



REGENT'S REVIEWS

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From the editor...

Welcome to the spring issue of *Regent's Reviews*! In the northern hemisphere, the seasons have changed. The winter chill is rapidly becoming a memory and spring is giving way to summer. The world forms the context in which people carry out God's ministry. Recognizing one's context is part of following God's calling. Engaging with contemporary thought stimulates the cognitive aspect of ministry and is an important part of existing in a particular context. Hopefully these introductory remarks will encourage you the reader to engage with this issue of *Regent's Reviews*.

This new issue is full of exciting reviews and promises to introduce readers to a variety of new books. In the first section, there are review essays by Sean Winter and Richard Kidd. These two reviews are more in-depth and provide readers with detailed commentary. In the section on pastoral theology, there are nine new books. There are five reviews each in the biblical studies and doctrine & ethics sections. In the church history section, there are four reviews. This issue is rich with content and is intended to be useful in exploring the latest literature in these important fields.

Readers will be blessed with contributions from such a diverse group. We have reviews from ministers in congregational work, graduate students, and tutors from several different colleges and universities. The reviewers'

breadth of experience and perspective will help readers gain insight into these new books before buying them.

Regent's Reviews is published by Regent's Park College, University of Oxford.

I hope you enjoy this issue.

Peace,
Matthew Tennant, Editor
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Review Essays

Douglas A. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009)

It was said of Barth's commentary on Romans 'landed like a bomb on the playground of the theologians'. Time will tell whether this important work by Douglas Campbell, much of which is concerned with the interpretation of Romans, will exercise the same kind of influence on exegesis and theology. What is clear is that all 1218 pages of it has landed with a heavy thud on the desks of Pauline scholars. Many of them may have to re-think and re-articulate cherished and long held understandings of Paul's theology, and in particular Romans 1-4, in order to find a way out from under the weight of Campbell's sustained attack on the conventional reading.

For in this book Campbell sets himself a task like no other. He seeks to demonstrate that traditional interpretations of Paul's understanding of salvation are wrong. To achieve this task Campbell must do the following: (a) define the interpretation that he seeks to eliminate as a valid way of reading Paul, (b) demonstrate what is wrong with it, (c) explain why it remains all-pervasive and (d) provide an alternative interpretation, a 'rereading' that better accounts for the Pauline evidence. I must be emphasizes that for Campbell, this

task requires not just an alteration or adaptation of the traditional view (as happens, for example in some recent scholarship espousing one form or another of a 'new perspective' on Paul). To utilise Paul's apocalyptic language for a moment, Campbell seeks to put 'Justification Theory' to death. Only then will it be possible for the apostle's apocalyptic, participatory and unconditional account of God's deliverance to come into full view.

In this review, describing Campbell's argument for this ambitious and audacious task will not do it justice. He names the focus of his attack 'Justification Theory'. The book carefully articulates the key elements of the theory in abstract form and shows how it dominates historical, contemporary, scholarly and popular interpretations of Romans, Paul's theology and thus ultimately, the gospel. 'Justification Theory' is probably, in one form or another, the most widely recognized and taught gospel account. 'Justification Theory' posits that one that moves from the problem of human sin to the solution of Christ's substitutionary death, the benefits of which can only be appropriated through a certain kind of human response, namely faith. The crucial element for Campbell is that this theory is a conditional soteriological model in which salvation can only be received by those who by one means or another recognize that they deserve a divine punishment from which they are unable to escape.

Campbell argues that this account of Romans, Paul's theology and the gospel is not just merely misguided, or in need of modification (for example through a reassessment of the nature of Paul's critique of Judaism). He asserts that the 'Justification Theory' is wrong exegetically, theologically and ethically.

Chapters 2-6 of the work consider the key problems raised by 'Justification Theory', and I challenge everyone to read these chapters and come away thinking about things in the same way as they have done in the past. The mounted critique is sustained, powerful and, in my view, often persuasive. To overcome 'Justification Theory', Campbell insists that we need to understand its own power and persuasion as an interpretative paradigm. Dismantling the theory cannot be successful without addressing the wider theoretical, ecclesial and cultural settings that buttress it against attack.

Chapters 7-9 demonstrate (successfully in my view) that 'Justification Theory' is intertwined and therefore complicit with the wider project of modernity. This idea makes the theory so persuasive and hard to unseat within the interpretative frameworks of both the church and the academy.

The next step, progressing in the extensive exegetical chapters of the book, is to offer a more plausible and satisfying account of Paul's theology and specifically of the meaning of Romans 1-4. Here

Campbell's work has already and will continue to receive the most attention. Along with others (including this reviewer) he claims that justification by (human) faith is not the heart of Paul's theology at all, that the Pauline gospel is fundamentally unconditional and that Romans 5-8 take us closer to the 'centre' of Paul's thought. He further asserts that at key points in Romans 1-4 the emphasis is not on human faith at all, but on Christ's faithfulness as the means by which God sets the world, and human beings 'right'. Campbell pushes this argument to its ultimate conclusion. Given that there are places in Romans 1-4 (specifically 1.18-32) which look like the preparatory stages of 'conditional' salvation, i.e. the issue is what human beings must do to be saved, Campbell argues that in these sections we hear the voice of Paul's opponent, the more or less enigmatic 'Teacher'. His re-reading of these crucial chapters is nothing less than revolutionary. The key question for many will be whether one has to accept the exegetical conclusions in order for the wider theological point to hold.

In short, this is a major work, probably the most important book on Paul since E. P. Sanders' *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*. Like this earlier work, there *The Deliverance of God* will indirectly influence many. Few ministers, or even theological students will want to wade through a book of this length and density without some guidance and orientation, and one can expect to see significant debate on and engagement with its central contentions in coming years. I

imagine, for example, that Campbell's work will contribute to a growing movement that reads Paul's soteriology as implicitly universal in scope (recent New Testament scholarship in German is already working on these issues in detail). The re-reading of Romans 1-4 offered here will keep exegetes busy for a generation as they consider the plausibility of Paul's deployment of the rhetorical trope of 'speech-in-character'. I believe many will do exactly what Campbell says they always do to protect 'Justification Theory' from attack, that is, say that an attack on the theory is an attack on Christian orthodoxy/Protestant Christianity/Reformed theology. But it is clear that with this book the apocalyptic Paul is here to stay, and things can never quite remain as they are when apocalyptic thinking is in the air.

My own view is that in large part Campbell's reading of Paul is indeed a more satisfying, plausible and powerful account of the apostle's thought. Christian theology has always invested heavily in the capacity of the Pauline letters to speak truthfully and decisively about God's saving action in Jesus Christ. To read Paul's letters in the light of this book is to see that truth differently and perhaps to see it more clearly. So, daunted or not, perhaps you had better read it for yourself.

Sean Winter
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Brian Haymes, Ruth Gouldbourne and Anthony Cross, On Being the Church: Revisioning Baptist Identity, Studies in Baptist History and Thought, Volume 21 (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008)

Writing this book was always going to be an ambitious project and, dependent on the precise scope of the term 'revisioning', was unlikely to entirely fulfil all of the expectations raised by the title.

The book has much about it that is pleasing and helpful. All of the authors are skilled researchers and writers, so there is a wealth of interesting and reliable references to resource documents. They all have wide experience in ministry and education thereby connecting the material with the realities of Christian life and mission. Additionally, the authors have all been deeply rooted in Baptist life and can speak with authority, through hands-on engagement with the book's themes.

The topics discussed in this book, largely gathered in discrete chapters, are wide-ranging. There is a thorough exploration of many classic themes familiar within ecclesiological thought: the people of God, the communion of saints, authority and the mind of Christ, baptism, discipleship, the Lord's supper, ministry, and so on. Each chapter explores the way that Baptists have addressed a particular theme, tracing the diverse origins and developments

within Baptist thought. The strategy is to move towards a contemporary statement on each major theme, typically reaching a conclusion that, in one way or another, challenges the fashions of our day.

If the title had been 'revisiting' rather than 'revisioning', the book could easily be said to have achieved its declared aim. Many important themes are revisited and often the fruit of revisiting is a fresh angle for today, drawing on wisdom from the past that has been lost or obscured over time. The chapter on discipleship, for example, provides a challenging exploration of the practice of 'church discipline' both as an historical issue as well as something that demands significant re-casting if it is to make sense in the present day - the connections from past to present gathered around the concepts of mutuality and community (pp. 110ff). Or again, the chapter on 'ministry' moves from reflections on early Baptist practice to a creative emphasis on *remembering* as the connecting thread linking authority, table fellowship and the exercise of ministry in community (pp. 158ff). Each chapter then makes an important contribution to the continuing formation of Baptist identity.

There are few new ideas in the book, but there are creative new meetings of ideas and gatherings of previously scattered information. For example, stories of Baptist 'calls for baptismal reform', drawn together in a single

narrative, are really useful (pp. 93ff).

The promise, however, that the book as a whole is a 'revisioning' of Baptist identity needs more careful examination, despite the exuberant affirmations in the Foreword and on the back cover of the book. The term 'identity' prompts the reader to expect a work in which there will be a well-developed unity of direction from all of the diverse authors' contributions. The book indicates that 'identity' will be delivered, and the unifying strategy declares a beginning with a Trinitarian vision of God and allowing that vision to shape church as participation in God's Trinitarian life. In reality, some parts of the book deliver this with much greater clarity and conviction than others. The visible disjunction between the three authors' contributions is just too great. This is not only apparent from their starkly different writing styles, but also in fundamentally different stances on a number of important issues. There is, for example, no attempt to find a coherent way through the wide spectrum of Baptist approaches to ministry, ranging as it does from the significantly sacramental to the predominantly functional; at one point or another every possible position seemingly finds its affirmation. A similar occurrence happens in the exploration of baptism, where a strong emphasis on 'conversion-baptism' in the main chapter on this theme stands uncomfortably beside other more contemporary and ecumenical approaches, which emphasise

baptism in relation to a more extended journey of initiation.

These tensions are often focused where they are closely juxtaposed with quotations of leading Baptist theologians. The main formative influences certainly include George Beasley-Murray, James McClendon, Paul Fiddes and John Colwell, all of whom deserve both our attention and admiration. But it is important to be clear about the limits to which their ideas and passions can be integrated into a single promised 'revision'.

One may argue that this book models a revisioning of Baptist identity by the fact that three well-informed but differently minded Baptists collaborate together, benefit greatly from their interaction, and are able to present their work in a way as to strongly affirm their respect for each other and their different stances. That in itself is quite an achievement and not one that Baptists have always found easy. Yet the prospectus, set out in the Forward and opening chapter, seems to offer the possibility of something more.

So who will find this book useful and how will they use it? The book will undoubtedly be useful to all of us who continue to explore the origin and development of Baptist identity, and it will provide us with a critical foil against which to test our emerging ideas. Researchers will appreciate the references to primary texts. Others might also find the book useful as a benchmark and a challenge to take the idea of 'revisioning' further. Hopefully, some readers may work

at the challenge to keep the unifying vision of participation in the Trinitarian life of God as a consistent hermeneutic, perhaps also seeking a more consistent style for the presentation of their ideas. This project should be taken further in the direction of a coherent, even if many-sided, vision for a different kind of future Baptist identity, and to provide more indications of how that identity can be grasped.

There is much to treasure in this book; its recurrent emphases on such themes as movement, relationality, mutuality, community and accountability are important for us all. This book will be on our college reading lists, but it would be good to think that it will energise more work on its task of revisioning, as well as providing an important working resource for those studying the story so far.

