversaries this book has given both its contributors and its readers the opportunity to move beyond personal attacks and petty politics to meaningful dialogue. One can only hope that this meeting of minds will continue. If it does, all North American Baptists will be its beneficiaries.

Paul R. Wilson,
London, Ontario.

David S. Dockery ed., *Southern Baptists & American Evangelicals The Conversation Continues*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993, xiv + 242 pages. ISBN: 0-8054-6041-1.

Proving the axiom that the simplest questions are often the most difficult to answer, *Southern Baptists & American Evangelicals* attempts to come to terms with the question, "Are Southern Baptists 'evangelicals'?" This volume is in reality the second such work to wrestle with this question. It advances the discussion of an earlier volume with the same theme published by James Leo Garrett Jr. and E. Glenn Hinson in 1983. Most of the articles are papers that were presented at the 1989 and 1990 Southern Baptist Denominational Heritage Conferences and their annual Baptist pastors' conferences held at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

In my opinion, this book is only partially successful in its attempts to wrestle with the question it raises. While the articles are written by an interesting and diverse array of evangelical scholars, only a few, especially those by George Marsden, Joel Carpenter, John P. Newport, E. Glenn Hinson and James Leo Garrett, Jr., provide the in-depth scholarship needed to provide a satisfactory response to the query. Some of the articles in the opening section on identity lack substance, are somewhat repetitious and constantly defer to the conclusions reached by George Marsden. Clearly his article sets a standard that is unmatched in any of the other papers. In addition, while it may be argued that the "conversational" approach used in this book justifies the length of the first section on identity, I would contend that while a understanding and definition of evangelicalism is needed, these issues are already partially covered in the introduction. In short, section one is simply too long. Thus, it is not

until Joel Carpenter's paper entitled "Is 'Evangelical' a Yankee Word?" that the discussion on the central question is advanced.

Despite its flaws, however, *Southern Baptists & American Evangelicals* is, as Mark Noll asserts in the foreword, "a very important book on a vitally important subject" (p.x). As a number of writers point out, the Southern Baptist Convention's struggle with the evangelical label has led to internal tension and intra-denominational friction. Both of these factors provide reasonable justification for a volume of this type.

While uneven writing and scholarship are evident in its pages, *Southern Baptists & American Evangelicals* provides its reader with the contextual information and insights needed to draw one into the dialogue. The conversational approach used throughout this book encourages the reader to think critically and formulate questions. This volume would be particularly useful as a supplementary text to stimulate discussion in a course on Baptist history.

Undoubtedly the debate and dialogue over the relationship between Southern Baptists and the wider evangelical community will continue. The discussion has certainly profited from the compendium of articles offered by Dockery. Hopefully another ten years will not pass before a third volume is published.

Paul R. Wilson,
London, Ontario.

**George M. Ella, *William Huntington: Pastor of Providence*.
Darlington, Co. Durham: Evangelical Press, 1994, 367 pages.
ISBN: 0-85234-317-5.**

Regarded by many as the black sheep of late eighteenth-century Evangelicalism, the life and thought of William Huntington has been largely ignored by evangelical authors and historians. George Ella rightly deplores this fact and in this new biography has sought to do justice to this controversial figure. Huntington's remarkable conversion from a life deeply marred by sin and shame — a section of the biography that makes for especially compelling reading — and his rise to prominence as a Calvinistic pastor and preacher in London, his subsequent controversies with fellow Calvinists and the nature of his personality, warts and all, are here detailed with enthusiasm and a conviction that Huntington has much to teach the present generation. Indeed, one comes away from reading this biography with the impression that Huntington was an extraordinary figure in an extraordinary era, who should be better known,

particularly by Calvinists, for he was a man who genuinely sought to exalt salvation by Christ alone and grace alone.

Nevertheless, the biography left me with some deep concerns. For example, I have over the past number of years spent much time reading the works of Andrew Fuller and John Ryland, Jr, two of Huntington's sternest critics. As such I was naturally very interested to see what would be said about their disagreements with Huntington — disagreements that focused on the free offer of the gospel, the place of the law in the believer's life, and the nature of the atonement. I was amazed to find especially Fuller described as the author of an "illicit gospel" (e.g., p.18) and "heretical" teachings (e.g., pp.137, 188-189). A lengthy appendix (pp.297-318) seeks to give substance to the various charges throughout the book leveled against Fuller and his friends, but, in my mind, it definitely fails to prove that Fuller was a heretic. I am not afraid to admit that there are weaknesses in Fuller's formulation of his theology, particularly with regard to the atonement, and that this biography has shown that this area of Fuller's thought needs closer re-examination. That it is heretical, though, is quite a different matter, for that would be tantamount to denying that Fuller and his close friends, which would include William Carey who was at one with most of Fuller's theology, were regenerate individuals. In fact, with regard to the areas of disagreement between Huntington and Fuller, I would venture to say that it is the theology of the latter which best preserves the lineaments of Reformed Christianity.

Ella has done a great service for students of late eighteenth-century Evangelicalism in recovering the life and ministry of this largely-forgotten figure. It is unfortunate that in doing so Ella has blackened the character of some of Huntington's contemporaries, namely Fuller and his friends, who were in their own right great men of God.

Michael A. G. Haykin,
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Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., *Lord of the Saved: Getting to the Heart of the Lordship Debate*. Phillipsburg, N. J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1992, xii +104 pages.

This brief monograph will ably serve to acquaint any reader with the main issues and several of the respective advocates of both sides of the "Lordship Debate." The matter in question is whether salvation

can be secured by the acceptance of Christ as Savior without a corresponding acceptance of him as Lord. "Nonlordship" proponents say "yes," and "Lordship" proponents say "no." The book is a recasting of Gentry's earlier article, "The Great Option: A Study of the Lordship Controversy," which appeared in the *Baptist Reformation Review* 5 (Spring 1976). Gentry's purpose in the book is to report on the debate, and more importantly, to affirm and defend the "Lordship" position.

The discussion is organized into six chapters. Chapter one presents a basic statement of each position. The four succeeding chapters constitute the burden of the argument in favor of the "Lordship" position, dealing in order with "faith," "repentance," the "Lordship of Christ," and "discipleship." Gentry's approach is primarily to offer word studies of the appropriate Greek words, and in the case of "faith," of the prepositions that are used with them. He draws heavily upon specific usages of these words and concepts in their biblical contexts. He includes exegesis of relevant passages, often in comparison with interpretations of "non-lordship" proponents. The final chapter is a call for a commitment to the preaching of an uncompromised gospel as the "Lordship" position defines it.

One feels that this is a debate of systematic rather than practical theology. Quotes from "non-lordship" writers indeed arouse concern about that position, but the safe route will be to observe these quotes in the broader context from which they are taken. Gentry argues that there is no middle ground; it must be one way or the other. Every pastor will wrestle with this judgment. Those who know and preach the worthiness of their Lord to receive joyful submission from all his own, will yet be burdened by the ones who seem that they will be saved "yet so as by fire."

Jim Christie,
Rouge Valley Alliance Church,
Scarborough, Ontario.

J. Ramsey Michaels, *Interpreting the Book of Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992, 150 pages. ISBN: 0-8010-6293-4.

