

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_sbct-01.php

REVIEWS

Behold Your King! Meditations on the Death and Resurrection of Christ

Richard Holloway

SPCK, London, 1995; 120pp., £5.99; ISBN 0 281 04811 8

This is a series of profound and moving meditations on the death and resurrection of Christ by Richard Holloway, Bishop of Edinburgh. In his introduction, he says that to preach the cross is 'one of the most taxing and privileged responsibilities of the Christian minister'; he himself rarely accomplishes it without weeping. He explains how he feels that Jesus' death has become an ecclesiastical event taken over by the church, but that in fact Jesus belongs to the world, not the church. These meditations are designed therefore to help us think in a deep and meaningful way about the death and resurrection of Christ.

The book is divided into three parts. The first – The Actors – leads the reader into the thoughts and feelings of people who played a part in the events of Good Friday. Part Two focuses on the Seven Last Words of grace, comfort, compassion, fear, longing, triumph and ultimate freedom spoken by Christ on the Cross and leads us deep into the mind of Christ himself. In Part Three – The Aftershock – the reader is encouraged to contemplate the meaning of Christ's resurrection, to discern what it can tell us about the character of God and the way God would have us live as Christ's followers today.

Janet Watson, Glasgow Bible College

Christian Theology. An Introduction

Alister E. McGrath

Blackwell, Oxford, 1994; 510pp., £12.99; ISBN 0 631 16078 7

The teaching of Christian doctrine continues to exercise the ingenuity of academics and publishers alike. How do you give an accessible introduction to a subject that spans two millennia and engages with very kind of human culture and church life issue? Blackwells chose well in commissioning Alister McGrath in this latest, well-thought-out response to the challenge. The author demonstrates his now familiar gift of explaining theological issues in a style usually free of 'theologese'. Joined with a highly

SCOTTISH BULLETIN OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

competent grasp of the discipline, McGrath's work has done all that his publishers could reasonably ask. Thanks to him the publishers can on the whole justify their claim that the book avoids denominational bias, analyses every area and is suited for those training for ministry. For the greater part, they can also justify their claim that the three major sections, 'Landmark' (a historical account), 'Sources and Methods' and 'Christian Theology' (a traditional theme-based section), provide a sound pedagogical progression but that each chapter is a self-contained unit. The historical approach at the beginning will win the attention and sympathy of readers not yet clear on the importance of doctrine, and will ease them almost painlessly into the subject. Each chapter has a valuable closing section indicating key names, themes, words and phrases together with questions for revision and further study.

It is no criticism of the excellent writing of McGrath to say that the experiment is not a complete success. For the result is quite a long book, and the three-sections approach creates its own problems. For example, it proves impossible to avoid repetition. A typical example is found in the chapter on the patristic period when opting for a section on 'Key theologians' followed by one on 'Key Theological developments'. As it turns out the two simply cannot be disentangled. Equally, fragmentation can take place: the patristic treatment of Christology reappears in the thematic handling of Christology. A broad brush treatment of historical theology followed by a similar treatment of method and topics is doomed to this result. Of course, repetition is a sound principle of teaching, but how far should it be allowed in a book? To give just another example of the problems arising, should Cyprian and the Cappadocian Fathers fail to appear under 'Key theologians' and only make their entry in the thematic handling of 'Church' and 'Trinity'?

This question of structure is the man flaw (if that is a fair word) of the book. Other criticisms are simply those of individual preference. I found it slightly disconcerting to find no substantial treatment of the Definition of Chalcedon, but relatively generous space given to Harnack's view of patristic dogma (important as that is). The overall impression is of the sinking of boreholes at interesting points rather than a broad turning over of all the patch. This can leave a student vulnerable but can be defended in teaching terms. The result proves not that Blackwells were misguided but that the subject has formidable breadth and complexity. This is a bold, pioneering and progressive approach which deserves to succeed, and only writers of McGrath's stature can make as fine a job of it as here. The readability and reliability alone of the work

should guarantee it a place in every theological library where it should remind all teachers of Christian doctrine that their first task is to convince the next generation that the subject is absorbing, mainly accessible, and certainly indispensable. The publisher and author have certainly given us a lesson in achieving that.

Roy Kearsley, Glasgow Bible College

An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion

B.R. Tilghman

Blackwell, Oxford, 1994; 235pp., n.p.; ISBN 0 631 18938 6

Several introductions to the philosophy of religion have been produced over the last few years. Tilghman varies the routine in at least two ways. First, he seeks to introduce students to philosophy as well as to the philosophy of religion. Secondly, he selects a few key themes rather than trying to cover all the main ones. Before doing so, he traces the origins of philosophy and religion in an historical survey designed to give us our bearings. And after doing so, he concludes that the attempt to give evidence for belief in God, or any associated religious convictions, is altogether mistaken. Religion is a way of life in what philosophers will identify as a generally Wittgensteinian sense.

The result is a sustained assault on attempts to demonstrate the rationality of religious beliefs, according to the common understanding of rationality which links it with demonstration. In successive chapters, Tilghman discusses: 'The existence of God', 'The Bible, Truth, and History', 'Religion and Science', and 'Religion and Ethics'. God's existence cannot be proved. The Bible is not a convincing record of God's activity in the world. Scientific enquiry gives no evidence for religion. Religion cannot explain morality, nor does it provide us with a logical answer to the problem of evil. The author carries out his programme in a way that is largely negative and destructive, although it has a putatively positive effect of properly locating the role of religion in life.

If every philosopher of religion wrote as attractively as does Tilghman, the discipline would be well served. He is well able to harness expertise in the nature of argument to a winning and lively way of discussing the problems of philosophy of religion. His design of tracing the origins of philosophy and religion in the opening chapter is a particularly welcome feature of the book. However, for two reasons, this book cannot be recommended as an introduction.