Richard L Kidd
Co-Principal of the Northern Baptist Learning Community

Pastoral Theology

Stephen Pickard,
Theological Foundations for Ministry (Ashgate, 2009)

The author of this erudite and beautifully written analysis of the theology of ministry has a wide experience of ministry: As a priest for a team ministry in a new housing area of a large rural town in Australia, in a pit village

daughter church of a city parish in the United Kingdom, in University chaplaincy in the UK, in theological education and ministerial formation of the Uniting Church and Anglican Churches in Australia, in a School of Theology of an Australian University and more recently as an assistant bishop in the Diocese of Adelaide. The fruit of this experience is a conviction that the way forward for effective mission is collaborative ministry that involves the whole body of Christ and every member. Perhaps this is news to our Anglican friends, and it would certainly be news to some Baptist churches in this country, but for the latter at least, it should not be at all unfamiliar. Surely this is one of those founding principles of Baptist ministry, at least if our conciliar documents from the 1950s onwards are to be believed.

Having said that, while there is much that will be familiar, Pickard lays a new foundation for that collaborative character of ministry by having it dialogue with the science of emergence.

The difficulty lies in applying the correspondence between the perichoretic life of God and the shape of Christian ministry and leadership to a hierarchically ordered system of ecclesial ministries (such as employed by Anglicanism) in a straightforward, yet not overly simplified manner. Pickard notes 'collaborative ministry discourse seems more at home in various forms of Protestant and Pentecostal churches where "every-member ministry" has a familiar appeal and congregational forms of church life

predominate with little or no organic connection to wider circles of the ecclesia' (p. 5). However, he subsequently observes that those churches seem as susceptible as Episcopal churches are to dysfunctional ministry patterns and autocratic forms of ministry. At this point he wants to claim that highly hierarchical forms of governance are the ideal for collaborative ministry, despite the initial attraction to the flat-structured types of governance. I am not so convinced! Certainly I agree that collaborative ministry is vital: 'The spirit of collaboration is nothing less than the Spirit of Love that connects and inclines every member of the body of Christ towards the other' (p. 7).

Pickard's argument unfolds in five parts. Part I provides a background map for the appraisal of some ministry issues. Part II looks at ministry trends in Anglicanism. Part III develops a theology of collaborative ministry in dialogue with the science of emergence. Part IV explores the threefold orders of the ministry of the church, including issues such as lay presidency, ordination, women's orders and the indelibility of orders. This Part also takes a longer look at episcopacy in the context of the ecumenical movement. Part V concludes the argument with discussion of ordination vows, practical expressions of collaborative ministry and the value of friendship as 'the glue for genuine collaborative ministry' (p. 10).

The discussion on ministry landscape, 'mapping the territory'

as the chapter heading puts it, is rich. From Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry of 1983, through the discussions between the Anglicans and Catholics (ARCIC), via Schillebeeckx and Hanson, the issues are mapped: clericalism, the identity and purpose of ordained ministry, the ubiquity of the term 'ministry' to mean all manner of things so that it comes to mean whatever the user wants it to mean, the use of language such as charism/charismatic and the relationship of the ordained ministry to the service of the whole people of God.

Chapter Two takes the discussion forward with regard to the relationship of Christology, ecclesiology, pneumatology and ministry. Questions of ministry's priority over church, either in its catholic (the ministry is prior to the church) or Protestant (the ministry of the Word is logically prior to the church) version and the impact of charismatic renewal upon a ministry doctrine that re-orders it to focus on all-member ministry, are discussed here. From this a genuine trinitarian theology of ministry tries to emerge. The theology is transfixed by two horizons: the doctrine of creation with ministry as work, and the *missio Dei*.

With the next section (Part II), Pickard turns his attention to theological trends in ministry, beginning with a chapter on the legacy of R.C.Moberly's *Ministerial Priesthood*. Moberly was an Oxford Anglican Professor of Pastoral Theology in the late 19th century, and his understanding of ministry

as 'representative priesthood' proved influential in the first half of the last century, with surprising echoes amongst more contemporary Evangelical Anglicans. Ministry was 'of' the church argued Moberly, but was not derived 'from' the church, so that ministers were 'organs of the Body, through which the life, inherent in the total Body, expresses itself in particular functions of detail'. (*Ministerial Priesthood*, p. 68, cited on p. 57.) This position is critically analysed by Pickard before tracing its legacy in two key Anglican works in chapter 5: Michael Ramsey's *The Gospel and the Catholic Church* (1936) and Anthony Hanson's *The Pioneer Ministry* (1961). This position is further developed in the following chapter into a more detailed analysis of the various Anglican papers and statements on ministry.

Part III develops a theory of collaborative ministry, first by integrating the preceding discussion on issues facing ministry and the work of Moberly, Ramsey and others that shows how the ordained ministry relates to the others in the church, then by a curious argument that relates orders of ministry by replacing an older tradition (order in the universe as something fixed and static) with a dynamic ontology of order that emphasizes change, adaptation and a capacity for novelty. These dynamic ontologies of complex transformation are used as a way of describing the changing nature of ministry. I must confess that it all feels rather forced, as a new lens through

which the argument for collaborative ministry must be viewed is needed, and 'hey presto' modern science provides it.

In Chapter Nine, Pentecostalism is strongly criticised: 'the real problem is the inability of the ordering to maintain itself; it collapses back into more inchoate and diffuse forms' (p. 140). In its place there should be ecclesial ministries that are dynamic, ordered relations. I am not sure that the criticism should be leveled so much at Pentecostalism as to the neo-charismatic ministries that classic Pentecostals find as unacceptable as do the Episcopalian churches. This confusion is perhaps indicative of a general unease with charismatic forms of ministry that are often characteristic of more conservative forms of Australian Anglicanism, and which find their heartland in the Diocese of Sydney. Why a mode of ministry that is self-evident from Scripture needs to be dressed up in quite so complex a theological framework is not obvious to me!

The remainder of the book explores Episcopal ministry in particular, with discussions on function versus ontology (a discussion familiar to Baptists in their conception of episcopate as local church oversight), relational ontology of orders that wants to diminish the distance between the ordained and the laity and discussions of some practical problems, such as lay presidency at the eucharist and theological education.

The chapter on reforming the episcopacy has many interesting themes: challenging the idolatry of management, the diocese, not as a geographic space but as a network of relations and so forth. Much of this chapter could be applied to the ecclesiology more familiar to Baptists that consider the gathered local congregation as that space and the pastor as the Episcopal figure. In this book, these ideas seem as if they were gathering dust in a journal somewhere and needed some freshening up and a new outing. Indeed Chapter 11 appeared elsewhere earlier. I am not sure how neatly they are woven into the overall argument, but they certainly contain some of the most stimulating material in the book, even if they seem to be an afterthought. The same could be said of Chapter 13 and Chapter 14 is the transcript of a sermon. The argument does not seem to return until chapter 15, which is the conclusion. Perhaps a more rigorous editorial process might have helped towards the end.

However, this book is a fascinating and erudite analysis of the challenges to Anglican expressions of church and ministry, and Australian Anglicanism in particular. It has wider currency too, including those of us who do not subscribe to Episcopalian ecclesial structures and polity, if inevitably in a more limited fashion. If this book results in more collaborative approaches to ministry, then it will have served its purpose.

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Elaine Graham & Stephen Lowe, What Makes a Good City? Public Theology and the Urban Church (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 2009)

The authors challenge the whole United Kingdom Church (although the Anglican context of the authors is clear throughout the book) to address questions of citizenship and regeneration, culture and globalization, and poverty and justice within our increasingly urban society.

They explore the nature of public theology believing that theology should mediate or correlate between the two worlds of reason and revelation in order to show how the believer can inhabit the worlds of religion and secular society with integrity. The authors recognize the tension between Christianity as a source of 'common wisdom' for public life and the distinctive witness of the community of faith. This tension is explored initially through the lens of Augustine's City of God and the two cities, one marked by self-love - self-interest, individualism and lust for power, and the other by love for God - generosity and concern for the well-being of all.

To build a 'good city' there is a call upon the Church to make a commitment to staying in the urban communities of our nation and to contribute in every way possible to the flourishing of our cities. People of faith can contribute their distinctive values in nurturing a physical and spiritual

environment which makes a good city and which promotes the deep well-being of its citizens.

The authors emphasize a theology of space and place, speaking of narratives, memories and meaning. Positively they identify the influence of 'faithful capital' in the long-term presence of people and networks of faith in most deprived urban areas. But they recognize that from the government's point of view, this social and faithful capital can be seen as both a valuable resource and a source of discomfort. That is, on the one hand, they are offering paths of 'community cohesion' and urban 'regeneration', but on the other hand, the distinct and conflicting language of faith with values that challenge rather than support government policy.

While the authors believe that faithful communities can be the seedbed of a positive celebration of diversity, when faith is expressed as a source of solidarity and hospitality, they note the challenge of relating city planning to a vision of the human spirit and what enhances human beings. With realism and sadness they acknowledge a widening prosperity gulf, where in the past decade a multi-billion pound urban 'regeneration' industry has become a driving force behind cultural, environmental, retail, leisure and housing development in urban Britain. There has been a commodification of our cities marked by consumerism, tourism and cultural industries, alongside which there has been a marginalization of the poorest

members of society, manifested by vandalism, violence, unemployment, racial disharmony and the rise of extremist political parties.

The authors are emphatic in declaring that building a 'good city' involves changing the nature of power within the city, a process that needs to take account of everything from a change of heart to the transformation of entire structures and organizational cultures. This building of a 'good city' involves a holistic, comprehensive vision of humankind's needs in a sustainable world.

Having made these important observations, this is a book that has practical theology at its heart. We are to remember that 'God takes place' in the local context and throughout the book the emphasis is on a theology from the bottom up, of empowerment and active participation in the community. The authors conclude that there is still a paucity of resources to help the laity implement an informed ministry in their secular vocations. They maintain that the urban church must equip its congregations to exercise an 'everyday faithfulness' in their own contexts, caught, increasingly as they are, between a religiously indifferent or illiterate public sphere and the introspective, individualized parochial patterns of church involvement.

As one might expect from these authors, this is an excellent text to inform and challenge the nature of

church and for theological reflection within an urban context.

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Laurie Green and
Christopher. R. Baker
(eds.), Building Utopia?
Seeking the Authentic
Church for New
Communities (SPCK, 2008)

The major Church of England report, entitled Faith in the City, was published in 1985 and signaled a new interest in the urban church and landscape. Since then a number of studies have taken place to explore theological concerns with regard to city life. This book, edited by Green and Baker, emerged from the work done to write the sequel to Faith in the City (published as Faithful Cities in 2006). Where the 1985 report focused solely on inner city life, the later report broadened its focus to city life in general and the 'new post-suburban developments which were appearing particularly in the south-east of England' (p. 17). *Building Utopia?* is a compilation of reflections by the sub-group who looked at these urban developments, in particular, along the Thames Gateway.

The book has two parts. The first six chapters contain the results of interviews with and research on those directly involved with Thames developments – current residents, those moving into the area, developers and local

government officers. The later chapters provide some reflections on what goes before - the spiritual search for belonging, how churches might respond and what makes a good city. The question mark in the title expresses the idea that while the intention might be 'Building Utopia', the experience of many living there suggests otherwise.

As a piece of contextual theology this book is helpful, giving some broad 'postcards from Utopia' (as the first chapter is titled) on the intention and values behind these new urban developments and what it is like to live there. For those involved in pastoral ministry in these areas, the book gives insight into some of the possible issues found amongst residents and local government.

The book's theological reflections are somewhat disappointing. I had hoped for a more critical and extensive discussion, but felt these chapters were somewhat light. Considering the subtitle 'Seeking the authentic Church', the chapter on how churches might respond seemed only to offer some examples of what a few churches were doing, rather than provide what 'authentic Church' might mean in these new communities, which are different in many ways to the village, town and city models generally found across the UK.

The final chapter on what makes a good city offers some helpful principles in establishing community and on the sacredness of public space. These principles

could easily be utilized by local churches in planning to engage their new urban areas.. Building Utopia? is right to argue that churches should be both working for, and an example of, human flourishing within the urban setting. That is, churches should focus on ways to help people relate to one another and establish roots.