This short volume is a fine contribution to the *Guides to New Testament Exegesis* series. Michaels offers a system of interpretation which balances scholarship with a reverence for the biblical text that is healthy, though a little short of some of the explicit affirmations that conservative interpreters might desire. He succeeds in his purpose of offering a sound

hermeneutic without trying to answer the specific problems of interpretation, except by way of illustration. This manual will thus be profitable for those of various theological and eschatological positions; no position will find itself exempt from the penetrating challenges of Michaels' carefully tested principles. But comfort may be derived from the fact that Michaels betrays little personal bias; when it is appropriate to discuss various viewpoints, he does so with equal respect and honesty.

The book is divided into two sections. The first handles sensibly the general considerations of genre, authorship, socio-historic background, and structure. As many questions as answers are raised, but tools are offered to enable the reader to reach his own conclusions. The second section deals with specific aspects of exegesis, and does so by way of illustration more than by explanation. This approach is thoroughly effective. Though the material is often technical Michaels avoids a vocabulary which would render it obscure to the non-specialist. Thus, for example, he discusses the question of subjective or objective genitive in "a revelation of Jesus Christ" without using those terms (p.130).

Included in the second division are chapters on textual criticism, grammar and style, narrative criticism, tradition history, and theological interpretation. While each is instructive, the treatment of textual criticism will be especially helpful for anyone wishing a concise, illustrated presentation of the key elements of that discipline, even for biblical texts other than Revelation. His method and illustration of sentence analysis/diagramming is, in my opinion, a weaker point. In all, the book is surely one which will be appreciated by pastors, teachers, and students alike.

The page reference on page 81 that was flagged for final editing but missed should probably be "see p.120ff."

Jim Christie,
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Harold A. Netland, *Dissonant Voices: Religious Pluralism and the Question of Truth*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991, 323 pages.

In the last two centuries the Christian community has entered into religious dialogue with a host of foreign ideologies with alarming consequences for biblical orthodoxy. According to Harold A. Netland, those who maintain that the Bible presents Jesus as the only legitimate saviour for all humanity and apart from him there can be no redemption from the predicament of sin have been assailed from

within and without as being wrongly exclusive in their thinking. Significantly, although pluralism has been a fact for as long as recorded history, the concerted effort to bring together representatives from various religions for the express purpose of enhancing mutual understanding through dialogue is a phenomenon of roughly the last hundred years. Indeed, a major assumption underlying the current emphasis upon interreligious dialogue — that religious variety is a positive rather than a negative fact, and that pluralism should have an enriching rather than a divisive effect upon religions — is a relatively modern one (p.15).

Netland identifies seven reasons why many believe that “exclusivism” is untenable. First, the overwhelming number of Buddhists, Sikhs, Hindus and Moslems that have immigrated in recent years are likely to be one’s next door neighbours. Formerly, they would have been part of a visiting missionary’s slide-show presentation. Second, the twentieth century is typified by a growing scepticism in religion. Third, along with scepticism and an increasing awareness of other cultures is the rise of moral and religious relativism. A fourth factor is the differentiation between public facts and private opinions. Religious ethics have been relegated to the closet of one’s personal preferences. Fifth, truth and falsehood are inappropriate distinctions for the modern mind. Belief systems are therefore evaluated upon their pragmatic merits. Sixth, adherents to “exclusivism” boast a presumptuous, arrogant and intolerant doctrine which only serves to increase tension among cultures. Finally, there is a growing acceptance in Christian circles of a universal soteriology (p.28-33).

Netland’s work is a timely apologetic in an increasingly “politically correct” climate. Three key areas are identified in which Evangelicals are either confused or in retreat. The first is dialogue. The popular notion, according to Netland, is that in a pluralistic society dialogue is absolutely essential between individuals in various religions. Netland is quick to point out, however, that dialogue has been sadly degraded by Western society. It is no longer a mere exchange of ideas that serves to educate and cultivate the appreciation of other people and ideologies. Nor is it designed to foster discussion of propositional and doctrinal issues. Rather the danger of modern dialogue is that

it rises above the level of fixation with explicitly beliefs and doctrines and ... (introduces) the participants to new horizons of truth and reality through a deep experience of the divine reality. ... Dialogue here is often thought of as a common

quest for Truth. It is generally taken for granted that God — or the religious ultimate — has revealed himself in all religions, that all persons can be 'saved' and related to God through their own religious traditions, and that not only is there no need for conversion to Christ, but attempts to persuade non-Christians to accept Christ as Lord and Saviour are theologically and morally unacceptable. Sacred scriptures of all religions can be regarded as revelatory. The Bible has no privileged status (p.290).

The rejection of Scripture's sufficiency leads to Netland's second concern, that is, the abandonment of traditional evangelism. Netland is correct when he states that conversion is the result of evangelism and not the task itself. Evangelism is the faithful proclamation of the good news that reconciliation with God is possible in the person of Jesus Christ and his substitutionary atonement. Evangelism can take place even where no results are self evident. "To 'evangelize' does not mean to win converts ... Evangelism is the announcement of the good news, irrespective of the results" (p.281-282). The danger that arises is that if all holy books contain some degree of truth and dialogue amongst various factions is a quest for ultimate truth, then what need is there for evangelism?

The rejection of the scriptural mandate to evangelize and the unwillingness to engage in authentic dialogue leads to Netland's third concern, namely, that salvation only through Christ is being labelled by many as intolerant. Thankfully, Netland provides a proper framework whereby Christian exclusivism need not be at odds with toleration. Toleration, properly understood, does not mean acceptance of doctrines that are blatantly unbiblical. One may study Buddhism and discuss Buddhist beliefs with its practitioners. One may also empathize with their concerns and respect their philosophy. But to do so does not mean that one must adapt any or all of their dogma. It is possible and ought to be encouraged that while one may disagree with Hindus and Moslems about ultimate reality, one may still respect the person who holds a divergent opinion. Netland quoted Maurice Cranston who defined toleration as "a policy of patient forbearance in the presence of something which is disliked and disapproved of" (p.307). Netland proceeds to clarify this definition by stating that "toleration thus has an element of disapproval built into its meaning" (p.307). Ironically, Netland also points out that this discussion of Christian intolerance is a uniquely Western phenomenon. Nations such as Tibet, for example, do not

hesitate to persecute Christian missionaries should they attempt to evangelize within their boundaries.

This is an outstanding piece of scholarship and should be mandatory reading for any thinking Christian, for Netland's style is concise and articulate, his reasoning thoroughly biblical and coupled with razor-like logic.

Heinz G. Dschankilic,
Cambridge, Ontario.

**Mark A. Noll, *Confessions and Catechisms of the Reformation.*
Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991, 232 pages.**

Ten key documents of the Reformation period are here presented in an easily accessible form with helpful introductions. Each major section of the church is represented: Lutheran, Reformed, Anabaptist, Roman Catholic and Anglican. Noll places the Confessions and Catechisms in their historical context, and explains their importance for the era in which they were formulated and their relevance for today.