SCOTTISH BULLETIN OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

First, by his selection of arguments to knock down, Tilghman gives the impression that no alternative forms of the arguments work. A good example is the discussion of Aquinas' cosmological arguments for the existence of God. There is no reference to, still less discussion of, the sophisticated contemporary presentations of cosmological arguments by, for example, Richard Swinburne or William Lane Craig. Indeed, throughout the book, Tilghman hardly ever engages with the best defences of the positions he attacks or the leading protagonists in the field. Indeed, he makes clear at the beginning that he does not intend to pursue all the possibilities. Nevertheless, the unwary student will come away with the conviction that the positions Tilghman attacks are patently indefensible. This is the result of a largely tendentious and irresponsible exercise.

Secondly, the author's treatment of the Bible, very important in the book, illustrates a mixture of ignorance, prejudice and snide contempt. He does not understand the Genesis narratives, claiming that Adam saw God, and failing to note the universal purpose of the covenant with Abraham. His attempt to answer the question 'Is the Bible true?' concentrates on the inerrancy of Gleason Archer's *Encyclopaedia of Biblical Difficulties* and dismisses the historicity of the Gospels with such statements as: 'The authors of the gospels cannot be understood to be ... historians in the modern sense. They would not have understood what it was to interview surviving witnesses...' *etc.*, and that the reports of the resurrection are inconsistent. There is no sign of digging deep here to understand what is going on and every sign of not wishing to dig deep elsewhere either: see the remarks on 'of one substance' (p. 37) and the bibliographical suggestions for further reading in theological ethics (p. 196). Students will come away thinking that they can easily dismiss much in the Christian tradition with a cursory knowledge of the Scriptures and an elementary logical move or two.

That is not to deny that some points are well made or that some points could not be so elaborated that they could be well made. It is to say that what we have is not good enough. Other textbooks in philosophy of religion (*e.g.* those of Brian Davies and William Abraham), whatever their weaknesses, continue to serve their purpose far better.

Stephen Williams, Union Theological College, Belfast

Image and Likeness: Religious Visions in American Film Classics

Edited by John R. May

Paulist Press, New York, 1992; 200pp., £14.95; ISBN 0 8091 3286 9

The Lumiere brothers' Cinematographe flickered into life in a Paris hotel basement in December 1895. But if, since then, it has been meat for reviewers, gossips, historians, and theorists, most theologians have been vegetarian. John R. May has been important in what limited critical theological reflection there has been. May's interests in literature are strongly present in his writing on film, and he shares T.S. Eliot's conviction that literature and film should be judged by Christian faith. So it is from a position within the Judeo-Christian framework that he and his collaborators look for religious 'visions' in American film classics.

Essentially a collection of shorter or longer religious film reviews, the book works around the thesis that in 'each of these films is an image of the religious sensibility of an American filmmaker, and thus a likeness of the transcendent in his vision'. Given the directors discussed, the working definition of 'religious' is necessarily broad, and concerns the questions which are 'most fundamental'. Interestingly the contributors avoid films explicitly dealing in faith or theological language. Their focus on a representative selection of the all-time-greats as well as films of note means there is much to interest the 'movie buff'.

The writers attempt 'a dialogue about lasting values in American films'. What they achieve is largely an intriguing set of analogical readings, addressing issues of concern to religious people. This leaves the extent to which they engage genuine cultural values, as distinct from offering religious interpretations of cultural tropes, open to question.

Neil Hurley's '*On the Waterfront* : rebirth of a "Contenduh"' is perhaps the most interesting here. Reviewing the 1954 Elia Kazan film, Hurley discusses the operation of the film's central characters, Father Barry and Terry Malloy, as 'Christ-figures'. Similarly, Charles B. Ketcham's essay, '*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* : a salvific drama of liberation', works with the central character, Randle P. McMurphy, as 'an analogue to the Jewish-Christian figure of the Suffering Servant'. While Harvold Hatt recognises that 'a film is not a theological treatise', his discussion of Hitchcock's *Notorious* makes connections with the secular analogues of the dynamics of contrition, confession, and satisfaction.

Concern with finding filmic analogues to religious themes

SCOTTISH BULLETIN OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

underwrites much of what Hurley first described as 'cinematic theology', and locates May's project both here and elsewhere. The weaknesses of this analogical approach lie, first, in its philosophical basis of liberal humanism and existentialism, which yields a certain predictability of focus on the human quest; and, secondly, in the general assumption of literary interpretive paradigms, reducing film to visual story. These weaknesses lead to shortsightedness about the already committed nature of analogy: it is necessary to believe first in order to see.

Steve Nolan, Manchester

Mozart. Traces of Transcendence

Hans Küng

SCM Press, London, 1993; 81pp. £6.95; ISBN 0 334 021790

In this unusual and attractive book Hans Küng once again writes with insight, wit and clarity about a subject outside his own. In an entertaining introduction he explains that he wishes to advocate a middle ground between Barth's eulogies on Mozart's religious significance and Wolfgang Hildesheimer's sceptical minimising of it. Küng's claim to have a special contribution is simple: he is a Catholic and he thinks that Mozart was one too in the best Küngian sense. Mozart had indeed become disenchanted with the Catholic hierarchy but confidently clung to the Catholic faith of his youth, allying it to the insights of the Enlightenment.

In the exposition of this thesis many gems surface, of which one of the best is the author's claim to know that Barth dreamt that he was to examine Mozart in theology 'well aware that in no circumstances would Mozart be allowed to fail'. Küng playfully puts this down to Barth's suppression of Mozart's Catholic identity. The comment is not incidental: Küng will argue that Mozart was in his own way a theologian of direct Catholic piety and that he understood a theology of the heart which poor Protestants, even Barth, could not know. In a perfectly courteous and tongue-in-cheek style Küng seeks to break Barth's monopoly over a son of the church.

In fact Küng achieves a more serious purpose. Using his impressive knowledge of Mozart he argues cogently that, when composing church music, especially a mass, Mozart brought deep religious sensitivity to the task. Although there is no such thing as sacred, or secular, the music carries 'traces of transcendence' (of the title) and of mystery. Stoutly Protestant readers will search in vain for Catholic theology to which they can take exception in the analysis of Mozart's handling of the liturgy of the mass.

REVIEWS

Moreover, before Küng has finished, sceptics and Marxists are needing to take cover as he pits the deeply devout work of the composer against bankrupt radicalism.

A fascinating read for lovers of Mozart and friends (Bach and Haydn also get a favourable mention) and not short of the telling theological punch either.