Andy Goodliff
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Thomas E. Reynolds,
Vulnerable communion: a
theology of disability and
hospitality (Grand Rapids,
MI: Brazos Press, 2008)

I read the positive comments on the cover of this book and wondered whether the reality could live up to them - it did! I really enjoyed reading it. I am interested both theologically and personally in disability and it is clear that Reynolds writes with the authority of one who has wrestled with the subject at multiple levels.

Reynolds differs from many theologians of disability in that he does not become distracted from his theological task by defaulting to his own experience. He allows his own son's autism to inform what he is doing, but he also pursues the arguments with clarity and rigour. For that reason it is a vital addition to the excellent work in this area, and complements the liberationist approach of Eisland, the process work of Pailin, the ethics of Hauerwas and Vanier, the

pneumatology of Yong and the reflective theology of Young.

Reynolds' hermeneutical approach is what he terms 'metaphorical reversal' – we might perhaps say 'kingdom ethics'. He critiques liberal modern culture for its emphasis on reason, productivity and independence (most disabled persons will fall short of one of these 'gold standards') and locates our discomfort with disability in the context of this 'cult of normalcy'. He bravely assesses our tendency to apply the medical model of 'cure' indiscriminately to disabled persons and exposes the way the Bible can be used and abused in support of this view, concluding that disability is often a constructed concept.

Reynolds grounds his critique in what is broadly an open theistic approach to creation. God's creation is characterised by a superabundance of love expressed as unconditional welcome to the diversity of created beings. Reynolds then suggests that persons image God through the human dimensions of creativity, relationality, and availability. 'Here disability does not mark an incomplete humanity...[but] one way of being human as vulnerable yet creative, relational, and available. Notice the absence of terms like "reason", "productivity", and "independence"' (p. 186). Sin is the distortion of creativity, relationality and availability into control, competition and contempt respectively. The work of Christ exposes the true nature of sin and redemption and leads us to the idea of metaphorical reversal - the

gospel subversion of the power structures of the cult of normalcy. The book is a wide-ranging and comprehensive piece of work and to include more would have made it excessively long. However, I think some anthropological insights might have been useful. For example, some references to Girardian dynamics would have been appropriate, and also I think Reynolds' development of personhood could have been more robustly referenced, to locate it in the vast literature that exists. I was also left feeling slightly dissatisfied with comments about pain and suffering such as: 'God is not a direct causal agent. God does not purposely create tragedy...a shadow feature, a kind of undertow which accompanies creation's independent and relational goodness' (p 187). To me, this is where open theism comes unstuck.

Towards the end of the book, Reynolds offers some very useful commentary on the healing ministry of Jesus and on the presumed link between sin and suffering (again, some anthropological underpinning might have made an even stronger case here). He also ends with a vision for the church as a place of hospitality, where disabled people are recognised, accepted and 'advocated for' in the wider culture. This vision is excellent, biblical and glorious, yet sadly unrealised; I felt my habitual frustration at the normal church situation in which pragmatism excludes the weak (as defined by the cult of normalcy). We still have a way to go, but Reynolds has

given us a gift in this book and, thankfully, the church with all her failings is still the bride of Christ.

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Adele Reinhartz, *Jesus of Hollywood* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)

Adele Reinhartz's *Jesus of Hollywood* offers a survey on how Jesus has historically been portrayed on the silver screen. Her project is largely a descriptive one, and thus she does not seem to develop an identifiable thesis about films depicting Jesus. Reinhartz is herself a biblical scholar, and consequently one of her overriding concerns is how the biblical accounts are translated into a medium which requires more than what the gospel accounts allow. Which events are portrayed and why? Perhaps more importantly, which events are left out? Given that the focus of the Gospels is a person, Reinhartz largely focuses on the portrayals of those people who feature in Jesus' progression from an unknown Galilean carpenter to resurrected Messiah.

Each chapter follows a fairly straightforward format of describing a particular character or set of characters in terms of their depiction in Scripture, and then discussing how those characters are reproduced on the big screen. Easily the most provocative and interesting part of her book for this reader deals with "Jesus' Foes" (even though she locates Judas

with his friends). Here one finds the cinematic treatments of Satan, the Pharisees, Pilate, and Caiaphas. Given the variety with which these figures have been depicted over the course of cinema history, these chapters are quite fun to read.

Reinhartz's insights are considered by and helpful for everyone fascinated by film. She astutely notes that many viewers have powerful faith commitments requiring adherence to certain theological and scriptural constraints. The typical suspension of disbelief so readily entered into by the film viewer is delayed when watching a film depicting the object of possibly deep devotion. This altered approach makes for a more attentive viewer and requires the filmmaker to be particularly careful how and when they insert their own voice. Reinhartz does a commendable job of exploring these artistic nooks where filmmakers have addressed historical gaps in the text with their own concerns. Who is Mary Magdalene and what is her relationship to Jesus? Does Judas betray Jesus or, as in Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ*, is Jesus the betrayer of Judas?

One of Reinhartz's most pressing concerns is the depiction of anti-Semitism present in many films depicting Jesus. She has no illusions that this is simply the construction of the filmmaker; the Gospels explicitly maintain that "the Jews" intended to eliminate the problem of Jesus. Citing the Christian use of this fact to persecute Jews, Reinhartz is

acutely sensitive to how Jewish figures are presented in various films. Since Reinhartz's definition of anti-Semitism seemingly permeates the Gospel accounts themselves, filmmakers appear to be in an impossible position: use the gospels and be an "anti-Semite" or re-interpret the people and stories to avoid that accusation (an option not open to those who are concerned with presenting a portrayal of Jesus that is faithful to the gospels). Reinhartz chooses the latter option, as evidenced by her explicit preference for Scorsese's *Last Temptation* and Denys Arcand's *Jesus of Montreal*, which the latter tells the story of a Quebecois theatre troupe putting on a Passion play.

Although Reinhartz seldom invokes New Testament scholarship in her text, one of her two most cited figures is John Dominic Crossan (along with E.P. Sanders). Given Crossan's stance as an iconoclastic figure within New Testament studies, it should come as no surprise that she chooses those filmmakers who prefer less canonical views of Jesus' life. This, however, does not help the filmmaker or viewer who desires to take the Gospel accounts at face-value (even if not entirely literally). Are they anti-Semites for doing so? This question is obviously not the intended one in Reinhartz's text, but it is a question she invites by her evaluation of films depicting Jesus.

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William T. Cavanaugh, *The Myth of Religious Violence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009)

William T. Cavanaugh's *The Myth of Religious Violence* suggests two key claims. First, there exists no transhistorical and transcultural essence of 'religion'. Consequently, for Cavanaugh, there can be no such phenomena as a specifically 'religious' violence apart from political or secular violence. Second, Cavanaugh argues that the dubious category of 'religion' legitimates the use of violence by those powers considered political and secular. These twin pillars of Cavanaugh's argument are carefully argued and extensively researched.

Chapters One and Two develop the idea that 'religion' is itself a hotly disputed and nebulous concept. Cavanaugh takes great pains in the first chapter to identify how the invocation of religious violence hides the fundamental ambiguity of the concept of religion, especially with regard to discussions of religious violence. Chapter Two develops the thesis that the fog surrounding the notion of an essentialist account of religion stems from the notion's status as a modern idea. As a modern idea, attempts to go back and find how religion operated in a pre-modern context are anachronistic and distorting.

Chapters Three and Four demonstrate how the concept of religious violence underwrites the violent tendencies of the modern state. Following Cavanaugh's

deconstruction of the idea of a pre-modern notion of 'religion' separate from political and economic concerns, chapter Four embarks on a journey to show that the 'wars of religion' of the 16th and 17th centuries were less about religion and more about the emergence of the modern state. Contrary to those (and they are many) who cite these conflicts as proof of the violent nature of religion, Cavanaugh asserts that these conflicts have as much to do with political and economic concerns as they do religious ones. Finally, in the fourth chapter, Cavanaugh endeavors to show how the modern West uses the false genealogy of religious violence to 'marginalize discourses and practices labeled religious' (p. 225) and underwrite its own legacy of violence.

Cavanaugh's work has much to commend. The research, given the vast array of covered fields, is extensive and considered. Perhaps the most immediately helpful section is his sustained critique of contemporary thinkers who discern a gulf between identifiably religious violence and secular violence (p. 18-54). Given the prolific output of writing on religious violence following September 11th in the American context, this questioning of methodology is much needed. Furthermore, Cavanaugh is aware of the popular currency held by the idea of religious violence, at least as it appears in the new atheism of Christopher Hitchens and Sam Harris (as described in *God and the New Atheism* by John F. Haught). He spends eight pages (p. 212-220) evaluating how they provide

a stark example of how the notion of religious violence serves not only to marginalize the religious voice, but justify the violence of the 'more enlightened' Western liberalism. Cavanaugh cites Harris to expose the dichotomy between rational, unitive violence and religious violence, which is inherently irrational and destructive: 'Some propositions are so dangerous that it may even be ethical to kill people for believing them...we will continue to spill blood in what is, at bottom, a war of ideas', (p. 215). Despite the breadth of Cavanaugh's argument, he is circumspect in his claims; he acknowledges that religion does play a role in violence while yet holding out that violence cannot be solely religious in nature.

\William Cavanaugh's *The Myth of Religious Violence* is ideal for those interested in 'religious violence' or how the religious voice is (or is not) heard in the public square. The book is provocative, careful and thorough. If there is any complaint, it is only that Cavanaugh takes 230 pages to develop the thesis, yet much of that space is devoted to extensive supporting material, perhaps better suited to an appendix.

Clark J. Elliston
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Justin Lewis-Anthony, If you meet George Herbert on the road, Kill him (Mowbray, 2009)

A bizarre title introduces a review of both priestly and pastoral ministry. After serving as Precentor at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford the author Justin Lewis-Anthony is now Rector of St Stephen's in Canterbury.

George Herbert (1593 -1633), a poet, orator and priest in the Church of England, despite a very brief ministry, has had a deep hold on the Anglican understanding of a parochial ministry ever since and Lewis-Anthony has had enough.

So what is the Herbert-inspired ministry that in Lewis-Anthony's opinion needs to be discarded? It has these ingredients:

- it assumes the Church is the centre of God's activity and can be expected to provide for all that gives 'life in all its fullness'
- so the priest is the all-competent manager of this life-giving process
- this means the priest is not expected to rock the status-quo
- and so he is a domesticated activist at the beck and call of whoever is the dominant authority at the time.

I am not enough of an Anglican to know whether or not this is a valid critique of Herbertianism but it rang bells for me.

This book raises a powerful issue facing many churches of different traditions. What does the trained professional have over the prepared amateur? What becomes of the ordained when the non-

ordained are prepared to take responsibility? What sort of authority is given to a stipendiary ministry?

What kept me reading was the skillful way in which the author used the writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Michael Ramsey, Vincent Donovan and others to make his case. All of them have deeply influenced my own theology throughout my pastoral ministry. They included Nick Stacey. He was an Anglican priest who had a significant and, at the time, pioneering ministry in Southwark in the 1960s. I was just starting my training at Regent's Park College and that ministry style inspired me. Stacey gathered around himself a multi-skilled and multi-disciplined team; their pastoral care was centred on physical as well as spiritual well-being. South Bank Religion started to upset the status quo of the church in its attempt to respond to people not in the church. Stacey left the Church of England a disillusioned man. I thought the ideas were great, blissfully unaware of the way Anglican cages rattled, but Lewis-Anthony sees them as the last attempt at a Herbert style ministry which does not meet present needs. More importantly, he believes this style lost significant elements of the pastoral vocation.

So what does he suggest? He recommends, borrowing ideas from Rowan Williams, that clergypersons build up self-understanding around three words: 'witness', 'watchman' and 'weaver'. As Witness he or she must again

and again call the community of the local church back to its foundation character, which is the Cosmic Church, i.e. more than parochial. As a Watchman the Church needs to be told where it is and the minister must be free to see where and what it is and say this without fear. As a Weaver the minister is a creator of connections and resists fragmentation.