The collection begins with the document that could be said to have "sparked off" the religious controversies of the sixteenth century: Luther's *Ninety Five Theses*. These deal in a vigorous and courageous way with the question of indulgences. At this stage Luther was appealing for reform, and thus he spoke more charitably of the Pope than would be the case later on: "if the pope knew the exactions of the indulgence preachers, he would rather that the basilica of Saint Peter were burned to ashes than built up with the skin, flesh, and bones of his sheep" (#50, p.32). There follows the *Sixty Seven Articles* of Ulrich Zwingli. Noll describes it as the "first Protestant confession" (p.38). It is comprehensive in the doctrines and practices covered, and led to the Zurich city council approving Zwingli's reformed position as the position of that Canton. The significance of this document is clear: "the major thrust of the Sixty-Seven Articles defined a basic Reformed stance which, with variations, continues as an influential Protestant position to this very day" (p.39).

The *Schleitheim Confession* is of course of particular interest to Baptists. The principle of believer's baptism is insisted on, infant baptism being regarded as "the highest and chief abomination of the pope" (p.51-52). Noll explains clearly why Catholic and Reformed alike reacted with horror to this stance and why the so-called Anabaptists were persecuted. The fiery persecutions endured by this group explains the ultra-separatist position that they adopted, which is laid out in this confession, whereby civic, juridical, and military involvement were all abhorred.

Martin Luther's *Small Catechism* is a delight to read. It was prepared to remedy the widespread ignorance of basic Christian truths among laity and clergy alike. It is a clear aid to family worship.

When the Emperor Charles V summoned the princes and leaders of the Holy Roman Empire to a Diet at Augsburg in 1530, the Protestant leaders commissioned a group of theologians headed by the Lutheran Philipp Melancthon to produce a summary of their beliefs. The *Augsburg Confession* lays out 21 basic articles of faith and doctrine, followed by detailed discussion of certain abuses in the Roman church which had been corrected. The discussion is clearly intended to persuade and convince, rather than divide. However, the clarity of the positions taken would inevitably serve to polarise debate, and the Catholic response came with the Tridentine decrees. The chasm between the Protestant Reformers and the Church of Rome is most clearly understood when the *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* are examined first-hand, for although certain blatant abuses were corrected, the major points for which the Reformers stood are categorically condemned. The brief *Profession of the Tridentine faith* unequivocally calls for the affirmation of the seven sacraments, transubstantiation, purgatory, images, indulgences, and asserts that outside this true Catholic faith none can be saved.

The Reformed and Anglican positions are represented by the remaining documents: the *Genevan Confession*, the *Heidelberg Catechism*, and the *Thirty-Nine Articles*. The *Genevan Confession* was presented to the city senate by John Calvin and William Farel in November of 1536, and was adopted as the *Confession* which "all the citizens and inhabitants of Geneva and the subjects of the country must promise to keep and hold." Noll notes that it provided for "the earliest stages of the Reformation in Geneva a succinct, forceful statement of the sort of Christian convictions to which Calvin devoted his life" (p.125). Its concise nature makes it a valuable summary of the faith of the second generation of Protestants.

The *Heidelberg Catechism* is arguably the most attractive document in the collection, in its warm spirituality and its expression of experiential enjoyment of Christ and his benefits. Originally commissioned as a doctrinal statement that could combine Lutheran and Reformed understanding, it became the doctrinal standard of the Dutch Protestant Church in 1586. Subsequently it became of foundational importance to the Reformed Church in America and the Christian Reformed Church as well as other denominations. The first question is itself illustrative of how appropriate this catechism was for Protestants facing suffering and persecution:

Q. What is your only comfort, in life and in death?

A. That I belong — body and soul, in life and in death — not to myself but to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, who at the cost of his own blood has fully paid for my sins and has completely freed me from the dominion of the devil; that he protects me so well that without the will of my Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head; indeed that everything must fit his purpose for my salvation. (p.137).

Finally the *Thirty-Nine Articles* (1571) provide the doctrinal standard of the Church of England and Episcopal churches, though as Noll points out, many Anglicans in our own day regard them as of historical significance only, and do not see themselves as bound by them.

The headings make reading very easy, and the print is clear. This work is most warmly recommended. It is a readable and stimulating introduction to the vital doctrinal issues which have shaped sixteenth-century, and subsequent, church history.

Sharon James,
Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

Thomas C. Oden, *Requiem: A Lament in Three Movements*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995, 176 pages. ISBN: 0-687-01160-4.

Thomas C. Oden has been on a long theological journey. Unlike some so-called neo-evangelicals like E. J. Carnell and Henry Ockenga, Oden did not begin his trip as a fundamentalist and end up a broad-minded Evangelical. Oden's journey began in the avant-garde theological liberalism of the sixties and has come to rest in the what he terms paleo-orthodoxy or post-modern classical Evangelicalism. To borrow a phrase from the apostle Paul he was a "modernist of modernists" whose Damascus-road experience was the death of modernity. Oden writes from the perspective of an insider whose disillusionment with the liberal seminary's establishment is both profound and complete. Moreover, though *Requiem* is a lament, it is also a call to arms and a beckoning to Evangelicals within the mainstream liberal seminaries not to miss the opportunity for renewal opened up to them by the ongoing demise of modernity.

Oden opens his lament with a survey of the modern liberal seminary's entrenchment in the radicalism spawned by the Enlightenment's "turn to the subject" and its resultant relativism. Liberal radicalism persists, in Oden's view, mainly because of a

system of tenure that all but ensures that no one who could seriously challenge its assumptions will ever get the chance.

Although this situation seems bleak, Oden believes that all is not lost. Over the years he has observed a growing group of what he calls “young fogeys” whose commitment to the ancient confessions is starting to challenge the power elites of the so-called liberated seminaries. He states:

There abide within this liberated space a flourishing group of post-liberated Christians. They are maturing beyond the messianisms of liberated life. They have had it with the fantasies of liberation. They have exercised some of its license, received its cheap grace, and feasted briefly at its narcissistic table, only to remain hungry. Having gone through the motions of liberation, they once again find themselves grounded in the apostolic truth that sets us free (p.42).

Requiem is a fascinating look inside the world of the mainstream seminaries. It confirms some of the long-held suspicions of many Evangelicals, namely, that we are unwelcome and regarded as nothing short of curious anachronisms. However, Oden’s book is not a call to a pre-modern form of Evangelical theology but rather a plea that we take the current opportunity (provided by a deep disillusionment among the establishment with many modernist assumptions) to develop a post-modern Evangelical theology. Oden calls such a theology paleo-orthodoxy and is careful to distinguish what he means by post-modern from what philosophers such as Richard Rorty *et al.* have been promoting.

This is a short but profound book written by one who has become a leading Evangelical thinker of our time. A short review really cannot do it justice, but suffice it to say that if you want a glimpse at what is going on in many of North America’s mainstream seminaries from someone who knows whereof he speaks pick it up and give it a read. Read in combination with Noll’s recent work on the state of the Evangelical mind — *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Eerdmans, 1994) — one could gain a could sense of where we as Evangelical thinkers should be heading and what we are up against.

Scott Dyer,
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J. I. Packer et Thomas Howard, *Le Christ et l'humanisme moderne*. Méry-sur-Oise, France: Éditions Sator, 1990, 264 pages.