Roy Kearsley, Glasgow Bible College

Listening to the God who Speaks

Klaus Bockmuehl

Helmets and Howard, Colorado Springs, 1990; 164pp., £6.50; ISBN 0 939443 18 X

Klaus Bockmuehl was, until his death in 1989, professor of theology and ethics at Regent College, Vancouver, Canada. In this book of 'reflections on God's guidance from Scripture and the lives of God's people', contemporary Christians are provided with access to some of the lesser-known gems of spiritual wisdom, from Augustine to Bernard of Clairvaux, to Francis of Assisi, as well as more familiar insights from the Reformation. All is rooted in exposition of the theme of divine guidance in Old and New Testaments, with the focus on listening as obedience.

Much has been written in recent years about the gift of prophecy in the NT and today (*e.g.*, W. Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy*, 1988; G. Houston, *Prophecy Now*, 1989; D. Pytches, *Prophecy in the Local Church*, 1993), all of which affirms the need to hear what God is saying to individuals and fellowships in the contemporary context, and to explore ways of evaluating such insights. In this book, Bockmuehl helps the reader to cultivate the skills of listening to God in the midst of a clamour of different voices which call for our attention in the modern world. He recognises the over-arching authority of Scripture as the supreme rule of faith and life, yet faces hard questions as to how that kind of direction may be assimilated in the real world. This is not a 'how to' book, and the author is critical of the activism which characterises much of Western middle-class Christianity. But he also warns against quietism and wants to encourage a spirituality which is both practical and relevant.

This book deserves to become one of the latter-day classics of Christian devotion, coming as it does as the last will and testament of an exponent of Christian spirituality who was concerned that the Christian faith should be lived out in moral as well as experiential terms. It provides a much-needed counter-balance to more shallow

SCOTTISH BULLETIN OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

treatments of a devotional nature which often lack the biblical and historical depths sounded in the relatively few pages of this work.

Graham Houston, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh

The Word To Set You Free. Living Faith and Biblical Criticism

David Brown

SPCK, London, 1995; xiii + 193pp., £9.99; ISBN 0 281 04806 1

This volume is a series of short meditations (thirty-six in all) based on sermons preached by the author. The collection represents an attempt to bridge the gap between the critical study of the Bible and the preaching of the good news. Brown notes that ministers and pastors often feel perplexed how to relate the discoveries of biblical criticism, with which they had become acquainted in their training, to congregations of ordinary believers. Many times they are caught in an internal tension, thinking one thing in the study and presenting quite another from the pulpit. On becoming a clergyman, Brown determined that study and pulpit should be fully integrated in his ministry. These meditations are efforts to fulfil that aim. In each he endeavours to bring out the spiritual significance of biblical texts through a critical reading of them.

The meditations are grouped under three main headings. In Part One, *The Revealer at Work*, the author tries to 'make more palatable the notion of a fallible Bible' and 'help the reader to view this fact as part of the wonderful generosity and providential love of God'. Part Two, *Gospel Anticipations*, contains meditations on Old Testament texts, highlighting strategic points in the history of Israel. Part Three, *Gospel Hidden Treasure*, takes the reader through the life of Christ. The Conclusion, *Spreading the Gospel*, deals with Ascension and Pentecost. Brown has included a Scripture and a subject index.

The individual and collective value of these meditations will have to be judged by the reader. Most subscribers to *SBET* will be unhappy with the view of Scripture with which Brown operates (though the author says he is strongly committed to orthodox Christianity). The applications and reflections which he offers are, in my view, sometimes insightful but never profound. This book represents an interesting and useful exercise, but one whose results are, for this reviewer, disappointing.

Edward Adams, King's College, London

The Hidden Voice. Christian Women and Social Change

Edited by Lavinia Byrne

London, SPCK, 1995; 181pp., £12.99; ISBN 0 281048 436

This is the final volume in a trilogy written by Lavinia Byrne. It continues the theme of 'hiddenness' from her previous book *The Hidden Journey*. Here the material is divided into two categories which Lavinia Byrne labels as either 'integrated' or 'refused', and which she considers show a subtle rejection of women's contribution to the genre. She describes the 'integrated' literature as mainstream. As an example she argues that women wrote hymns which were incorporated into hymn books but that nothing was made of the fact that women had written them and that therefore they had a distinction all their own. Similarly, Byrne highlights the fact that the writings of women educators who realised the urgent need for women to be educated were simply assimilated into the tradition and ignored because what they were suggesting would disrupt the social order. However, where women preachers and social purity and suffrage campaigners were concerned Byrne shows that their work was simply refused. Nothing has been written about them. Thus, works tracing the lives and thoughts of, for instance, Edith Picton-Turberville, Dorothea Hosie, Josephine Butler, Frances Willard, Mary Townsend and Mary Sumner are rare or non-existent, despite their impact on the society of their day.

Lavinia Byrne is concerned to highlight the fact that the women whose primary sources she has reproduced and on which she is commenting, wanted to change women's aspirations and that their voices called for a change in women's service and status both inside and outside the church. She acknowledges the fact that nowadays this voice is both public and authoritative and that it was thanks to these women who were prepared to brave stigmatism and rejection that women's role is now acknowledged. This book contains a wealth of material which would be of great use to anybody tempted to research the subject further. I found it fascinating because of the glimpses of experiences hidden behind the lines, encouraging when one considers the recognition that has now been achieved for women both inside and outside the church, but at the same time sad that women still have a long way to go in this struggle.

Janet L. Watson, Glasgow Bible College

**The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans
3.21-26**

Douglas A. Campbell

JSNT Supplement Series 65; JSOT Press, Sheffield,
1992; 272pp., £35; ISBN 1 85075 294 X

In this revision of his doctoral thesis, Douglas Campbell offers a detailed and fascinating analysis of Romans 3:21-26, utilizing rhetorical theory and insights from linguistics. He contends that the doctrine of justification by faith in its traditional sense is not as strongly supported by this passage as is usually thought.