He then proposes a fresh model of pastoral ministry that is about:

RULE – know who you are and live by the specific gifts of your calling

ROLE – know what you are for and resist domestication by the local church

RESPONSIBILITY – know who you are set over and be accountable

RECKONING – know how to make decisions; the hardest thing churches find to do

RECONCILING – know how to manage conflict – which inhibits good decision-making.

This model suggests an emphasis. A minister needs to journey from a false impression of either his or the church's competence to be or bring in what some call the Kingdom. It is a journey that has Christ at the centre and no boundary that cannot be taken away. It wishes to initiate what well may become an argument with both parochial and gathered models of church for the sake of people are part of either.

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Nick Spencer and Jonathan Chaplin (eds.), *God and Government* (SPCK, 2009)

This collection of essays, produced under the auspices of the Christian think tank Theos, is timely with both religion and politics under the spotlight in today's skeptical culture. What is the proper function of government, and what resources of thought do Christians bring to the practice and priorities of government? These questions lie behind these essays, and the responses engage theology with politics in instructive ways.

All of the contributors resist any pietistic withdrawal from the demands of living in a society that has a political orientation, but the answers to the questions posed above are subtly different. In his foreword, Rowan Williams challenges the way in which government tends to treat belief in God as a 'rather regrettable private eccentricity' (p. x), as easy a marginalisation of religion by government as pietism is a marginalisation of politics by some Christians.

The first four chapters explore the biblical and theological foundations for Christian political thinking, and the second four chapters explore various conceptions for the role of government. Opening the collection, Nigel Wright gives a clear account of the ambiguous nature of government, both fallen and redeemable, from the dissenting Free Church tradition. This idea of separation of church and state, which we have come to expect from the author of *Free*

Church, Free State, is axiomatic for Nigel Wright: it allows the church to be itself, prophetic in its witness and 'a modest instrument of the common good' (p. 34). There should be no established church, but rather in maintaining a critical distance from power, there should be no seeking of any special privileges for themselves not shared by all other faith groups. 'This is a form of love for neighbour'. I do wonder if under certain circumstances, this ideal must be compromised. An aggressive secularism (or militant Islam wedded to the establishment of a world-wide caliphate) might require a maintenance of a special privileged position, if by so doing the church enables all others to also thrive in a hospitable environment of welcome. Faced with the choice of the Church established in London or the exclusive and violent powers of Wahhabi Islam in Riyadh, I think I know which I would prefer.

Julian Rivers echoes much of Nigel Wright's subject matter as he addresses the nature and role of government in the Bible. It is a pity that there should be so much duplication of material in these two chapters, but Rivers argues that government is legitimate, should be limited, reflect a commitment to human equality, subject to law and held to account. I rather suspect that the categories come first, and the Scriptures are then used in defence of those categories, but that does not render them illegitimate.

The most stimulating of these four early chapters is by another

Wright, Bishop Tom Wright, who rehearses here what has become a major theme of his recent writing and polemics: the statement 'Jesus is Lord' is a radical challenge to the idea of empire, be that Imperial Rome or the current global empire of economic liberalism. The rediscovery of a political dimension to the New Testament is one of the more remarkable turns in New Testament scholarship (not to be over-egged, so that the New Testament is about nothing but politics, though.) The church is called to reject both tyranny and anarchy, for if Jesus is Lord, then he challenges the lordship of Caesar, Hitler and the bond markets alike. Bishop Wright argues that in Western democracy, we have been too concerned with how people gain power (the *vox populi* is our current mantra) and too little concerned with what they do with power once they have gained it. 'The church must, in short, learn from Jesus before Pilate how to speak the truth to power rather than for power or merely against power' (p. 77).

The fourth essay is penned by another Baptist and PhD graduate from Spurgeon's College, David McIlroy. A barrister by profession, as well as an academic, McIlroy explores many of the same categories of political thought as Rivers, but now explores them through the lens of the Christian tradition. If Augustine and Gregory of Nazianzus get an early honourable mention, it is to Oliver O'Donovan that McIlroy looks as his main discussion partner.

The next four chapters explore various dimensions of government's interaction with the social fabric. Nicholas Townsend's essay concerns government and social infrastructure, with Catholic Social Teaching (CST) as its currency; Philip Booth continues in similar vein, using CST to understand solidarity and subsidiarity. And the Catholic commentator Philip Longley continues in similar vein. The difference between Booth and Longley's position lies in the understanding of CST: for Booth the common good is one principle amongst many in CST, for Longley it is the overarching principle and the measure by which all other principles should be measured.

In the final chapter, Andrew Bradstock argues that the idea of human being's equal worth is derived from the book of Genesis, is seen everywhere in the Old and New Testaments and produces the practices of the early church. Therefore, a task of the church is to remind government of this fundamental principle, and of government to work to alleviate the injustice of scandalous inequality. This has nothing to do with the 'politics of envy', or which public school the Leader of the Opposition attended, but rather 'the creation of a society that seeks materially to acknowledge that all its members are made in God's image and should live in a way that reflects that status' (p. 196). Of all the issues discussed in this collection of essays, I suspect that it is this issue that will dominate the 2010 election. Nothing excites the political

passions so much as envy and jealousy, and Christians are not immune from those deadly sins.

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Biblical Studies

Gordon D. Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009)

Gordon Fee is the current series editor of the *New International Commentary on the New Testament* and has already contributed volumes on 1 Corinthians and Philippians to the series. This commentary succeeds Leon Morris' version.

The format of the commentary is very helpful. Discussions of the Greek, matters of textual criticism and other technical issues are relegated to the footnotes allowing the body of the commentary to focus on the interpretation of the letters. As usual, Fee writes helpfully, clearly and coherently, drawing the reader's attention to the major issues, so this book would be a good choice for anyone studying in depth or preaching through one or both of the letters to the Thessalonians.

Fee has little regard for the idea that 2 Thessalonians or any part of 1 Thessalonians is deutero-Pauline but his conservative stance on this

belief does not prevent him from offering occasional barbed asides about the *Left Behind* series, dispensationalism and the 'so-called New King James Version'.

The letters to the Thessalonians have acquired something of a 'Cinderella' status within Pauline studies. They attract attention largely because of their eschatological content. Fee handles this material in a sane, helpful and balanced way, keeping the reader's attention focussed on the apostle's purposes, including the ethical dimension of his thought.

Fee is aware that these letters are widely used in circles that claim to be interested in biblical prophecy and that passages within them form the basis for all kinds of speculations about the future. Considering these circumstances, therefore, his reluctance to go beyond the text is perfectly understandable. However, at points his insistence that the Thessalonians would have known what Paul meant but that we cannot, starts to feel like a mantra. Surely the reader should be allowed a fuller discussion of some of the saner options on questions such as 'what or who it is that restrains the revelation of the "lawless one"' (2 Thessalonians 2.6-7). Furthermore, Fee refuses to be drawn in on the literalness of the language in 1 Thessalonians 4.14-17 describing it as a 'moot' point. But this may not be an issue a preacher can readily avoid and is surely one on which he or she is entitled to look to a major commentary for help.

But in the end the criticisms are not major ones. This is a valuable commentary. It may not rescue the letters from their 'minor work' status but it does offer a number of reasons to consult them more frequently. Of particular interest are the sections which draw attention to the context of the church under the constant threat of persecution and the comments on Paul's Christology including his creative use of the Septuagint's rendering of the Shema.

Overall, this commentary is a good and worthwhile one which reminds us of the importance of the texts it covers.

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Anthony C. Thiselton, *The Living Paul: An Introduction to the Apostle and his Thought* (London: SPCK, 2009)

There is no shortage of introductory books on Paul. Such is the current ferment over issues relating to Paul's theology, his relationship to Judaism and the possible ethical implications of some of his teaching (not to mention the larger questions of methodology and smaller debates

over exegetical issues) that a beginner needs a guide.

Anthony Thiselton is, in many ways, an ideal candidate to take on that role. His own scholarly career has traversed the differing territories of hermeneutics, theology and exegesis with enviable ease and demonstrable erudition. For much of his time he has been deeply engaged in the interpretation of 1 Corinthians and has authored two commentaries on that letter. In the present work of some 190 pages, he seeks to offer an account of Paul's thought that is 'accessible, but without undue simplification'.

The first two chapters helpfully identify two issues that, in many cases, prevent people from wanting to study Paul more deeply. First, Thiselton considers the oft-held view that Paul's gospel constitutes a significant departure (at best) or deep betrayal (at worst) of the message and teaching of Jesus. The notion of Paul as the 'lone, grumpy, woman-hater' who founded Christianity is, for Thiselton, a 'myth', and he draws on important evidence from the letters in support of his rejection of this idea. Secondly, the problem of Paul's apocalyptic world-view is considered. Again, Thiselton rejects the view of Paul that holds him to be a wild-eyed, world-hating dualist. Instead, Paul 'preserves what is important' about apocalyptic, and can be seen to have a sense of humour.

These opening chapters, in many ways, help us to see both the strengths and weaknesses of

Thiselton's approach. On the one hand, he shows an admirable confidence in explaining the key questions that face anyone studying Paul, identifying the important evidence relating to those questions and articulating his own answers to them. Yet this approach, and the confidence that accompanies it, tend to give the impression that the issues themselves are relatively straightforward, and the solutions easy to find. In relation to the foci of the opening chapters (Paul's relationship with Jesus and Paul's particular construal of the tradition of Jewish apocalyptic and eschatology) there is little sense that these matters are the subjects of significant scholarly debate, not least because they are topics of considerable theological and exegetical complexity.

The pattern continues throughout the rest of the work. Two chapters follow on Paul's life and letters; Pauline chronology is dealt with in 17 pages! Then the bulk of the book takes up Paul's thought and gathers it under a set of fairly traditional headings: christology, proto-trinitarianism, the Holy Spirit, anthropology and sin, participation and justification, the Church and sacraments, ethics and Paul's view of the future. Each chapter outlines some of the critical issues relating to the topic, has a brief discussion of some of the relevant texts and scholarly debates, and tries above all to provide the reader with a clear sense that an understanding of Paul's views reveals him to be both important and interesting. Thiselton always has one eye on

the reader who wants to know how and why Paul is relevant for contemporary Christian faith and practice, and in a concluding chapter on 'Paul and postmodernity', this concern comes to the forefront. For Thiselton, Paul should be heard as a 'living voice for today', hence the book's title.

At a number of points, his discussion on the apostle's thought elicited from this reviewer a hearty, internal cheer. For example, the discussion on christology precedes that of anthropology and Paul's justification language is located in the wider (and for Paul more central) soteriology of participation. Yet the treatment of both primary and secondary literature is sometimes uneven and the apostle's thought tends to be abstracted from the particular rhetorical situations in which it comes to expression in the letters. The book feels as if it may have been hurriedly written, and Thiselton's prose has never been the easiest to follow.

The question remains then as to whether Thiselton has fulfilled his stated aim of providing an accessible but not simplistic account of Paul's thought. The answer here must be affirmative. But this does not mean that Thiselton's book is the best introductory guide for a new reader of Paul. Older works by Ziesler and newer books by Bird and Gorman more adequately fulfil that role. *The Living Paul* will perhaps find its true place in the hands of those who have forgotten, or never known, why

the interpretation of Paul is fundamental to any account of Christian faith and practice. And among that group there will be, in my experience, a fair number of Christian ministers, for whom this volume may offer a helpful and necessary review and reminder.