Depuis la parution du *Manifeste humaniste* en 1933, l'humanisme moderne, «idéologie dominante de notre culture technicienne» (p. 96), fait sienne l'affirmation du philosophe grec Protagoras: «l'homme est la mesure de toute chose». Si le matérialisme et un entichement pour la science en sont des éléments de base, l'une de ses caractéristiques est le refus de tout ce qui s'appelle religion, traitée de superstition. En réaction contre une religion légaliste, autoritaire, conservatrice et anti-culturelle, version déshumanisante du christianisme, l'humanisme moderne s'imagine offrir à l'homme la clé de l'épanouissement de soi, en éliminant tout ce qui s'y oppose.

Ce bien-être, valeur suprême, est accessible, prétend-on, puisque l'homme est en évolution constante vers ce qu'il y a de mieux, inné en lui. On reconnaîtra là une vue de l'homme, prônée entre autres par Jean-Jacques Rousseau au XVIII^e siècle, et dont l'essence profonde de rébellion s'élève contre l'invitation à la soumission inconditionnelle à Dieu que propose la Bible.

Mais l'humanisme ne colle pas vraiment aux données de l'expérience humaine, à laquelle il ne fournit pas non plus un sens. Ne collent pas plus les autres «ismes» à la mode tels l'existentialisme, le monasticisme, le gnosticisme.

Pour répondre au défi de l'humanisme moderne, les auteurs, le premier, professeur de théologie dogmatique à Vancouver, le second, professeur de lettres, présentent le point de vue chrétien sur les dimensions de l'humanité, réfutant ainsi ceux qui accusent la religion d'être une fuite de la réalité. Sans vouloir faire une apologétique classique, truffée d'arguments métaphysiques et de discussions sur l'historicité des données bibliques, ils couvrent amplement le projet auquel ils se limitent: parler de ce «qu'implique le fait d'être humain» (p. 35).

Sept volets de l'existence humaine sont scrutés: la liberté, l'espérance, la santé et la vertu, la dignité, la culture, le sacré et la considération d'autrui et l'identité personnelle, choisis en raison de leur pertinence autant pour l'humanisme que pour le christianisme. Environ trente pages sont consacrées à chacun.

Plutôt qu'au moyen d'arguments philosophiques, chaque thème est abordé par la considération de situations concrètes de la réalité. Ce portrait conduit à poser la problématique, et l'insuffisance de l'humanisme est vite apparent. Suit l'exposé de la pensée biblique en la matière, qui fournit l'occasion de présenter une doctrine chrétienne.

Ce livre est intéressant non seulement pour savoir comment la Bible répond aux positions humanistes, mais également pour saisir toute la grandeur de la condition humaine lorsque vécue à la lumière de l'Évangile, qui révèle «le seul être totalement humain que l'histoire ait connu» (p. 54), l'Homme-Dieu Jésus-Christ.

Le livre se présente comme une adaptation. En effet, l'appel des auteurs aux réalités de la vie quotidienne se traduit souvent par des références qui auraient dérouté le public français: noms de personnalités, d'institutions ou de faits culturels. Ces éléments sont habilement escamotés au profit de références générales («magazines de mode», p. 76) ou d'exemples français («la Nationale 7», p. 79). Par ailleurs, la traduction possède une grande qualité: on ne la sent pas. Le style français est un peu plus relevé que l'original, sans être pédant. Fait peut-être exception l'emploi du mot «manducation», p. 30. Il manque à cette version française un court manifeste humaniste chrétien que comprend la version anglaise. Aucune des versions ne comporte d'index.

La conception humaniste de la liberté, «liberté 55», c'est la liberté *des* contraintes extérieures. La vraie liberté ne serait-elle pas plutôt la liberté *pour* l'intégrité et l'engagement personnel? En effet, la conception chrétienne est que la vraie liberté est celle d'aimer à la manière du Christ, en obéissance au Père.

La création visible, le cosmos, constitue tout ce qui a été, ce qui est et ce qui sera; l'humanisme ne propose donc pas d'espoir transcendant à l'homme. Et pourtant, peut-on expliquer l'effort investi par l'athlète, par l'étudiant-chirurgien autrement que par une faculté innée, l'espérance, qui imagine l'avenir convoité. Et la mort, la maladie végétative, l'épuisement des ressources naturelles, problèmes auxquels l'humanisme moderne n'apporte aucune solution, ne font que mettre en relief l'aspiration de l'homme à répondre à la question: «et après?» Le cynisme, qui ronge notre société tel un cancer, est la seule réponse de l'humaniste à ces questions fondamentales. La foi offre une meilleure optique pour saisir les enjeux: la nature déchue de l'homme permet de comprendre à la fois le mal qui est dans le monde et la raison des aspirations de dépassement.

Pierre Tellier,
Orléans, Ontario.

Joseph Padinjarekara, *Christ In Ancient Vedas*. Burlington, Ontario: Welch Publishing Company Inc., 1991, 222 pages.

In the *Rg Veda* (Mandala 10, Hymn 121) there is a selection often referred to as a hymn to an unknown god. It is the type of opening that Paul would have loved. Unlike the altar in Athens, however, the end of the hymn identifies the unknown god as Prajapati, the Lord of All Creation. In further Hindu writings it is revealed that this god was a primal giant man who was sacrificed so that the oneness of Hindu monism was shattered into the vast diversity which we see around us today.

Joseph Padinjarekara wishes to take this piece of mythology, usually interpreted as a creation story, and show that it is really an example of a primitive revelation, though subordinate to the Bible, telling the Vedic people of the coming of the Messiah, Jesus. Padinjarekara has a B. A. in Sanskrit studies from the N. S. S. Hindu College, Changanachery and the University College, Trivandrum, with his Master's degree in Sanskrit and Indian Studies in the University of Toronto. His theological training is from Ontario Bible College and Canada Christian College, both in Toronto.

The core of the book is a comparison between Purusa, the incarnation of Prajapati, who is the sacrificial victim, and Jesus Christ. Padinjarekara believes that their sacrifices share ten similarities. Both involve a sinless man, completely separated for his work, rejected by his people, suffering silently, tied to a sacrificial pillar, his bones not broken, who returns to life after the sacrifice, his flesh becoming food for his followers, all due to the totally giving nature of his sacrifice. Each point is impressively supported from both Christian and Hindu scriptures. He then draws the conclusion that this must be a prophecy of Christ since Jesus is the only historical person who fulfils the qualifications. Thus, Purusa is really a type foreshadowing Christ. The Hindu apologist, with an illusory view of history, however, would most likely not be pressed to this conclusion, as to him the sacrifice of Purusa before the creation is just as real as that of Christ outside Jerusalem.

After this section there follows two subsidiary arguments. The first draws a comparison making Christ the Universal Guru, fitting and fulfilling all the guru qualifications: destroyer of the darkness of sin; Supreme God in His being; Supreme Way in Himself; Supreme Knowledge in Himself; and Supreme Journey in Himself. This is predicated on the argument that the Vedas teach the reality of only one real guru, a stance sure to be challenged by Hindus. The author believes that the divine qualities of this Supreme Guru have been falsely interpreted and appropriated to all humans by Hindu theology. The second argument tries to show that Christ, as Purusa, is really the fulfilment of all four systems of salvation in Hindu thought. Karma

Marga is seen as the way of sacrifice of Purusa. Jnana Marga is the way of knowledge of Purusa. Yoga Marga is concentration on Purusa. Bhakti Marga is love and faithfulness to Purusa.