There are four main chapters and an Introduction and Conclusion (and four appendices). In Chapter One, Campbell reviews and critiques previous attempts to interpret the text and to resolve the various exegetical issues relating to it. In the second chapter, he subjects the passage to rhetorical analysis. Chapter Three analyses the key atonement words in Romans 3:24-25, *apolutrosis*, *hilasterion* and *haima*. Campbell argues that the basic notion conveyed by this cluster of terms is that of an atoning death (on the analogy of the ritual of the Day of Atonement): Christ's death is a sacrifice for sin, an act of substitution (but not necessarily penal substitution) effecting a deliverance from sin. Chapter Four examines the righteousness and justification terminology of the passage. The Conclusion draws the various strands of the argument together and proposes a new reading of the text. Campbell claims that Romans 3:21-26 'makes the essentially simple point that Christ, and above all his death, is the definitive eschatological revelation of the saving righteousness of God'.

The author accepts the subjective genitive interpretation of the phrase *pistis Iesou Christou* in Romans 3:22 (which is becoming increasingly popular), rather than the traditional objective genitive view. That is to say, he takes the phrase as a reference not to the believer's faith in Christ, but to Christ's own faithfulness in going to the cross. Campbell, though, takes the subjective view further than most of its advocates and argues, on rhetorical grounds, that in all three of its occurrences in Romans 3:21-26, *pistis* refers to the obedience of Christ.

The book is a highly technical and specialized one which makes no small demands of the reader (a knowledge of Greek is required to follow the argument) but is well worth the effort of grappling with. While I fail to be fully persuaded by Campbell's argument, this is clearly a landmark study of Romans 3:21-26 with which subsequent discussion of the passage and its theology must engage.

Edward Adams, King's College, London

The Divided Self: Closing the Gap Between Belief and Behaviour

Marlene Cohen

Marshall Pickering, London, 1996; 254pp., £8.99; ISBN 0 551 02963 3

This latest volume in a series of handbooks of pastoral care is intended as a self-pastoring resource for all those with pastoral responsibilities. The author, Marlene Cohen (who is also series editor for these handbooks), is well qualified to help us in the area of pastoral counselling, and draws on thirty years of pastoral experience in three continents. The book could be described as an expansion of the quotation that 'a pastor's activity in gaining self-understanding is more important for spiritual leadership than expertise of all kinds'. So Marlene Cohen addresses some of the gaps frequently left in theological training in a fresh and contemporary way, drawing on a wide range of case studies. The book is primarily intended for individual reading but also makes provision for group study. This leads to a slightly confusing double structure in the book, with fourteen sessions for group use being divided between five chapters. There is no index, but a lengthy bibliography and a guide for group study are included.

Marlene Cohen gives detailed attention to the pastor's own inner complexities, which play a significant part in any pastoral encounter. These may be known and recognised aspects of our make-up or unknown and internalised influences. So this book analyses and explores the unofficial belief system that co-exists with our publicly owned beliefs and affects our patterns of behaviour. This analysis of our inner belief network, or 'personal pudding' as the author engagingly labels it, provides the strongest component of the book. We would all benefit from reflection on why we behave as we do and this resource probes our lack of self-understanding in a number of areas and also exposes our often sketchy knowledge of why others behave as they do. The final chapter on integration and integrity suggests ways in which we might tackle our own dysfunction as pastors, and encourages us to do a defining work on ourselves. The author offers her own guidelines for good pastoring and suggests in note form a number of ways of exploring the process of integration.

Inevitably in a small volume there is a good deal that is given only cursory treatment. I would have liked a little more clarity in the discussion of the 'splits' and 'gaps' in our personalities and how we may 'close the gaps' in practice. There are some generalised references to preaching and teaching which cry out for more detailed treatment. In the biblical sections I would have liked

SCOTTISH BULLETIN OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

to see fewer references more fully explained, and I am not sure what the author means by 'teaching a theology conductive[sic] to combating personal dysfunction'.

Having said that, there is a great deal of fresh insight and analysis which will be helpful to all of us in pastoral situations. We need the challenge to 'put ourselves out to pasture' from time to time and to face the complexities of our own personalities. I warmly recommend this book as an aid to that process.

Brian S. Ringrose, Edinburgh

Liberating Paul. The Justice of God and the Politics of the Apostle

Neil Elliott

Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY, 1994; xi + 308pp., \$18.95; ISBN 0 88344 981 1

This book is part of a series entitled the 'Bible and Liberation Series' (edited by N.K. Gottwald and R.A. Horsley), the aim of which is to bring to light the social struggles behind the biblical texts and to explore ways in which a 'liberated Bible' may offer resources in 'the contemporary struggle for a more human world'. Neil Elliott, an established Pauline scholar, sets out to liberate Paul from the service of oppression and domination into which, according to Elliott, he has for centuries been pressed, and to reinstate him as the apostle of liberation.

Paul has usually been interpreted as a social and political conservative, a supporter of the status quo. His legacy has often been used to justify and maintain various forms of oppression, *e.g.* to legitimate slavery, to silence women. But this understanding of Paul and this use of his teaching, Elliott claims, are a misunderstanding and a misuse. The apostle was much more radical than has been traditionally assumed and his message is much more liberating and challenging than we have been led to believe. Elliott argues that our understanding of Paul has been skewed by the existence of pseudepigraphal writings in the Pauline corpus. Most of the problem texts, he contends, belong to letters and passages falsely attributed to the apostle (*e.g.* 1 Cor. 14:34-5; 1 Thess. 2:14-16; 1 Tim. 2:11-15). Though commonly viewed as heirs or interpreters of Paul, the writers of the pseudepigraphal works are as much saboteurs as they are disciples. The pseudo-Paulines represent a betrayal and suppression of Paul's legacy. Their presence in the canon continues to contaminate the way the genuine letters are read. Excised from this corrupting influence, a

rather different picture of Paul emerges: an apostle with a liberative vision and praxis.

The book falls into two parts. The first, *Paul in the Service of Death*, deals with the misinterpretation and misapplication of Paul and his canonical betrayal. The second, *From Death to Life*, examines Paul's theology and practice from a political perspective, focusing on his theology of the cross, his apocalyptic outlook and his evangelistic and pastoral work as an apostle.