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Adela Yarbro Collins and
John J. Collins, King and
Messiah as Son of God:
Divine, Human and Angelic
Messianic Figures in
Biblical and Related
Literature (Grand Rapids,
MI: Eerdmans, 2008)

These days it is quite rare to have a book co-authored by a husband and wife team who are both eminent Biblical scholars, but that is precisely what we have in this volume. Both of the Collins are Professors at Yale University, Adela in New Testament and John in Old Testament. The partnership works very well here given that the book is an ambitious attempt to trace how the idea of the Son of God develops over time, commencing in ancient Near Eastern royal ideology and extending into Christian writings within the New Testament. The book has its origins in a series of six lectures given in Oxford in May 2006. Adela and John each delivered three of the lectures during that term, and each contributed one additional chapter to the book for its full

complement of eight chapters. The book also contains a five-page Introduction and a ten-page Conclusion that was jointly written, along with a full textual index, an author index and a Bibliography of 27 pages.

The book is essentially an exploration of how ideas of kingship and messiahship relate to theological declarations of divinity, and it concentrates on the title 'Son of God' as the focal point in assessing how these ideas were conceived in a variety of Jewish and Christian texts over the centuries. In short, it seeks to understand how Jesus of Nazareth came to be understood by early Christians as both pre-existent and divine. In the first four chapters of the book, John Collins suggests that the Jewish thought-world surrounding messianic expectations is the key here, for it provides the essential backdrop for such exalted assessments to take place. Critical to the overall argument is the suggestion that the title 'Son of God' is at heart a messianic title which has its roots in Ancient Near East's conception of the King as a divine agent. The royal Psalms (notably Psalms 2 and 100) are thought to follow the same pattern evidenced in ancient Egyptian, Mesopotamian and Canaanite texts. The trajectory is then tracked through other Old Testament texts, many of which are familiar to us through Advent carols, notably 2 Samuel 7, Isaiah 9 and Isaiah 7:14 (via the Septuagint). Collins also offers a discussion of how the title 'Son of Man' (Daniel 7:13) and 'Son of God' fit together, although this is

probably the most contentious of his suggestions.

Adela Collins then picks up the baton and begins by assessing what the Apostle Paul and the Synoptic Gospels have to contribute to the discussion. She concludes that declarations of Jesus as the messianic 'Son of God' were already on the scene when Paul became a Christian, and that the Apostle significantly adapted and developed these. As far as the Synoptic Gospels are concerned, she concludes that, although they all contain passages in which there is a strong christological emphasis on Jesus as the Son of God, this does not mean that he is viewed as a pre-existent figure by Matthew, Mark or Luke. In fact, among the gospels, she argues that it is only in the Gospel of John that we see the idea of Jesus's pre-existence as a heavenly Son of God clearly asserted. Interestingly, Collins discusses the Book of Revelation alongside the Gospel of John, something that is not commonly done by New Testament commentators. The distinctive contribution that the Book of Revelation makes to the discussion, however, is that Jesus Christ is portrayed as an angelic figure, or at least one who can be described in angelomorphic terms (the adaptation of Daniel 10:5-9 in Revelation 1:13-16 is a key element in this argument).

The main argument of the book proceeds at quite a pace from chapter to chapter, building naturally as it follows an essentially diachronic approach

through the various texts of the Old Testament and New Testament. It does interact with a number of recent secondary sources dedicated to christological investigation, and in this sense does offer a good survey of the main issues which have preoccupied scholarship for the past 100 years or so.

No doubt the foundational premise of the book as a whole (that 'Son of God' as a title links to the idea of a heavenly, messianic figure who is in some sense divine) will be contested by many New Testament scholars. They will argue that the failure to recognize a subtlety of expression in key texts and the too-casual movement from one christological idea to the next are weaknesses that need to be recognized and undermine the validity of the case overall. Still, the book is a creative venture by two premiere biblical specialists, and a work well worth investigating, particularly if you are interested in how christological ideas developed.

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James D. G. Dunn,
Christianity in the Making,
Volume 2: Beginning From
Jerusalem (Grand Rapids,
MI: Eerdmans, 2009)

Professor James D.G. Dunn has been one of the premiere New Testament scholars of the UK for the past thirty years and most of

his teaching career was spent as the Lightfoot Professor of Divinity at Durham University, where he retired from this post in 2003.

This book represents the second part of a projected three-part study of Christianity in the Making, which is aimed at tracing the history of Christianity's beginnings into the second century. Essentially the trilogy follows a chronological format. Volume One is entitled *Jesus Remembered* (2003) and covers questions relating to the Quest for the Historical Jesus, and explores the nature of Jesus' relationship with Second-Temple Judaism. This second volume picks up the story and covers the years 30-70 CE. The various chapters in the volumes are consecutively numbered and Volume Two contains chapters 20-37. In essence, the study is dedicated to discovering what Dunn describes in the opening chapter as 'the Quest for the Historical Church', and not surprisingly, it is the Acts of the Apostles and the Pauline Epistles that form the focal point for much of the book. Chapters 22-27 cover Acts 1-14 and Galatians and Chapters 28-33 discuss Paul as the Apostle to the Gentiles. Chapters 34-37 tackle a number of questions relating to the death of Peter and Paul, as well as what happened to the Christian movement associated with both Peter and Paul after their death (Ephesians, James and 1 Peter are all discussed in Chapter 37 under the heading of 'The Legacy of the First-Generation Leadership').

For the most part, the diachronic approach allows Dunn to intertwine his discussion of the Acts of the Apostles and the various Pauline letters smoothly and sensibly. However, along the way, the reader can readily detect some of Dunn's own theological and exegetical assumptions coming through. For example, he places the discussion of 2 Thessalonians immediately after his discussion of 1 Thessalonians (and before the treatment of Galatians) which intimates that Dunn accepts the authenticity of 2 Thessalonians as a genuine Pauline letter, however he does admit that scholarship is roughly divided 50/50 on this point. Similarly, he discusses both Philemon and Colossians as genuine prison epistles, probably arising out of Paul's final imprisonment, with Colossians in particular being produced via the assistance of Timothy as an amanuensis; this accounts for the stylistic and allegedly uncharacteristic, non-Pauline features of the letter to the Colossians. Also worth noting is the way that Dunn handles the complexity of the Corinthian correspondence within the volume. He rightly (in my opinion) argues that there were at least four different letters written by Paul to the church at Corinth, although it is now impossible to unscramble the contents of two of them. Curiously, Dunn does not follow one very common way of resolving the tension between the two halves of 2 Corinthians, by assigning chapters 10-13 to be the 'painful letter' alluded to earlier in 2 Corinthians. Instead, Dunn takes the change in theological tone

found in 2 Corinthians 10-13 to be due to Paul receiving fresh information about the situation in Corinth while he was writing what we call 2 Corinthians as a whole. In other words, Dunn assumes that 2 Corinthians is best viewed as a single epistle and that fragmentation theories mislead us as readers. Having said that, Dunn does admit that 'I do not believe that the puzzle of 2 Corinthians is finally resolvable' (p. 836), and goes on to state that 'my own suspicion is that the puzzle of 2 Corinthians was of Paul's own making', ie. that it had to do with Paul's impatience in dealing with the Corinthians and in writing to them rather too hastily.

There is much to commend within this book, although it is not the sort of work that lends itself easily to sermon preparation or bible studies. It is more the kind of work that you would read to gain an overall impression about the historical development of the early Christian movement. As always, Dunn writes with an admirable clarity as he patiently leads the reader through the tangled web of scholarly opinions about complicated questions. I feel at some level, that the material concentrating on Paul is perhaps a bit more clearly presented in Dunn's earlier book *The Theology of the Apostle Paul* (1998). Certainly, the interested reader will find that the two books complement one another very well, although some will, no doubt, be discouraged at the daunting prospect of 2,000 pages! In short this is a mammoth undertaking (the indexes alone cover 175

pages), but it is hard to imagine how one person could do it better. I await Volume Three of the trilogy!

Larry Kreitzer
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Oxford

Laurie Guy, Making Sense of the Book of Revelation, Regent's Study Guides 15, (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2009)

In this latest addition to the excellent Regent's Study Guides series, Laurie Guy offers an accessible and readable introduction to the book of Revelation. Writing for a Christian audience, Guy invites his readers to encounter the risen Christ through the text of Revelation.

The opening chapters provide a helpful introduction to approaching the book, an examination of the social context of Revelation and an exploration of the apocalyptic genre. Guy first rehearses the traditional modes of reading Revelation (futurist, preterist and symbolic) before concluding that 'a symbolic approach covers all the bases' (p. 11). He then commendably and briefly outlines the debates on authorship and dating (unlikely to be John the Apostle and late first century) before describing the significance of the Roman imperial cult to the Revelation's first readers. An overview of Jewish apocalyptic literature follows, which helps locate Revelation's literary genre as an apocalypse and raises

important questions about the purpose and value of the Revelation.

The central section of this Study Guide is a series of chapters which address the text of Revelation in manageable sections. Each of these chapters would make ideal reading material for a study group session, or as a guide for a sermon series working through Revelation. Whilst not a verse-by-verse commentary, nonetheless all major passages are addressed with care. Guy strikes an engaging balance between presenting the fruit of his scholarship, and opening up the text in a way that will be helpful to those reading for more devotional purposes. Each chapter concludes with a concise summary and questions for further reflection. The book is further enhanced with strategic use of tables, charts and pictures.

Laurie Guy has provided us with a useful book, which brings to life the 'Challenging, inspiring [and] refreshing' (p. 182) message of the book of Revelation.

Simon Woodman,
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Doctrine & Ethics

Timothy Bradshaw, Pannenberg – A Guide for the Perplexed (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2009)

In *Pannenberg – A Guide for the Perplexed*, Tim Bradshaw has made a useful contribution, not only to a helpful series of T&T Clark studies (which takes its name from a phrase coined by Moses Maimonides and popularized by economics guru E.F. Schumacher), but also to the understanding and appreciation of German Protestant theologian Wolfhart Pannenberg's (b1928) significant contribution to the theological enterprise of the twentieth century and beyond.

Dr Bradshaw's doctoral research included a major study of Pannenberg in comparison with the theology of Karl Barth. In this new account, Bradshaw successfully identifies the further influence of the nineteenth century philosopher Hegel on Pannenberg's work, with its key emphasis on the significance of history and its relationship to Christian eschatology. These concerns were addressed in an early volume edited by Pannenberg called *Revelation as History* and taken up in perhaps his best known and most influential work *Jesus – God and Man* (both 1968). This has been followed by further important work including his *Basic Questions in Theology* (1971) and culminating in his three volume *Systematic Theology* (1988-1994).

For Pannenberg, the resurrection of Christ is central as a proleptic revelation of the ultimate destiny of human history. Although as with most contemporary theologians, Pannenberg begins his systematic Christological construction 'from below', it does not restrict him only to functionalist approaches, but by taking seriously the importance of the Resurrection he allows important ontological questions to be put in an appropriately 20th century way. In this regard he may be compared with his Catholic compatriot, the Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner (1904-1984). The Resurrection is an eschatological event which occurs in the midst of human history and allows the light of the future to illuminate both present and past. This does not foreclose the future however, but allows humanity to move forwards with a new openness awaiting further light to illuminate the quest for meaning. In this way Bradshaw shows how Hegelian dynamic is reconstructed in conversation with Christian eschatology.

The book is organized in a helpful way, discussing the key themes through a focus on the appropriate major texts, moving from basic questions, through revelation and history, Christology and Trinity, to 'Creation and Human Becomings' – the future perfect. This pattern allows both close engagement with the texts and clear development of themes and ideas as they relate to and build upon each other. *Pannenberg* is a readable book which encourages the reader to engage with the original texts both in its substance and by its

structure. An illuminating read – in every respect.