His conclusion is that the Vedas teach only one way of forgiveness of sins and attainment of heaven: sacrifice. Proper Vedic sacrifices reflect the perfect one done by God in heaven, in His heart, before creation, and manifested on earth in Christ. The Vedas teach that only through knowing Purusa, who is really Christ according to Padinjarekara, is there eternal life. Thus Purusa can be used as a bridge for leading Hindus to Christ, much the same way as the cultural examples in Don Richardson's *Eternity In Their Hearts*. It is an attractive proposition, well done and widely researched in the Hindu scriptures. I can appreciate the approach as in my dealings with Tibetans I have found in their New Year Festival striking similarities to Old Testament sin-cleansing rituals. Still, the question of context must always be addressed, as similarities over cross-cultural lines are not always what they seem to be and are usually full of peril and misinterpretation.

As I was reading this book a number of problems presented themselves. How could the *Purusa-Sukta* (The Hymn of Man) in the *Rg Veda*, which was written around or before 1500 B. C., be the answer to a prayer in the Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad, which was not written until 700 or 600 B. C.? If, as the author claims, it is a clear mistake to read "purusa" as "self," rather than "man," why did all but two sources I consulted insist it meant "self"? Can the Hindus not interpret their own language? In a comparison of Padinjarekara's translation of the *Purusa-Sukta* to the translations of others, why are there a good number of disagreements at crucial points, with more agreement among the translations of others than theirs with Padinjarekara's? Is it really true that reincarnation is nowhere taught in the Vedas and is merely the result of misinterpreting the Upanishads? As these are crucial points in the book's argument, I felt very fortunate to have the opportunity to raise some of these issues with the author himself when I unexpectedly met him during my work on this review. I found him to be a man on fire for God, deeply concerned for the salvation of his people, and more than willing to address my questions in our informal talk.

The problem over the meaning of "purusa" has been complicated, according to the author, by the Samkhya school of Hindu philosophy, who reinterpreted it into a general "self" rather than the "Man," thus obscuring the real intent of the *Purusa-Sukta* and other texts. My sources conceded that it did mean "Man" in the *Purusa-Sukta*, but did not want to concede it elsewhere. Perhaps Padinjarekara's explanation accounts for this reluctance, as the Samkhya division of purusa as self/spirit from prakriti/substance is a crucial defining point of their position through which much else is interpreted. The Vedas do not support this antinomy.

The author will have to argue this point better than is done in this work, however, as Samkhya is a very influential position in modern Hinduism and its proponents will not take lightly to having this core distinctive challenged. He does however buttress his stance with the argument that the language used of Purusa in the Vedas makes it clear that there can be only one Purusa, and not many purusa-selves, as he is described as solely supreme above all. I think a Hindu apologist would respond that this is an attempt to reduce the opposites-shattering contradictions of Hinduism, through which the monistic One is realized beyond sensory experience, into Christian dualisms which are inapplicable to the subject at hand: there is only one supreme Purusa, but we are part of him. And what of *Katha Upanishad* 6:18 (Penguin Edition) which declares, "Always dwelling within all beings is the Atman, the Purusa, the Self, a little flame in the heart"? Can it all be just misinterpretation? This clearly needs more argument.

Padinjarekara says that the Sanskrit in the *Purusa-Sakta* is open to differing interpretations at crucial points. He does take time to argue the important changes, but as I do not read Sanskrit I cannot tell how effectively he makes his case. To a layman it looks as though some spots have been radically altered to fit the Christ-is-Purusa argument. For example, verse 5, which tells how Purusa gives birth to the active female creative principle which turns around and gives birth to him in eternity, seems very reworked. Whether the Sanskrit words harbour the diversity used here or not, Padinjarekara's work on it, according to our talk, was convincing enough to convert one of his Sanskrit professors who is now an ardent supporter and distributor of the book.

In regard to reincarnation not being taught in the Vedas or Upanishads, Padinjarekara has told me that he will begin work on another book to back up his claim. He believes that all the verses used to support the doctrine are out of context and misinterpreted; they really teach resurrection. I do not think many scholars will find this stance acceptable or defensible, but one must wait to see this further work before closing the door on it.

Perhaps the major problem many will see with this book is methodological. In the last chapter the author admits that the only way to distil the truths from the dross of Hindu scripture is to strain them through a grid of Christian beliefs. But is this not doing the very thing that upsets so many Christians when Hindus "extract the true truths from the Bible" by filtering them through a preconceived grid of Hindu beliefs? James Sire has nominated this tactic to its own category of logical fallacy: world-view confusion. A Hindu apologist could make a strong argument along this line, claiming that the only Christian doctrines being found in Hindu writings are the ones being read into isolated sections taken out of context by Christian presuppositions. On the other hand, if

Padinjarekara's theory is correct, he has found what one would expect, and in a startling, many-pointed answer. The problem is that on this level interpretative issues almost become axiomatic and one tends to find that with which you started. Whatever way it goes, the author claims that the book is selling well to Hindus and salvation is occurring. This alone will probably guarantee a Hindu response to the work, a reply which could be the beginning of a very long and tangled dialogue.

James Standen Taylor
Toronto, Ontario.

John Piper, *"Love Your Enemies": Jesus' Love Command in the Synoptic Gospels and in the Early Christian Paraenesis.* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991, 273 pages.

This work originated as a doctoral dissertation in 1974. It was subsequently published by Cambridge University Press in 1979, and has now been re-released in paperback by Baker. The thesis sets out to explain the close parallels between the command of love for one's enemy as found in the New Testament epistles (see Rom 12:14, 17-20; 1 Thess 5:15; 1 Pet 3:9; 1 Cor 4:12) and the similar command found in the synoptics (Mt 5:38-48; Lk 6:27-36). Questions to be answered are: what accounts for the agreement between the parallels and what accounts for the differences?

The first chapter examines the command within the paraenetic tradition. Piper concludes that there existed an oral paraenetic tradition and that this command was a part of that tradition in the form of "Do not repay evil for evil." Also, the command was accompanied always with a positive counterpart and the emphasis fell upon the positive element (p.17).

The second chapter addresses the issue of the source of this command and concludes that the idea is to be found in the teaching of Jesus. This accounts for the striking parallels between the gospel tradition and the paraenetic tradition. Subsequent chapters tackle the issue of accounting for the differences between the traditions. The meaning of Jesus' command is explored within three spheres: his own earthly ministry (chapter 3), the early paraenetic tradition found in the epistles (chapter 4), and the gospel tradition recorded in Matthew and Luke (chapter 5). The difference can be accounted for by recognizing the different functions of the two traditions. The gospel tradition preserves the radical nature of Jesus' proclamation, which calls for a reorientation of life made possible only by God's prevenient mercy. The paraenetic tradition develops the practical application of this command for the community of believers.