This is a passionately written book, containing many important insights. I agree with aspects of Elliott's critique of the common understanding of Paul as a social conservative, but I am not convinced by the picture of Paul as a liberation theologian he strives to set in its place. Elliott's Paul may well be more politically correct than some other images of Paul in circulation, but is he any less a scholarly construct? This book will both stimulate and provoke, and it will undoubtedly generate much discussion.

Edward Adams, King's College, London

Grace and Gratitude: The Eucharistic Theology of John Calvin

B.A. Gerrish

T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1993; 210pp., £12.50; ISBN 0 567 29233 9

This suggestive and sympathetic study originated in the Cunningham Lectures delivered in New College, Edinburgh in 1990. Its starting-point is Charles Hodge's inability in the mid-nineteenth century to stomach Calvin's catholicizing doctrine of the Lord's supper as expounded by J.W. Nevin. In the circumstances of the Lectureship, it is surprising - or perhaps a signal act of *pietas* - that the author, who teaches historical theology in the University of Chicago, fails to mention William Cunningham's similarly low estimate of Calvin's doctrine of the supper: 'perhaps the greatest blot in the history of Calvin's labours as a public instructor'.

But only two of the book's six chapters are devoted to Calvin's theology of the eucharist, which is set in the context of a comprehensive interpretation of the Reformer's thought that focuses on the fatherly generosity of God as the fount of all good things and the response of gratitude as the sum of true piety. For Calvin, father, here often without an initial capital, is more a characterisation of God than a name. To it belong the images of the church as God's family, of the faithful as his sons and

SCOTTISH BULLETIN OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

daughters, of baptism (to which a whole chapter is devoted) as the symbol of adoption, and of Christ as the heir, for us, of all God's goodness. The outcome is a wonderfully attractive exposition of Calvin's theology, which will be an eye-opener to those reared on caricatures of the dogmatic fatalism of the Genevan despot.

Not that Gerrish avoids the offence of Calvin's predestinarianism. 'Free adoption is the citadel of Calvin's faith; double predestination is a defensive outwork' - which had the effect of damaging the whole edifice. I doubt whether this can remain a wholly satisfactory account - in respect of either the ancillary role of predestination (too much is made to rest on the mere sequence of the 1559 *Institutes*) or, on this interpretation, Calvin's failure to discern its disastrous implications for the heart of his teaching ('he risked making humans more benevolent than God'). Nevertheless this is a powerful corrective to many presentations of Calvin, grounded in a lifetime's study of the Reformer and the Reformed tradition. The case is built up with abundant quotations that display a rare sensitivity in translation, and in continuing comparison with Zwingli, Luther and Bullinger - but never Bucer, remarkably enough.

Gerrish discerns the distinctiveness of Calvin's view of the supper in what he calls symbolic instrumentalism: the reality that the signs point to does not merely simultaneously accompany the signs (symbolic parallelism) but is given (through the Spirit and received only by faith, to be sure) by and with the signs. What is this reality? Nothing less than the whole Christ, not merely his benefits, or his divinity separated from his humanity. More specifically, it is his body and blood, given once for all for us on the cross and, on the basis of that one sacrifice, given ever anew for our lifelong nourishment. In a concluding attempt to clarify what Calvin means by this true partaking of Christ's flesh (which is not an oral partaking), since Christ's risen and glorified body is in a single place in heaven, Gerrish argues that it is communion in its power or influence or efficacy through the radiance of the Spirit.

I would be surprised if the readership of this *Bulletin* were unanimously persuaded that Gerrish has drawn the sting of Hodge's and Cunningham's bewilderment. In the last resort Calvin's teaching retains an elusiveness not shared by the gross simplicities of Zwingli and of Luther. But this volume is a contribution of the first importance which no student of Calvin or the Reformed doctrine of the supper dare ignore.

David F. Wright, New College, University of Edinburgh

Paths of African Theology

Edited by Rosino Gibellini

Orbis Books, Maryknoll, 1994; 202pp., n.p.; ISBN 0 88344 974 9

'African theologians wonder ... and make some proposals.' According to the editor that sums up this collection of essays. He is in a position to write with such confidence because of the emergence over the last two decades of African theologians of considerable stature, a number of whom contribute here. The thread tying all the papers together is a concern for an 'African theology' or 'theology of adaptation', as opposed to the 'mission theology' of European ecclesiastical colonisation often spoken of today. However, the editor reassures us that the work and accomplishments of the missionaries are not here on trial. He is true to his word, even though he gives an uncomfortable but telling account of the alliance of mission and colonisation. He is able to put steel into the complaint with a quotation from Hans Küng lamenting the fact that the gospel that became Greek has never become African, Arab or Asian.

It is no coincidence that seven of the eleven contributors are Catholic theologians. Undoubtedly much of what is written is a reaction to the hierarchy. A. Ngingu Mushete believes that the time has gone for an immutable model of Christianity, whether that of Western theology or Eastern Orthodoxy. In an overview of African Christianity he charts the march of diversity even within Africa. John Mbiti, long established as a foremost African theologian, writes with customary sureness on issues of interest beyond Africa: oral tradition, time, community and nature. Justin Ukpong explores the question of inculturation and takes the controversial and unconvincing line that since the gospel was embedded in Jewish culture it must be equally carried out from within each culture today. The matter seems more complex than this. Jewish culture, to the Christian, is more charged with the history of revelation than any other (including Western modernity and post-modernity!). Equally, Ukpong's method, if taken at surface value, would produce a series of unconnected and non-communicating Christian cultures. Rather Christian theology feeds on interaction and mutual learning between inculturated theologies.

Charles Nyamiti, an acute observer of the tension between inculturation and liberation models for Africa, writes refreshingly yet again on theology and the African tradition. F. Kabasele Lumbala carries the battle into liturgy. Again one wonders if such an equal and opposite reaction to Western imposition really *is* the best route. Elochukwu Uzukwu visits the same territory but

SCOTTISH BULLETIN OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

succeeds in touching on issues of more global interest. Patrick Kalilombe writes thoughtfully and constructively on African spirituality, but is it not a bit far fetched to blame African totalitarianism on Western models of spirituality?