Nicholas Wood
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Kathryn Tanner, *Christ the Key, Current Issues in Theology*, (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2010)

Having so greatly enjoyed *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001), to which this book is the self-declared sequel, I approached this present volume with eager anticipation – anticipation which, in some respects within the early chapters, was not entirely satisfied. Professor Tanner admits that this work is less systematic than its predecessor and, though the chapters were originally delivered in 2007 as the Warfield Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary, some are revisions of earlier papers. Yet the focus of the book on an understanding of Christ's incarnation as the 'key' to a revisiting of a series of theological themes, provides an effective structural connectedness for the book as a whole. Neither was I thrown by the writing; certainly the book is demanding, the argument is tight and assumes a degree of theological competency, but the style is direct and unflinchingly engaging. Certainly the book is challenging; there are insights here to be pondered and perhaps questioned, but this is appropriate in any volume published within this series. I think

my unease with the early chapters centres, rather, upon the optimism which the author expresses concerning the unifying and reconciling potential of some of her proposals – an optimism which, I fear, may be a little misplaced.

The first chapter considers again the notion of the image of God and, following a review of the traditions, concludes that 'human beings image God only by participating in what they are not', and by coming, through the Word and the Spirit, to participate in God. The image of God in this 'strong' sense, then, is the destiny that awaits us in Christ, rather than being simply a given of human nature. This explicitly Christ-centred interpretation of the significance of the image of God is foundational to the treatment of nature and grace over the two subsequent chapters, the first of which seeks to reconcile a Protestant understanding of total depravity with a Catholic understanding that, even through human sin, the essential goodness of human nature is preserved.

Tanner's point is that that which is lost at the fall is not itself essential to human nature but that which is other to human nature, albeit the destiny and calling of human nature. This is a persuasive discussion but whether it will commend itself to the radical ends of this debate might be doubted.

The next chapter addresses the related questions of the gratuity of grace and the integrity of human nature, again assuming that this distinctively Christ-centred

approach to an understanding of our imaging of God resolves these questions in a manner that may reconcile Roman and Protestant concerns. The proposition is engaging, yet the optimism may be misplaced. Under and behind these first three chapters lies the spectre of the various significances accorded to the term 'nature' (not least the manner in which the term is used by Thomas Aquinas) and, without a more historical and sustained interrogation of the term, I doubt that this potential for persuasiveness will be fulfilled.

Chapter four, with its focus on the relations of the Trinity, aims in particular to reconcile Eastern and Western perspectives on the place of the Spirit. Again as the aim is laudable and the discussion perceptive, undoubtedly there is a valuable contribution to the contemporary debate, but I still would not share the author's optimism – indeed, I find it a little disconcerting. Chapter five builds on this Trinitarian foundation to question the application of understandings of the Trinity to human society and political theories. For this reader this was the most controversial and challenging chapter, questioning much that has characterised recent theology, again in a thoroughly Christ-centred manner. This wholly worthwhile book is worth its price for this chapter alone: '[w]e are... not called to imitate the trinity by way of the incarnation but brought to participate in it' (p. 234). But again I fear the challenge may pass largely unheeded.

I had the pleasure of hearing an earlier version of the chapter on death and sacrifice delivered at a conference for the Society for the Study of Theology in 2003. Models of the atonement are reviewed (perhaps a little too cursorily) and generally criticised for the scant weight they accord to the incarnation (a criticism wholly fair in many cases but perhaps a little unfair in some). This again is an engaging discussion (though maybe not as distinctive as in some preceding chapters) but its final positive proposal felt a little weak. On the other hand, this reader found the final chapter, entirely persuasive (largely because he was persuaded already) in its discussion of immediacy and the mediated manner of the work of the Spirit, again taking the incarnation as the 'key' to a proper theological understanding.

Though there are elements of this book, in particular its over-optimism, that I found frustrating if not irritating, this was a delight to read. Perhaps contrary to my own objections, I find myself appropriately provoked to think again in certain respects.

John E. Colwell
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William C Ingle-Gillis, *The Trinity and Ecumenical Church Thought: The Church-Event (Aldershot: Ashgate 2007)*

After nearly a century since the start of the modern ecumenical movement, we seem little closer to a common understanding of the nature and purpose of the Church. Reflecting on this lack of convergence Ingle-Gillis suggests a new framework for ecumenical discussions, based on an understanding of Church as an event-in-process rooted in the dynamic tri-personal life of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Ingle-Gillis' book assumes a good understanding of Christian History and Doctrine as befits a title in a series seeking to bring high quality research into critical debate. He begins by examining three dominant models for ecumenical ecclesiology within the World Council of Churches, which he tags as liberal and including the majority of mainline Protestant Churches who recognise all Nicene communities as legitimate manifestations of Church, Catholic/Orthodox churches who maintain the absolute necessity of a specific, visible community in which the one true Church of Christ subsists and conservative churches who affirm the genuine involvement of all baptized Christians in the life of a single trans-denominational Church. All of these, he argues, are predicated on the premise that a multiplicity of worshipping communities must be understood by definition as

existentially contingent, therefore, in some sense, provisional and requiring reunion to be more fully Christ's body.

In contrast to this provisionalism, Ingle-Gillis argues that multiplicity can be indicative of theological truth or revelation. Drawing on the work of Tom Torrance, Colin Gunton and John Zizioulas he constructs an ecclesiology which relies on the personal being of the tri-personal God as the final source of all that is, whereby all created persons stand in a particular sort of relationship to the triune God and to one another. The church is the seat of the Spirit's activity in history as the Spirit guides and sustains the created order, seeking to form humanity into community around the Lordship of Christ. This argument leads him to speak of the church as an event, the outworking of God's reign in space-time where authenticity is not found in the reflection of abstract unity but as an event-in-process, an event of persons-in-reconciliation. Thus the Churches' true life lies in their coming together rather than their being together.

Considering their similarities and differences in theology, the engagement with Torrance, Gunton and Zizioulas, and the implications for pneumatology and ecclesiology is absorbing. The espoused relational ontology has much to commend it though the underlying notion of the church being on a continual journey towards unity isn't entirely satisfactory because the inherent instability of focusing on events rather than states is

itself to create another form of perpetual provisionalism.

While insights into how a social understanding of the trinity might inform ecumenical dialogue are important, further clarification of how church as event relates to Christus totus will be needed to carry it further. Nevertheless, as an exploration of how a Trinitarian ecclesiology might be developed and play a part in ecumenical conversations, this book is to be welcomed. It might be of particular interest to Baptists seeking to think about how the local congregation relates to the wider church.

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Bernd Wannewetsch
(ed.), Who Am I?
Bonhoeffer's Theology
Through His Poetry
(Edinburgh: T & T Clark,
2009)

There is a vibrant niche in publishing devoted to the interpretation of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's life and thought. This latest addition examining his theology through his poetry is

neither cheap to purchase nor on occasions easy to read, but it will amply repay those prepared to invest their money, time and effort in its pages.

Bonhoeffer wrote ten poems while imprisoned by the Nazis. Although he came late to the genre and claimed to be 'no poet', he had from early days valued a fastidious linguistic precision that is part of a poet's vocation. So while he was a talented systematic theologian, Bonhoeffer's writing carried a consistent affinity for an evocative turn of phrase, whether it be his cri de couer of 'costly discipleship' and 'cheap grace', or the thumbnail prison sketches of phrases such as 'religionless Christianity'. As such, while his natural reservation of self-expression may have restrained him earlier in life, the poet's mantle was never far from his shoulder.

This book avoids commenting too deeply on the merits of his literary skills per se, but the verse that is presented here both in German and English, has proven to be fecund ground for commentators on Bonhoeffer's personality and theology. So it is a welcome change that each of the renowned contributors to this volume was invited to reflect, not so much on what each individual poem might teach us about Bonhoeffer the man or his thought, but more enticingly on how these pieces of verse together help us to continue a conversation with a deeply influential Christian thinker whose creative and maturing ideas were to be so tragically cut short.

As such, the introduction from editor Bernd Wannewetsch deliberately sets the tone for all that is to come by posing the question: Who is Dietrich Bonhoeffer for Us Today? From the beginning, we are forced to acknowledge that not only do the contributors bring with them differing expectations of the man in question (the thinker, the disciple, the activist or the martyr), but so too will every reader. The book intends to precipitate internal and communal conversations by which writers and readers might determine how Bonhoeffer may speak today, and it does so well.

As might be expected from such a prestigious list of authors, the quality of writing is consistently high and incisive. This reviewer's particular appreciation of the chapters from Michael Northcott on 'Who am I?', Stanley Hauerwas on 'The Friend' and Hans G. Ulrich on 'Stations of the Way to Freedom' undoubtedly owes as much to his own longstanding relationship with the poems they selected, as with the reflections offered. As such, and unusually for an edited volume, the most compelling feature of this already worthy book is its overall structure, its commitment to take the reader on personal pilgrimage by presenting the poems thematically rather than in simple chronology. With deliberate intention, and following an opening challenge of who Bonhoeffer is for us today, the reader is immediately asked to consider their identity in the light of Bonhoeffer's poetic enquiry 'Who am I?' This quest for self-

knowledge continues in the subsequent poem 'Past' where Oliver O'Donovan examines the effect 'past selves' can have on an individual and how it is this 'self that is gone' that 'we need to move out from'.

Moving out from what is gone, the reader may select a number of alternative thematic paths. If they continue the journey as printed, they are taken into an examination of faithfulness, presented through the sequence of poems 'Success and Failure', 'By Powers of Good', and 'The Friend'. But there is no reason why they cannot choose instead to reflect on aspects of suffering through the writing in 'Stations on the Road to Freedom' and 'Christians and Pagans'.

Similarly, an exploration of biblical characters and Bonhoeffer's motif of *stellvertretung* or vicarious representation is helpfully assisted by placing 'Jonah' and 'The Death of Moses' side by side. Of course this arrangement, (like any) will be arbitrary; Philip G. Ziegler's chapter on 'Voices in the Night' with its focus on human solidarity might have been better placed as a prelude to 'Moses' and 'Jonah'. But such disagreement over the selected sequence in the book will prove its own worth, inviting better conversation as to why the reader might have gathered these pieces in a different way and if so, for what purpose.

This volume will not be a convenient 'first port of call' on Dietrich Bonhoeffer. To best appreciate his poems and the book itself, some familiarity with the

biography and theology of the poet is necessary. But for those with a basic fluency in Bonhoeffer's life and thought, this excellent collection of writings should provoke and facilitate good conversation for many years to come.

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Michael Banner, *Christian Ethics: A Brief History* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009)

My Christian Ethics course at Regent's Park College consisted of four tutorials, during which I was assured that I would learn enough to realise I knew next to nothing. Entitled *Christian Ethics: A Brief History*, we might be forgiven for expecting Michael Banner's little volume to offer us little more. But for a book so short, it is disproportionately powerful, and far from being an 'idiot's guide' it has its own distinctive voice and case to offer.

This is not a text book. Historical Christian thinkers, whose inaccessible works leave us feeling guilty for not having read them properly, are not presented to us as though we lived in a vacuum. The manner in which the author guides us through the works of Benedict, for instance, betrays his own deep awareness of twenty first century moral issues. The same might be said of his treatment of Augustine, Aquinas and Luther. His engagement with

each figure serves an obvious single purpose: bringing each chapter to life with a clarity and continuity that flow through the entire text.

The purpose seems not so much to provide the reader with historical knowledge, but to aid contemporary self-awareness. This book is not merely a storeroom of resources that Christians can pick up and use as they engage with complex moral problems. The overall goal is more radical. We are encouraged to understand ourselves and our ethical position in the modern world, in light of the creedal affirmations of Christian belief. The beliefs that shape our identity are many, complex and varied, and Banner's walk through Christian history helps us to get to grips with the often hidden roots of those beliefs.

When Christians engage in complex moral debates, it is all too easy for them to quote Scripture in support of their unwittingly pagan beliefs. This little book is a substantive engagement with contemporary ethics, precisely because it is historical in its scope. It enables the contemporary thinker to hear the wisdom of history and provides a glimpse into the depths of that wisdom.