While this book still bears the marks of a dissertation, it is highly recommended reading for pastors as well as scholars. It is a stimulating study that will stretch and enrich one's mind and hopefully challenge the reader to faithful obedience to this command, which lies at the heart of the gospel.

Randy Mann,
London, Ontario.

Jerry K. Robbins, ed., *The Essential Luther: A Reader on Scripture, Redemption and Society*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991, 88 pages. ISBN: 0-8010-7759-1.

Any work that seeks to address the theology of Martin Luther must deal with the sheer volume of the Reformer's output. The problem with such a venture is, what does one omit or include and still remain faithful to Luther's intentions? This is further aggravated when one allows only eighty-eight pages including endnotes. Despite these difficulties, Jerry K. Robbins has successfully edited a highly useful introduction to Luther's writings.

As a handbook, Robbins has adeptly manoeuvred through the fifty-volume Fortress Press edition of Luther's works in an attempt to adequately represent Luther's thoughts on a variety of subjects, especially the three fundamental tenets of Luther's theology, which, as outlined by Harold C. Grimm, are: "justification by faith, the Bible as the sole authority for faith, and the priesthood of all believers" (p.7). Robbins has patterned his monograph along these lines. He divides the handbook into three sections with Luther's views of the Bible first. The nature of human redemption is placed second. And the role of the Christian in society third.

I heartily endorse this pocket-size gem as a solid primer not only of Martin Luther but of the Evangelical position as well. As one delves into the varied writings one becomes acutely aware of the timelessness of Luther. True, in his day he wrote against Roman excesses and deviation from the apostolic witness. However, if one knew nothing of Luther's historical circumstances, one might believe that Luther had penned some of his writings in the present era. For example, Robbins gives a quotation of Luther's refreshingly lofty view of Scripture. The words that follow are reminiscent of another great theological author, Martin Lloyd-Jones:

Therefore dismiss your own opinions and feelings,
and think of the Scriptures as the loftiest and noblest
of holy things, as the richest of mines which can

never be sufficiently explored, in order that you may find that divine wisdom which God here lays before you in such simple guise as to quench all pride. Here you will find the swaddling clothes and the manger in which Christ lies, and to which the angel points other shepherds (Luke 2:12). Simple and lowly are the swaddling cloths, but clear is the treasure, Christ, who lies in them. (p.26).

Heinz G. Dschankilic,
Cambridge, Ontario.

L. Joseph Rosas III, *Scripture in the Thought of Søren Kierkegaard*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994., 219 pages. ISBN: 0-8054-1624-2.

This careful examination of Søren Kierkegaard's use and understanding of Scripture fills a significant gap in our knowledge. Writing from an evangelical perspective, Rosas argues that the tendency of "the American conservative evangelical community" to dismiss Kierkegaard because of his ties to existential philosophy and neo-orthodox theology are somewhat misguided. While he acknowledges that there are "problems" in Kierkegaard's hermeneutical approach, Rosas is also careful to point out those areas in which his subject succeeded in making "positive contributions" to biblical exegesis. This more balanced interpretation of Kierkegaard is certainly thought provoking. Undoubtedly the more moderate interpretation offered by Rosas will stir controversy in some circles. It remains to be seen whether his book will stimulate further academic debate within the conservative wing of the North American evangelical community.

In addition, Rosas has organized his work in a fashion that will suit even those readers who are unfamiliar with Kierkegaard. By beginning with chapters that present Kierkegaard in context and outline the theological and philosophical foundations of his work, Rosas enables his reader to become familiar with the personal experiences and intellectual influences that shaped one of modern Christendom's most enigmatic figures. The chapters on the function of scripture in selected philosophical and other works are presented in a readable workmanlike fashion. The concluding chapter evaluates Kierkegaard's relationship with Scripture. It provides a number of fresh and stimulating insights on a difficult and complex subject. A thirty-nine page appendix listing all of the biblical references found

in the works that Rosas has examined constitutes a ready reference compendium that will be of particular use to evangelical scholars or students interested in further reading or research. While Rosas' book will certainly not be the last word on Kierkegaard's view and use of Scripture, its fresh insights, balanced interpretation and careful scholarship will be appreciated by historians, theologians and students. One can only hope that his efforts will encourage more evangelical scholars to take up the challenge of unravelling the complexities of modern philosophy and theology. Rosas' work has provided a model that other evangelical scholars would do well to follow.

Paul R. Wilson,
London, Ontario.

J. C. Ryle, *Thoughts for Young Men*. Amityville, New York: Calvary Press, 1991, 61 pages.

Michael A. Gaydosh is to be commended for his attempt to bring to light challenging and relevant material to help stimulate the spirituality of today's youth. He has done so by rediscovering J. C. Ryle's *Thoughts for Young Men*. Ryle, a prominent Anglican Evangelical of the last century, originally published this treatise as part of a larger work entitled *The Upper Room*.

To those familiar with church history Puritan influence on the treatise will be immediately obvious. Ryle follows the typical literary structure of such Puritan authors as John Owen and Richard Baxter. However, Ryle avoids something of the verbosity of his Puritan predecessors, choosing his language with a refreshingly concise economy.

The treatise is designed to be an exhortation to young men based upon Titus 2:6. Ryle structures his work in five sections to achieve this purpose. One is struck by the logic of his development of thought and the practical nature of its application. In the first section, Ryle outlines the reasons why exhortation is necessary. The second part details particular dangers about which young men must be warned. Section three lists some general advice appropriate to anyone. In part four, Ryle narrows his counsel to young men in particular. Section five contains Ryle's summation and conclusion.

Ryle's message, though expressed in the language of the Victorian era, is timeless in nature. It was appropriate for his audience in the 1880s and is certainly a long, overdue presentation for the congregations of the 1990s. For example, section two, which is entitled "Dangers of Young Men," details five areas of concern: pride, love of pleasure,

thoughtlessness and inconsideration, contempt of religion, and fear of man's opinion. Starting with thoughtlessness and inconsideration, Ryle takes his argument from the general to the specific by observing that souls are damned eternally because "Men will not consider, will not look forward, will not look around them, will not reflect on the end of their present course, and the sure consequence of their present ways" (p.22). Young men, by their very nature, are in particular danger according to Ryle, because they are "heedless of how they walk" and "know little of the perils" that surround them (p.22). Ryle raises an objection to his own position by citing a then-popular notion that youth is not a time for gravity and seriousness. The young should be indulged with gaiety, jesting and joking. Ryle answers in the following manner:

Doubtless there is a time for all things but to be always light and trifling is anything but wise. What says the wisest of men? "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house feasting: for that is the end of all men: and the living will lay it to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning: but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth."

This is a true spiritual gem that is solidly based upon sound exposition in the tradition of the Reformation and Puritanism. Writers and readers of contemporary pulp known as popular piety would do well to discover for themselves the work of J. C. Ryle.

Heinz G. Dschankilic,
Cambridge, Ontario.

John Sanders, *No Other Name*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992, xi + 315 pages.