African women are now beginning to be heard in theology, after much feeling of exclusion. Foremost amongst them is Mercy Amba Oduyoye. There is ground-breaking stuff in it, much of it applicable to the global aspects of theology and gender, including the evocative comment which has other applications: 'we cannot ascribe the cross to one half of humanity and the resurrection to the other half! To give the book balance, three articles around the theme of liberation by Jean-Marc Ela, Engelbert Mveng and Simon S. Maimela, each in their own way show that liberation is still an issue in post-apartheid Africa. Maimela's paper is a disturbing reflection on white racism ... and disturbed we should be. Anyone from the West who is interested in Africa, or who is working there, would find plenty to think about in this worthy adornment of the Orbis portfolio.

Roy Kearsley, Glasgow Bible College

The New Testament in Fiction and Film: On Reversing the Hermeneutical Flow

Larry J. Kreitzer

JSOT Press, Sheffield, 1993; 168pp., £10.50; ISBN 1 85075 364 4

The title of Kreitzer's book is full of post-structural promise, and perhaps because of this it both excites and disappoints. It excites in that Kreitzer is refreshingly prepared to appropriate insights from popular culture for the interpretation of biblical texts. In this way he works to re-democratise biblical interpretation. But not only so. Kreitzer contends that there can be a '[reversing] of the flow of influence within the hermeneutical process', in such a way as to allow us to re-examine 'NT passages or themes in the light of some of the enduring expressions of our own culture, namely great literary works and their film adaptation'.

Kreitzer explores his thesis in five essays, moving from literary text to film adaptation to biblical text and back again, making connections and trawling for insight. Sadly, this is where he disappoints. Typical of his results is his essay '*Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* : Re-reading the Pauline model of the duality of human nature'. After impressively detailed consideration of the dark side of human nature personified in Mr Hyde, and read by some as sexual immorality, Kreitzer concludes: 'Is it too much to suggest that the

words in Romans 7, although they almost certainly will not bear the interpretive weight of sexuality sometimes thrown upon them, nonetheless do so speak to us of moral struggles that characterised not only the apostle's life, but ours as well?'

One reason for such unremarkable insight is the method of analysis. Kreitzer suggests a reader-response approach to the texts, moving from 'facets of our cultural heritage, and then [applying] it to our understanding of the NT materials'. Instead, his careful investigation of sources and nuances of adaptation is a NT scholar's redaction-critical preoccupation with authorial intention. Indeed Kreitzer appears innocent of the literary or film theory which would significantly deepen both his analysis and his insight. Apart from Halliwell we look in vain for film critics, and literary theorists are equally hard to find.

Even so, Kreitzer is certainly on to something. His strength lies in his detailing the way that fiction and film inform the process of interpretation. He manages to demonstrate how, for example, Wyler's film *Ben Hur* interprets Wallace's novel. This parallel may 'provide a helpful doorway through which to enter the hermeneutical arena of NT studies'.

There is important work to be done on the relation of contemporary culture to contemporary faith generally, and to the shape of biblical interpretation in particular. However, such work requires a theoretical base capable of more incisive analysis than that allowed by biblical interpretation alone. Such a base must draw extensively on cultural analysis, informed by semiotics, psychoanalysis, gender studies, *etc.* This will then yield a place from which deeper reflection on both text and tradition can be attempted.

Steve Nolan, Manchester

Science and the New Age Challenge

Ernest Lucas

Apollos, Leicester, 1996; 190pp., £10.99; ISBN 0 85111 440 7

This is an excellent book, not just for those who are interested in the New Age movement, but for all who are looking to deepen their understanding of the biblical world-view in our modern age. It is a non-technical, profound, fair and very clear exposition of the main issues. My only criticism is that the title itself does not reflect the breadth of the author's treatment of various alternative ways of understanding the cosmos in an age of ever-advancing scientific understanding of what the universe is, and what our place in it might be.

SCOTTISH BULLETIN OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

The main thrust of the book is to show very convincingly how New Agers have misused the baffling discoveries of modern science to advance their own metaphysics. However, in successfully making his case, Ernest Lucas also introduces the reader to the inherent mysteries of relativity, quantum theory and the nature of life which, as science progresses, become more and more awe-inspiring as the old materialist, reductionist and mechanistic view of the universe breaks down.

From the position of a highly qualified scientist and biblical scholar, Ernest Lucas gives us very good surveys and criticisms of Eastern mysticism, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Sheldrake (morphic fields to explain the genesis and behaviour of living things), Lovelock (the Gaia hypothesis and mother earth), the modern ecology movement, and process theology.

He does not deny the mysterious interconnectedness of things across the bounds of space and time, but expounds it in the context of a Trinitarian God who, although transcendent, is also immanent in his creation which he loves and for which Christ came, died and rose again. That alone, the author believes, gives us a sound basis for scientific investigation of the universe and caring for our planet as we love and cherish that which its Creator and Redeemer loves and cherishes.

The notes, bibliography and index are good, full and helpful.

*Howard Taylor, St. David's Knightswood, Church of Scotland,
Glasgow*

James

Thomas Manton, edited by Alister McGrath and J.I. Packer

Crossway Books, Nottingham, 1995; 365pp., n.p.;
ISBN 1 85684 116 2

For those who are more accustomed to modern commentaries, reading Manton (1620-77) is like stepping into another world. Manton's 'sermons formed the basis of his published commentaries'. In this respect, the preacher is likely to come away from Manton with much profit, and not with the criticism so often voiced of twentieth-century commentaries – 'too academic'. It should be said that Manton preached longer sermons and a lot more of them on James than we would today. This means that consulting Manton on any particular passage will involve quite a bit of reading (*e.g.* 114 pages on Chapter 1).

Comparing this kind of commentary (even in this abridgement) with modern commentaries requires balance. We would be missing a great deal if, in our concern with being up to date, we were never

to read the older commentaries at all. If, on the other hand, we were to read nothing but the Puritans, we might have great difficulty in adapting to the fact that we are living in the late twentieth century and not the seventeenth.