One wonders at times, especially in his treatment of Benedict and Aquinas, how the author manages to extract some of his insights from the material under consideration. Occasionally the question may surface, as to whether Banner has over-

interpreted his sources for the sake of his case. In such instances, however, the only solution is to turn to the primary sources themselves which – after all – can only be in line with the purpose of the book.

The chapters on each figure are relatively short, and the reader feels a lightness of touch. But for all of Banner's 'easy-to-read' style, we are given confidence of enormous depth in his treatment of great Christian thinkers. This book penetrates to the heart of Christian discipleship and theology, and fuses ancient wisdom with contemporary ethical deliberation.

Christian Ethics: A Brief History is the readable work of a heavyweight scholar.

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Church History

John H .Y. Briggs (ed.),
Pulpit and People –
Studies in Eighteenth
Century Baptist Life and
Thought. Studies in Baptist
History and Thought -
Volume 28 (Milton Keynes:
Paternoster, 2009)

This volume is another welcome contribution to the series 'Studies in Baptist History and Thought', which has made a significant contribution to Baptist Studies in

the English speaking world. Its ten chapters range widely across the issues of the period, which, apart from a judicious opening chapter by the editor John Briggs, are mainly approached through the life and work of the key players. This is a helpful reminder that all history is made up of both broad movements of ideas, and particular men and women who engage with such ideas in their own contexts. The contributors themselves exemplify this principle since they too approach their material from a range of perspectives and traditions. Some are academics specializing in Baptist studies in educational institutions on both sides of the Atlantic, others are working pastors in local churches, while yet others are present or former staff members of regional associations of Baptist churches. This makes for a rich mix if also an inevitable unevenness in approach, yet together they offer a helpful insight into the complex world of eighteenth century English dissenting congregations.

In his opening chapter, which takes an overview of the century, John Briggs outlines some of the key issues for a period which in many ways takes as its starting date the 1689 Act of Toleration. Even the limited toleration created by the Act brought a sense of lassitude to many congregations which had inevitably needed to be more earnest in earlier days of persecution. The freedom to practice dissent did not mean full social acceptance and many prejudices remained which were not lessened until the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts much

later, and some might even argue that in some ways at least the privileges of establishment are not yet fully removed.

In changing the climate from the rather quiet era following 1689, the impact of the Evangelical Revival can scarcely be overestimated in the life of all branches of the church in Britain during this period, and this is no less true of the churches of older dissent which the Baptists represented. This is reflected in a number of the essays, and is anticipated by Austin Walker in his paper on Benjamin Keach (who only just makes it into the C18th by his death in 1704), who became a leading Particular Baptist pastor in London, having moved from the General to the Particular strands of Baptist life. The Revival is central to several essays: Clive Jarvis's essay on Gilbert Boyce, the Lincolnshire General Baptist Pastor and Messenger who opposed Wesley to his face on the question of paedo-baptism, and to Peter Morden's paper on the important engagement of Andrew Fuller with the work of Jonathan Edwards which ultimately led to Fuller's influential work *The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation*. This work made evangelical Calvinism accessible to a wide audience in the latter part of the century and found significant expression in the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society, in which Fuller played a key role.

Although not the subject of Walker's essay, Keach was also well known for the introduction of hymn singing in his London

congregation. This significant and initially controversial development in Baptist practice is also addressed in this volume in an essay by the American historian Michael Haykin on the life and hymns of Benjamin Beddome, the pastor of Bourton on the Water Baptist Church in rural Gloucestershire for over fifty years from 1743 onwards. (On a personal note, as a former Interim Moderator of this historic congregation for two years, your reviewer naturally read this essay with particular interest!) Beddome's father, John, was pastor of the Baptist church in Alcester and subsequently in Bristol, but originated in London as a member of the Tooley Street church during the ministry of Keach, so the positive influence of the hymn singing tradition was an established influence in the young Benjamin's life.

Following his death in 1795 a collection of no less than 830 of Beddome's hymns was published; they were largely written to sing after the sermon in morning worship and reflected the themes of the spoken word. Haykin notes that although few of these are still in circulation today, up to a hundred were still included in hymnals published a century later. Beddome was also reputed as a preacher, and during his long ministry resisted various offers to more prestigious pulpits. Karen Smith underlines the need to pay attention to the contribution of more rural and lesser known Baptist figures, including the significant role of women, in her fascinating account of the

struggles of James Fanch, pastor of Romsey in Hampshire, and an acquaintance of another well-known Baptist hymn writer, Anne Steele of nearby Broughton.

Beddome's preaching was heard with approval on more than one occasion by a fellow hymn-writer John Newton. Newton also links us with another influential issue of the time, the question of slavery. Caleb Evans of Bristol and his perhaps surprising ambiguity on the anti-slavery question is analyzed in the essay by Roger Hayden. This essay carefully teases out the dispute between Evans and his erstwhile associate pastor Robert Hall, who went on to a distinguished ministry himself at St Andrew's St Cambridge. To some extent at least the issue revolved around the latter's espousal of the abolitionist cause, and the former's more cautious approach.

Stephen Copson introduces us further to the diversity of eighteenth century Baptist life in his account of Hubert Stogden, James Foster and Charles Bulkeley, whose lives interwove in various ways with that of better known characters of the time, Foster even being celebrated in the verse of Alexander Pope. This is a helpful reminder that Baptists were not always as isolated from wider society as has sometimes been supposed. These three were men of some education and each demonstrated a willingness for theological exploration not always congenial to their contemporaries. Some might say little has changed

in Baptist circles in the intervening period!

Such interweaving in a small denomination, even in a time when travel and communication was much more difficult than today, is also illustrated by the fact that James Fanch of Romsey was brother-in-law to the eminent and scholarly pastor of Abingdon Baptist Church, Daniel Turner (Abingdon being another of your reviewer's previous haunts). Likewise Turner became a good friend and co-writer with John Collett Ryland, who came to faith under the ministry of Beddome at Bourton. Daniel Turner preached at the re-establishment and signing of the covenant of the congregation at New Road Oxford in 1780. According to Paul Fiddes' account in this volume, Turner was the likely coiner of the memorable phrase in the New Road church covenant 'A Protestant Catholic Church of Christ'. Like Beddome, Turner too served a fifty year pastorate, but this strong location in a particular place did nothing to dim what Fiddes describes as his 'vision of the church universal'. It has been a cliché of Baptist life that 'to belong everywhere, it is necessary to belong somewhere', but too often the emphasis has been on a parochial 'somewhere', at the expense of the universal 'everywhere'. Turner finely expresses his wider vision when he comments that 'every regular member and every minister of the word, in any particular church, is in fact a member and minister of the church universal'. Paul Fiddes explores the implications of this

with his usual subtlety and clarity of argument.

The final, and longest, chapter by Timothy Whelan takes us to the final decade of the eighteenth century. This time was influenced above all by the radical temper of the era following the French Revolution in 1789 and appropriately enough he focuses on the role of Martha Gurney who, together with another radical bookseller with whom she went into partnership in 1788 William Fox, was responsible for the writing, printing and distribution of a string of radical pamphlets between 1791-1793.

In fact Gurney was 'a leading Dissenting printer and bookseller' with her name credited in some 130 titles of the period, and the only woman so engaged. This chapter begins to redress the gender imbalance which Karen Smith and John Briggs both note in their earlier chapters. Fox's Address to the People of Great Britain on the Consumption of West India Produce was the biggest selling pamphlet of the century, outselling even Paine's Rights of Man and Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France. With the prosecution of a number of radical printers and booksellers in the early 1790s, followed by the suspension of habeas corpus in 1794, the radical movement was necessarily quieted, but in the three years to that point the pamphlets of Gurney and Fox had offered a prophetic Christian critique of contemporary issues with a rare consistency and integrity, laying the foundation for

the nonconformist conscience of the subsequent century.

Perhaps in reading this fascinating collection of essays we may rekindle something of the passion and integrity with which our forebears understood the gospel as a radical claim upon the whole of life.

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Keith G Jones, The European Baptist Federation (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009) and J.H.Y. Briggs (ed), A Dictionary of European Baptist Life and Thought (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009)

Bernard Green's book, European Baptists and the Third Reich (Baptist Historical Society 2009), surveyed the wreckage of war and ended on a note of growing hope as Baptists began to rebuild in the ruins, with British and American Baptists responding positively to the needs of their sisters and brothers in Continental Europe. It was a time of new endeavour as people sought to build links culturally, politically and economically, to bind peoples and nations to one another in a Europe that would not be driven by war.

In his book Keith Jones tells the story of how the organisation formed by Baptists in 1950 developed in such a way that it

became the forum for activity for national bodies. This is well-researched history but it is also a case study illustrating the thesis that the authentic expression of Baptist ecclesiology is interdependence - at all levels of activity. The story of the European Baptist Federation (EBF) is a signal demonstration of how Baptists can work together creatively to express the common purpose of mission. Interdependence is illustrated as a web of connected points rather than a pyramid or series of concentric circles.

Ten Unions from Western European countries were founder members in 1950. By 2006, there were 54 bodies in 45 member countries spanning the Continent and reaching into Syria and Lebanon in an endeavour to be inclusive for the benefit of all Baptists in a Europe-wide mission. The way of working pursued, not always easily or painlessly, was more than pragmatism; it was an expression of the ecclesiology of interdependence.

Even the finest church order needs champions and advocates and Keith Jones shows how the different personalities of the General Secretaries helped to shape the direction and content of EBF life, working with Baptists of sometimes sharply divergent convictions and sharing Baptist distinctives in conversations with other Christians.

Extending the sphere of activity, the EBF has been a partner in ecumenical initiatives, neither remaining uncritical nor aloof.

There has also been a consistent attention to evangelism and concern for religious and other freedoms where member Unions existed as minorities under indifferent political regimes or worse.

The provision of trained and theologically educated pastors was a common goal that was not always possible to achieve for the smaller Unions. The seminary at Ruschlikon was established in 1949 with considerable support from the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). The link was eroded by growing unease from the SBC over what was perceived as liberalism and, after the seminary was handed over to EBF in 1988, defunding swiftly followed, prompting relocation to the Czech Republic. By drawing together scholars and tutors from a wide range of backgrounds, the seminary has nurtured a sense of belonging and shared endeavour in European Baptist life, as well as stimulating research into Baptist history, ecclesiology and mission.

As Rector of the International Baptist Seminary, Keith Jones is well placed to narrate this story. The book is a thorough and detailed observation of the development of the Federation and will be required reading not only for its work on European Baptists but equally as an argument for the interdependence that it supports. The book also holds out the prospect of a more cohesive European Baptist consciousness that is rich in diversity and depth, and appeals for a more sustained

Baptist ecclesial reality that reflects the theory.

The Dictionary is a volume to set alongside Jones' book. With John Briggs as General Editor and a panel of associate editors, the work is designed as a single volume of reference on Baptist life in Europe and an opportunity to reflect as Europeans on key issues of Baptist Christian witness.

Authors are drawn from a broad range of Baptists of many nationalities. They deal with church order, mission, ethics, theology and history, whilst biography awaits a promised second volume. The book also includes short articles on the development of Baptist life in European countries.

This is a book in which to dip. It offers a compendium of widely-ranging articles that will enlighten readers. It brings together an impressive cast of authors. Baptists are not noted for their conformity to type, unless that type be diversity. So just as the book offers a European perspective on Baptist life, care must be taken not to underestimate the strength of divergent views on things like authority, ecumenism and the role of women, for example. Nonetheless the overall impression is of a developing awareness of shared identity.

This volume will be an asset for Baptists and non-Baptists alike. It does not give a Baptist view or definition on everything. Some articles have little that is distinctively Baptist yet they explore themes that helped to

form the culture of evangelical Christian witness. There is nothing else like this book and it is a must for those wishing to explore the mind of European Baptists.

Last year's 400th anniversary of John Smyth's baptism was a reminder of Europe's significance in the modern Baptist movement. Both of these books underline the need to take seriously the contribution of Baptists to the European story.