It is no secret that some Evangelicals are increasingly uneasy about the assertion that unevangelized persons have no chance of final salvation. This is sometimes based on fuzzy notions of tolerance in a pluralistic society, but sometimes, as in this book, it is grounded in serious biblical and theological inquiry. John Sanders is an instructor at Oak Hills Bible College in Bemidji, Minnesota, and an adjunct professor of philosophy at

Bemidji State University. In this book he displays his knowledge of both theology and philosophy, and he writes with both unusual clarity and charity.

This “investigation into the destiny of the unevangelized” surveys three major approaches to the question: (1) restrictivism, or the belief that some will not have a chance to respond to saving revelation; (2) universalism, or the belief that somehow in the end all will be saved; and (3) the wider hope, or the belief that some (but not all) of the unevangelized will be saved. For each of the views above, Sanders gives a careful explanation of the concept, a summary of the biblical support used to defend the view, a statement of the theological principles which inform the view, a survey of proponents of the view, a useful bibliography, and a statement of the strengths and weaknesses as Sanders sees them.

This method provides a commendable way of dealing with controversial issues. In particular, I appreciate the fairness with which the author surveys the various opinions. Sanders is not a debater who tries to put opponents’ views in the worst possible light, but a teacher who tries to put all views in the best possible light, which is surely what all of us want others to do with our opinions.

In the end, Sanders opts for the “wider hope” view which he calls “inclusivism.” This is the view that some of the unevangelized will be saved through their positive response to whatever basic knowledge of God they have. This salvation is through Christ and based on his redemptive work, but apart from any explicit knowledge of that work. Sanders argues for this conclusion on the basis of two “control principles”: (1) all salvation is through Jesus Christ; and (2) God sincerely desires the salvation of all persons.

The crucial point in Sanders’ argument is his contention that God’s universal salvific will (expressed most pointedly in 1 Timothy 2:4) demands the universal accessibility of saving revelation. But how can we know that this inference is true? The biblical texts like 1 Timothy 2:4 simply do not spell out the implications of God’s desire to save all. One might just as well infer universal salvation from these texts as to infer universal accessibility.

If in the end inclusivism proves to be true, I will certainly not argue with God, but positive evidence for it is very lacking. When Paul talks about general revelation in Romans 1-2, his conclusions are negative: all are without excuse and under divine wrath (1:18-20), and those who sin apart from special revelation will perish (2:12). When this is added to Paul’s comments in Romans 10 about salvation coming only through hearing the gospel, it seems impossible to confidently suppose that there is any salvation apart from explicit faith.

This is a well-crafted book which treats a difficult issue very seriously, and it serves as a helpful survey of Christian thinking on the subject. I remain unconvinced, but interaction with this book is a healthy exercise.

Stanley K. Fowler,
Heritage Baptist College and Theological Seminary,
Cambridge, Ontario.

Quentin J. Schultze, *Televangelism and American Culture: The Business of Popular Religion*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991, 264 pages.

Perhaps the single greatest cultural distinctive of post-World War II North America is the rise of television and its influence upon society. Originally hailed as the technology that would educate and edify the teeming masses, elements of Evangelicalism were quick to embrace the photo airwaves as a tool for spreading the salvific message of Jesus Christ. Quentin J. Schultze's prophetic analysis of this embrace of television is aimed squarely at televangelism's relationship to American culture. He suggests that

televangelism is probably the most characteristic and remunerative expression of American religion. It is the nation's own religion, a special Protestant hybrid raised in American culture and nurtured by mass media. Televangelism may even be the flagship of American religion, setting the style and tone of local and denominational church life (p.11-12).

Schultze writes this work not as a critique of televangelism's abuses and excesses nor as a strict theological treatise of television rhetoric, although there were numerous examples of both sorts of deviations. Rather, he examines "how and why televangelists are helping to transform American Christianity from a church into a business, from a historic faith into a popular religion based at least in part on superstition" (p.11).

I especially found two aspects of the book fascinating. The first, dealt with the "catch-22" of television religion. It is a well known fact that "air time" is an expensive proposition. In order for a television ministry to survive it must, of necessity, raise enormous amounts of cash simply to cover its staggering overhead costs. Secular programming relies upon corporate sponsorship by way of

commercial advertising. Christian ministries have no such recourse and must consistently petition its viewers for pledges and donations. The problem then becomes, how does one remain economically viable in a capital-intensive industry and yet also remain faithful to the central tenets of the faith? Schultze writes:

Televangelism is an outgrowth of commercial broadcasting. Both types of broadcasting are based on the modern concept of marketing, which insists that products and services should be tuned to the wants and needs of consumers. Not all religious messages will sell in the competitive TV environment; the most effective gospels both attract viewers and elicit donations to the ministry. To put it more starkly, the market shapes a televangelist's message and its presentation. What is said — and how — must compete effectively with other programs on broadcast TV, cable, and VCR. Televangelists face the competitive tyranny of the broadcast marketplace and the perceived needs of fickle viewers. (p.30).

Often, the result of this kind of consumer approach to Christian preaching is watered-down exegesis and sugar-coated doctrine. This can be demonstrated in the health-and-wealth gospels of Kenneth Copeland, the blatantly materialistic appeals of what was the PTL Club, and the overly-sensationalized personal "miracles" of Oral Roberts. Schultze argues that this sort of positivistic approach to personal betterment fits neatly into the American psyche. Televangelists remain popular not by teaching the historic doctrines of original sin, election, or the innate inability of men and women to extricate themselves from their fallen condition. Rather, anyone can "make it" and religion is no exception.

The second fascinating dealt with the so-called quality of the broadcast and the approach of the performers being televised. Traditional church services are often labeled as boring, irrelevant, overly liturgical, and poorly orchestrated. Television evangelists offer a high-profile alternative that rivals the production standards of the major networks. According to Schultze, religious programming maintains its popularity by giving its audience the illusion of spontaneity that is mistakenly interpreted by an unsuspecting public that it is Spirit-driven. In reality, very little that takes place before the camera is spontaneous. Broadcasts are well rehearsed and intelligently designed in order to facilitate the message of the

ministry. In other words, what one sees has been carefully selected to elicit a desired response. Jimmy Swaggart's supposed confession is a good case in point.

Swaggart's indiscretions were well publicized. After his fall, Swaggart's team broadcasted reruns of past crusades for several months. In a media event, which had all the drama of an NFL grudge match, Swaggart went public with a statement of repentance, complete with tears, music but no mention of a specific sin. The images the public saw were designed to invoke forgiveness and public sympathy for a man struck with the temptation of the flesh. In Schultze's words:

Swaggart's confession sermon in 1988 was one of the most masterful TV programs of all time, perhaps even the single most effective televisual performance of any American evangelist. Even non-Christians who had been highly critical of Swaggart specifically and televangelism generally were typically moved by the production. ... Organized around the theme of forgiveness, the entire one-hour program was designed to communicate the fact that just as God forgives sinners, viewers should forgive Swaggart. In a quivering voice, Swaggart admitted his "sinfulness" without revealing any particular transgressions. By providing, ample shots of his tear-drenched face, the cameras created an intense sense of both the preacher's genuine sorrow and his need for forgiveness from God and the viewers. ... Since the cameras made the worship service a public event, they carefully controlled what viewers were able to see. For example, it was impossible to see how many seats in the church were empty, apparently because of parishioners who had become disillusioned with the ministry. Also, there were no shots of disgruntled or angry congregants, some of whom tried to register their complaints vocally during the service. In addition, the cameras captured nothing of what Swaggart's own family really felt about Jimmy's sinfulness. ... Not one word or image of dissension was permitted on the screen for the entire hour. The message was clear: "God and the church have

forgiven Brother Jimmy. You should too." (p.104-105).