Those who have become rather disillusioned with the lack of real, practical application in many modern commentaries will warm to the publishers' commendation: 'In the realm of practical exposition promoting godliness, the old is often better than the new.' J.I. Packer, author of so many introductions to books, describes this one as 'the Mount Everest among expositions of the letter, both ancient and modern'. Here he endorses the opinions of J.C. Ryle – Manton 'is easily the foremost among the divines of the Puritan school' – and C.H. Spurgeon – Manton's work is 'consistently excellent'. In Manton's *James* there are spiritual gems, waiting for those who are prepared to take the time and make the effort involved in digging deeply for them. With his vast knowledge of Scripture and his keen eye for spiritual truth in fairly obscure passages, he will bring out lessons rarely found in many other commentaries which tend to say not much more than the fairly obvious.

Charles M. Cameron, Burnside Presbyterian Church, Portstewart

Judgment and Promise: An Interpretation of the Book of Jeremiah

J.G. McConville

Apollos, Leicester; 1993; 208pp., n.p.; ISBN 0 851114 318

McConville categorises scholars into those who regard the book of Jeremiah as containing Deuteronomistic material or as resulting from Deuteronomistic editing, and those who ascribe much or all of the book to the activity of the prophet himself. He seeks to provide an alternative to the common assumption of dependence upon the Deuteronomistic History (DtH). Towards this end, he considers the two main criteria which scholars use to discern its Deuteronomistic character – style and theology. He rightly underlines the inadequacy of style as a criterion since stylistic similarities may be explained in a variety of ways. Regarding theology he accepts that Jeremiah and the DtH share a covenantal theology, but notes also a number of clear differences between theological concerns of the two works. In contrast to the Deuteronomistic dependence theory, McConville seeks to show that the canonical arrangement of the book is not haphazard, but can be understood as the result of a coherent authorial / redactional

SCOTTISH BULLETIN OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

purpose. He also seeks to show that Jeremiah is dependent upon Deuteronomy and upon a joint prophetic tradition, particularly Hosea but also including the Southern prophets (Micah, Amos and Isaiah), rather than upon DtH.

McConville identifies the theology of the new covenant as governing the organisation of all the material in a more or less thoroughgoing way. The book moves from prophecies of judgment through which the people's inability to respond is affirmed to the need for a redemptive act from Yahweh. The various component parts of the book are seen as contributing in a variety of ways to developing this theme of divine and human action. McConville argues that this governing concept not only harnesses the diverse material of the book, but also can be used to shed light on the complexity of the structure of the book itself, so that the diversity within the book does not necessarily point to diversity of authorship. McConville recognises the diversity as the result of the book being produced over a large time-span, but also argues for a unity that is the result of an intentional ordering / redacting of the material. He is, however, unconvinced that one can reconstruct the details of the process of development. Nevertheless, he sees the growth of the book as having occurred during the lifetime of the prophet, and quite possibly in the context of the prophet's own ministry.

McConville's work represents a stimulating examination of the theological themes and purposes of the book in its canonical form. In my opinion, he is generally successful in providing a viable alternative explanation for the diversity of material in Jeremiah, and for its theological coherence. Although his suggestion that one cannot reliably reconstruct the process by which it was brought to its current shape makes good sense, his choice not to demonstrate the viability of possible processes by which Jeremiah could have been substantially responsible for the final form of the book weakens his case. This book is recommended for its contribution to our understanding of both the theology and composition of Jeremiah.

Edward D. Herbert, Glasgow Bible College

1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians

Charles Hodge, edited by Alister McGrath and J.I. Packer

Crossway Books, Nottingham, 1995; 320 and 240pp.,
£9.99 and £8.99; ISBN 1 85684 124 3, 1 85684 125 1

The Crossway Classic Commentaries introduce themselves as original works by godly writers, tailored for the understanding of today's reader. The intention of the series is to make available to a new generation some of the most valuable Bible commentaries written over the last five hundred years. While seeking never to change any thoughts of the original authors, the editors' task has been to adapt the originals so as to achieve maximum understanding and usefulness among a wide range of modern readers – lay Christians, students and ministers. The adaptation depends to some extent on the level at which the originals were written and involves abridgement, simplification of style and the removal of foreign words and Latin and Greek quotations, although references to the significance of Greek words and phrases are retained. The Scripture version used is the NIV. However, where the NIV rendering does not harmonise with the original author's comment, that is dealt with. These various adaptations make for a very readable text matched by clear type and good layout. It will perhaps be interesting to give some examples of modifications in the volumes under review.

Comments in the original may be left out as unnecessary. Dealing with the second part of 1 Cor. 1:26 Hodge felt it necessary to comment on the fact that in the Greek there is no verb to go with 'wise', 'mighty', 'noble' and therefore to suggest verbs that could be supplied. In this Commentary based on the NIV which reads 'Not many of you were wise by human standards', *etc.* there is no need for this kind of comment.

The KJ and the NIV both translate 1 Cor. 1:27 'But God hath chosen (chose, NIV) the foolish things of the world' to be the 'foolish portion of mankind'. The Crossway edition reproduces the explanation verbatim but sees no need to include Hodge's original note about it being possible for the Greek neuter plural to refer to persons rather than things.

The first part of Hodge's comment on 2 Cor. 5:21 is complicated and unclear. It contains some questionable references to Greek grammar. The Crossway editors omit the first part of the comment and take up again with Hodge at the point where he says 'the thing asserted here that Christ was without sin... the indispensable condition of his being made sin for us'. The editors have not deprived us by their abridgement.

SCOTTISH BULLETIN OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

Unfamiliar or outmoded words or phrases are replaced. For example in 2 Cor. 5:17 Hodge's 'analogous' is changed to 'similar' and in the same verse 'has wrought' becomes 'has made'.

More surprising is the omission of Hodge's comment on the phrase 'The love of Christ' in 2 Cor. 5:14. Hodge has stated quite definitely that here the phrase means Christ's love for us, not our love for him. The editors may have other views but by this omission have failed to present Hodge's understanding.