Stephen Copson
Central Baptist Association

Mark Smith (ed.), British Evangelical Identities Past and Present Vol. 1: Aspects of the History and Sociology of Evangelicalism in Britain and Ireland (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008)

This edited collection of essays began life at a conference on Evangelical Identities in 2004 at King's College London. A second volume will (hopefully) appear in the future on aspects of the Bible and theology amongst British evangelicals.

Historical studies of evangelicalism are nothing new, the now classic *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* by David Bebbington being the best example. Smith's book seeks to examine evangelicalism through 'a range of ecclesiastical, social and cultural contexts – denominations, nations, ethnicity

and gender, arts and material culture and spirituality' (p. 9). The various essays demonstrate the diversity of expression amongst evangelical Christians.

David Goodhew provides an account of the 1950 Peace Summit between SCM and IVF. Martin Wellings looks at evangelicalism amongst the Methodists in the 20th century, while Brian Talbot studies evangelical identity amongst Baptists in 19th century Scotland. Further chapters from Eryn White and David Ceri Jones, and Andrew Holmes look at evangelicalism in Wales and Northern Ireland, respectively.

David Killingray examines black evangelicals in Britain. Rachel Jordan discusses the impact of marriage on the public ministry of women and Kristen Aune looks at masculinity within New Frontiers. Peter Webster and Ian Jones look at the impact of music and the 'Evangelical Style' in the Church of England and John Harvey studies evangelical artefacts and kitsch.

The final chapters are studies in evangelical spirituality: Andrew Atherstone writes on the sermons of Francis Chavasse, Ian Randall discusses evangelical spirituality and identity, and Mark Smith considers Henry Venn's life of Francis Xavier.

The book opens with David Bebbington discussing evangelicalism and cultural diffusion and concludes with Derek Tidball asking what is right with evangelicalism.

I found Aune's look at masculinity particularly interesting. The paper arises out of her unpublished PhD study of gender in the New Frontiers movement. As yet there is no critical study of the New Frontiers, apart from bits of Andrew Walker's *Restoring the Kingdom* and this essay is a welcome taster of what seems a fascinating piece of research. Similarly, John Harvey's study on how evangelicals have used artefacts as a means of identity, evangelism and piety, asks critical questions of the commodification of evangelical faith.

For those wanting to get a wide ranging picture of how evangelicalism has developed historically and sociologically, this is a good collection of essays. I'm not sure I agree with Timothy Larsen's commendation that 'this could well be the most important book on British evangelicalism since David Bebbington's landmark study', but it certainly demonstrates the impact of evangelicalism on British Christianity and the impact of society and culture upon evangelicalism.

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**Ian M. Randall.
Communities of
Conviction: Baptist
Beginnings in Europe
(Schwarzenfeld: Neufeld
Verlag, 2009)**

This timely and most welcome volume is sadly one of the very few books published last year marking and celebrating the 400th anniversary of Baptist beginnings in Amsterdam 1609. It is also one of very few volumes surveying Baptists in Europe – something it does exceedingly well.

As we have come to expect from Ian Randall, the book is very well and clearly written, and my hope is that it will be bought and read by many – ministers, students and others, as it tells a story that we ought to know. For while Baptists do not have the parish system, our vision and understanding of the work of God is all too often parochial, limited by the local and the immediate. This handsomely produced hardback, which has the added bonus of well-chosen illustrations that nicely complement the text, shows us just what our God has done among us and across Europe.

While some of us might have heard of Johann Gerhard Oncken and his clarion call to Baptists, 'Every Baptist a missionary', few of us will have heard of Julius Köbner, G.W. Lehmann, Anders Wiberg, Johannes Feisser, Gottfried Alf, Heinrich Meyer, Ivan Kargel, Vasiliy Pavlov and Mihály Kornya to name but a few. And this is in no way to suggest that the great

Baptists of Europe were all men, though our history too often reflects the attitudes of the times, for there were also Veikko Palomaa, Natalia Lieven, Vera Gagarin, Rosa Guerizini and Madeleine Blocher Saillens. We should know about these women who are part of 'such a great cloud of witnesses'. Many of them were, like us, ordinary, but in spite of frequent persecution and many obstacles – of distance, discouragements, lack of support and often poverty – they nevertheless witnessed to their Lord, obeyed his call and shared the gospel, planted churches, preached and prayed, lived and died in the name of Christ and in the service of his kingdom.

Often the story is about people in times past in distant countries and remote places, with names we've never heard of and certainly cannot pronounce, but we shouldn't be put off by this. I must confess that personally I would have liked a few endnotes giving sources particularly for those passages quoted at length, as well as a few maps to help guide the reader around Europe (this comment probably reflects more on the reviewer than this volume). Nevertheless, there is a very useful select bibliography and a good index. But these are trivial comments. What is important is that the God whose grace and gospel these Baptists shared, and whose faith and witness he honoured, is the same God to which we worship and witness. Carey exhorted us to 'Expect great things from God and to attempt great things for him', and in these

234 pages we are challenged and inspired to follow our forebears' examples, for our God does not change and what he has done he can do in this generation and the next.

For anyone who wants a clear discussion of Baptist beginnings in the seventeenth century, prefaced by its precursors in the sixteenth, you will find few more succinct and clear introductions than that presented here. And then the story is taken across Europe.

As I read I couldn't help but notice several things – others will note different ones. First, an essential for all Christ's disciples is that we must be prepared to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow wherever Christ leads us. This is faith in action, a faith that does, that perseveres whatever situation in which we find ourselves. Baptists are, as they always have been, mission-minded, and persecution frequently followed the establishment of Baptist churches, sometimes leading to exile and even death. But such events rarely deterred them, and we see also a strong emphasis, first expressed by Thomas Helwys, on religious freedom for all, freedom to worship, but also freedom to witness. Secondly, is the importance of the baptism of believers, an importance that is rarely reflected among present-day Baptists. In many of these countries baptism marked the decisive break with the old life and the beginning of the new. It was costly and deeply meaningful and part of the gospel that was

preached and lived. During the whole of his ministry, Kornya baptized around 11,000 people and Mihály Tóth some 5-6,000 (p. 142), while the Russian Baptist Andrey Evstranko baptized over 2,000 (p. 176). Thirdly, an important belief is the place of the church as the fellowship of believers. Following on from this is the fact that God calls and equips ordinary people. As Randall notes (p. 84), for example, 'In all the Nordic countries a network of Baptist communities came into existence from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, with individual congregations often being started through the work of ordinary people who came to Baptist beliefs', while still recognizing that 'significant wider leadership was also important'. Many of these Baptists were colporteurs and Bible women, and this fact reflects the central Baptist emphasis on the importance of the Bible, Bible study and the place of reading Christian literature as a part of the healthy Christian life. Here, too, present-day Baptists can learn from those who have gone before us. And there are also the emphases of prayer, preaching, and interdependence and one group of believers encouraging and supporting another.

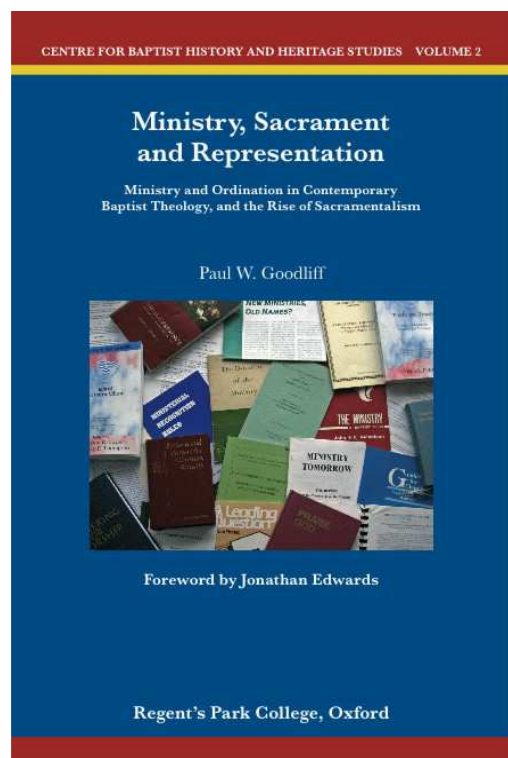
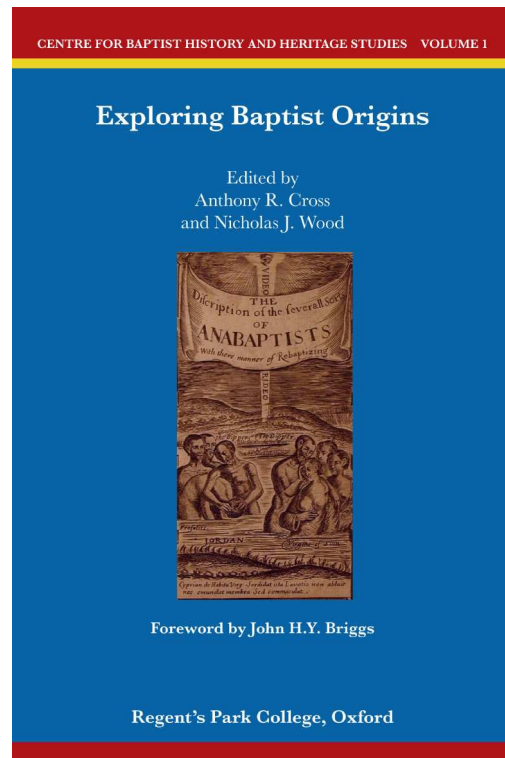
German Baptists played a central role in European Baptist history, which can hardly be overemphasized. But there was a down side. Randall notes (p. 157), 'The strength of the Germanic presence in various countries across Europe was ... a means by which significant Baptist mission was able to be undertaken,

although it was also a source of weakness since Baptist congregations were often seen as alien, to a large extent using a "foreign language" rather than being seen as being part of the national mosaic'. This is a necessary reminder that our calling in mission is to establish churches in the gospel and to enable them to grow and develop their own ministries, spirituality and theology. Our place is not to dominate or dictate, but to share as partners in the work of the gospel. It is important for indigenous churches to develop their own life and ways in Christ, and that a great strength of Baptist life – as it should be with all Christian life – is our unity in diversity.

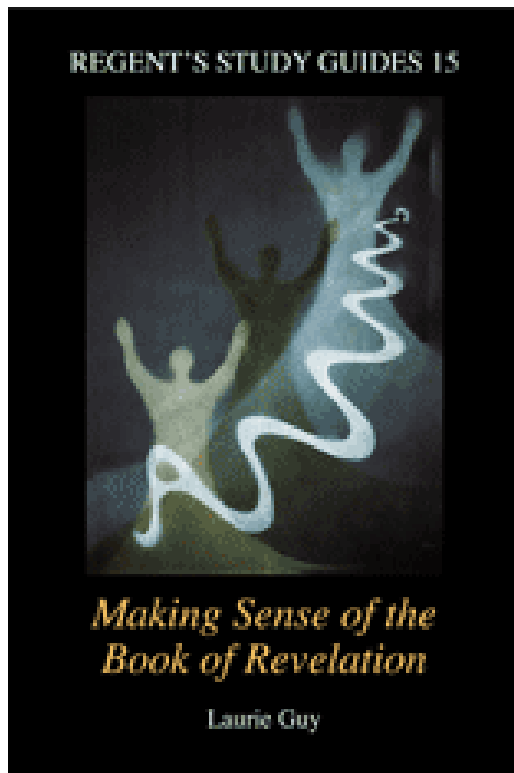
I hope this book will be read by many and there's no better way to close than to quote what the author says on Oncken (p. 101) who passed on the vision of the German Baptists: 'no other head but Christ and no other laws but the following of the New Testament ...' and that he 'tried to introduce the listeners to the big Missions plan of today, and to emphasise that every Christian has and must do something for the expansion of the Kingdom of God'.

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