This is a superb analysis of a very important twentieth-century phenomenon. Every thinking Christian ought to read this work in order to understand the way in which society has encroached itself upon the domain of the Church. Schultze is not opposed to televangelism provided that televangelists are held accountable by a controlling ecclesiastical body. I recommend that this book be read in conjunction with the theological analysis found in that other recent publication which also exposes some of the more extreme televangelists, namely, *The Agony of Deceit*.

Heinz G. Dschankilic,
Cambridge, Ontario.

William Shirreff, *Lectures on Baptism*. London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1878; repr. Paris, Arkansas: The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc., 1978, xxxii + 232 pages.

This book covers an old debate. The author leads us down well-worn paths with which we are familiar. Do we really need another book asserting the Baptist position over against infant baptism? I believe we do. Any helpful contribution is needed, for this is a vital area. It has been, and continues to be a crucial debate. "The interests of the Church of Christ are deeply concerned in the scriptural administration, and, of course, in the diligent study of this ordinance," writes the author. We heartily concur. We deeply respect our Paedobaptist brethren, and feel genuine Christian affection for them. Yet we must say, our consciences are bound by the Scriptures, and that infant baptism is ultimately a dangerous and unscriptural doctrine. There is but one baptism, writes the author, the baptism of believers! And he seeks to demonstrate this in a variety of ways.

He begins by trying to move our Paedobaptist brethren from the Old Testament where they seem so often to be stuck, to the New Testament, and urges them to recognize that the New Testament is "the only rule in regard to the positive institutions of the gospel." The Old Dispensation is at an end, and with regard to baptism we must receive all our instruction from the Lord Jesus and His Apostles. Having laid this foundation, he then goes on to deal with various issues such as the meaning of "baptize," "presumptions" against infant baptism, the New Testament texts that deal with baptism. We would not agree with the author in every case and with respect to his

exposition of every proof text, but he nevertheless deals with the evidence in a helpful and convincing way.

An extremely commendable element of Shirreff's work is the fact that it is at both firm and gracious. Having been a paedobaptist himself, he speaks with passion and fire about the issue, but he speaks always with grace and respect. He gave these lectures to commend the doctrine of believer's baptism to his friends in the Presbyterian church, and one detects no bitterness or rancour in his words, only a firm commitment to establishing the Biblical position on the issue and warmly, passionately, commending it to his brethren.

Of great interest also is the "prefatory memoir" provided by C. H. Spurgeon, who informs us that Shirreff had for many years been a minister in the Church of Scotland (one of the most learned, popular and impressive preachers in the church, according to James Haldane!). After a lengthy struggle, however, he became convinced, at the age of 61, of the scriptural nature of the Baptist position. Immediately he resigned his charge and shortly thereafter became minister of a Baptist church in Glasgow. The memoir itself is instructive and inspiring.

It would be wonderful if God would deign to use this little volume, so that, though dead, this brother would yet speak and be the instrument for bringing many to a more Biblical understanding of this blessed ordinance.

Carl Muller,
Trinity Baptist Church, Burlington, Ontario.

Laszlo Tokes with David Porter, *The Fall of Tyrants: The Incredible Story of One Pastor's Witness, the People of Romania, and the Overthrow of Ceausescu* Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1991, xiv + 226 pages.

The collapse of the Communist empire within the last few years is no doubt one of the great events of world history. *The Fall of Tyrants* is a fast-paced, exciting overview of the events surrounding the fall of the hated Nicolae Ceausescu from the perspective of a thirty-eight year old pastor of the Hungarian Reformed Church. Tokes ministered in the town of Temesvar in Transylvania (historically part of Hungary), Romania. On December 15, 1989, Pastor Tokes was to be forcibly removed from his home and dismissed from his church. Supported by his congregation, however, Tokes refused to leave and thus a showdown with the authorities ensued.

There are many fine things about this book. First, it gives a brief, but helpful historical survey of the problems of Hungary and Romania since 1916. Second, in an arresting manner, it chronicles the life and background influences of the author since his birth in 1952 to the events of 1990. Third, we are given valuable insight into the state of the Romanian church under the Communist regime. Fourth, the author gives us his views on what he conceives biblical Christianity to be, on his philosophy of teaching God's Word, and on his view of how to transform his society. Fifth, we see that there is still much that needs to be done in Romania, both in society and in the church.

A disturbing note in the book to me is Tokes' openness and participation in ecumenical worship with the Roman Catholic Church (p.104, 114) and the Orthodox Church (p.117). It is difficult beyond general references to tell what Pastor Tokes believes theologically and his willing participation with these churches gives me cause for concern.

The Fall of Tyrants is easy to read and gives some good insights into the church in Eastern Europe in these dramatic days. It can only serve to inform people, like myself, who have little knowledge of this part of God's vineyard.

Don Theobald,
Binbrook Baptist Church, Binbrook, Ontario.

Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church*. London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1993, vi, 359 pages.

"All Protestants are Crypto-Papists." With this provocative declaration by the nineteenth-century Russian Orthodox theologian Alexis Khomiakov this fine study of Eastern Orthodoxy begins. While certainly not true in a theological sense, this statement does highlight the fact that Protestantism in all of its current manifestations, including Evangelicalism, has been deeply shaped by the history of Western Europe and North America, as has Roman Catholicism, whereas Eastern Orthodoxy has quite a different historical background. In detailing that background — first, its history, and then, its faith and practice — Ware does a superb job. Focusing primarily on the Orthodox churches in communion with the Patriarch of Constantinople, Ware gives the western reader a good grasp of the Orthodox claims for their own churches and what they think of Christians who do not belong to their communion.

Ware is right to remind western readers — and North American Evangelicals are sorely in need of this reminder — that such Greek-

speaking authors as Athanasius (*ca.* 295-373) and Basil of Caesarea (*ca.* 330-379) are a rich and vital part of their heritage. Despite this common heritage, however, Eastern Orthodoxy and Evangelicalism are far apart when it comes to such basic issues as the fallibility of the Church — in Orthodox thinking the Church as indwelt by the Spirit cannot err (p.248) — and the veneration of Mary (p.257-261).

Nor can this reviewer agree with Ware's suggestion that the "crystallizations and fossilizations of the sixteenth century," i.e. the Reformation, are something to be shaken free of (p.325). The Reformation was not a mistake, but a fresh wind of the Spirit which has been a life-giving force ever since that era. This does not mean Evangelicals have nothing to learn from the Orthodox. Evangelicals can learn much, for instance, from the Orthodox understanding of the Trinity, and about the person of the Spirit in particular (see p.210-218, 229-231).

A helpful, lengthy bibliographical essay (p.329-344) directs the interested reader to other, more detailed sources for "Further Reading."

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