Although Greek words have been eliminated, not all reference to the Greek text is abandoned. On the phrase in 2 Cor. 5:14 translated in the KJ 'if one died for all, then were all dead', Hodge on the basis of Greek grammar and syntax argued for 'all died', which is in fact reflected in the NIV. With reference to the Greek Hodge also argued for 'in the place of' as the proper understanding of 'for' in this phrase. In both instances the Crossway editors without using Greek words have faithfully presented Hodge's argument based on the Greek.

Since spiritual vision and authority based on an accurate handling of the biblical text are the qualities that the publishers looked for, it is not surprising that Hodge was chosen as the commentator on the Corinthian Epistles. Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones said that 'One always turns to Hodge's commentaries with great confidence, for in him there is a perfect blending of theology, scholarship and devotional spirit which are the prime requisites of a commentary.' But Hodge is not flawless. Exegetical weaknesses show from time to time: for example, in his treatment of 2 Cor. 5:1-11. In using him, as indeed all good commentaries of his era and earlier, we require, as Don Carson has pointed out, to make allowance for a considerable improvement in the grasp of Hellenistic Greek over the last hundred years. Such improvement Hodge himself would gladly have made use of had he been writing today.

A.C. Boyd, Free Church College, Edinburgh

Galatians: Paul's Charter of Christian Freedom

Leon Morris

IVP, Leicester, 1996; 191pp., £14.99; ISBN 0 85110 658 7

Paul's letter to the Galatians is a foundational document for contemporary theology. This new volume on Galatians by the seasoned and dependable Australian scholar, Leon Morris, is therefore to be warmly welcomed. Some, like the present reviewer,

may read the title and have their appetites whetted at the prospect of a monograph on this storm-centre of Pauline studies written by a scholar who is not convinced by the 'new perspective on Paul' of J.D.G. Dunn and others. Unfortunately, this is not what Morris offers us (perhaps next time!). In fact this volume, despite its title and appearance, is a standard verse-by-verse commentary on the letter, similar to the commentaries on Matthew and Romans which Morris has already written for IVP in the 'Pillar Series'.

Morris makes it plain that the commentary is written for the 'general reader' rather than the 'specialist'. There is, therefore, very little in the way of technical discussion or scholarly debate. Numerous footnotes refer to selected scholarly works, but these do not give more than a first taste of the issues at stake. Most of the secondary works cited are commentaries, but there are also a few references to more recent monographs and journal articles. This may make the commentary less suitable for students who are looking for detailed interaction with contemporary secondary literature, but it does mean that the commentary has an uncluttered feel, allowing the reader to hear the text speak.

Readers of this *Bulletin* who appreciate the significance of Galatians for understanding not only the first-century church but also the course of the Reformation will be pleased to see numerous quotations from Luther and Calvin, as well as from more recent commentators.

Those who are already familiar with Morris' writings will recognise his strengths of paying meticulous attention to the meaning of Greek words and of clearly presenting the thought of the apostle in straightforward English. These strengths are combined in the author's own translation of the biblical text. Though the result may not always be particularly elegant, it helps to illustrate the decisions Morris takes in the body of the commentary. Those who require a commentary for preaching or leading Bible studies will find Morris' comments very helpful, and it is perhaps fitting that the two warm commendations on the book's dust-jacket come from men who are known primarily as preachers and expositors.

The lack of indices is disappointing but, given that this book is not designed as a scholar's tool, this is understandable.

Alistair I. Wilson, Highland Theological Institute, Elgin

God and the Mind Machine

John Puddefoot

SPCK, London, 1996; 140pp., £7.99; ISBN 0 281 04973 4

John Puddefoot is Head of Mathematics and an Honorary Chaplain at Eton College. The subject of his book is one that is at the forefront of philosophical-scientific-theological debate and this reviewer expects the discussion to grow in significance for a long time to come – outliving the debate about the big-bang, evolution and origins. As well as theoretical questions, it raises many ethical and practical matters. It is thus very important that theologians should be familiar with the many very profound issues involved.

The sub-title of the book reads 'Computers, Artificial Intelligence and the Human Soul'. The central issue running through it is whether or not computers will ever be conscious as the high animals clearly are, and whether they will ever be self-aware – able to reflect on their own existence – as clearly human beings are. Each normal human being knows what it is from within himself to look out of himself to the outside world. For others to know me they must know something of what it feels like to me to relate to the world beyond me. Clearly we can know computers from the outside, examining how they work, but we cannot enter into the world of a computer to feel what a computer feels. Most of us would believe that a computer does not feel anything and never will be a conscious being. However there are those in the Artificial Intelligence community who believe that there is nothing in principle that would stop us one day from making self-aware computers or robots. If one takes a strictly materialist view of reality (there is nothing but atoms) then self-awareness must be the product of purely physical processes in the universe and so self-awareness must be amenable to manufacture by future generations of scientists. On this view the mind is simply another word for brain which is merely a very complex computer.

Puddefoot shows how much of this debate is confused by the 'sliding definition ploy' of some writers who use words such as 'intelligence', 'brain', 'machine' and 'mind' in different ways depending where they are in their discussion. He takes us through the many scientific, philosophical and theological issues that surround this subject, warning us that we must not be too dismissive of capabilities of computers of the future (*e.g.* to provide creative solutions to human problems, to give companionship to the lonely). However, he doubts that self-aware personhood can ever be manufactured by human beings. His

REVIEWS

theological reflections on creation and incarnation are certainly interesting. For example, he believes that the incarnation was necessary for God to know human beings from the inside. He does not believe in a brain-mind dualism, but believes that mind emerges from the brain but cannot be reduced to the physical processes of the brain.

I wish John Puddefoot could have dealt more with what others have written on this subject. The very important works by Roger Penrose, Francis Crick and Keith Ward (taking very different views) are hardly mentioned. The style is a little disconcerting. One moves through the book from passages which are very closely argued to other parts which are written with a chatty manner of expression with semi-humorous asides (not always relevant to the case being made).

Nevertheless we must be grateful to the author for helpfully highlighting many of the issues that will be debated in the years to come. He has obviously thought deeply about his subject and so many of his own reflections are profound and a real challenge to both materialists and Christians who have not yet taken the issues seriously enough.

*Howard Taylor, St. David's Knightswood, Church of Scotland,
Glasgow*

Understanding Paul's Ethics. Twentieth-Century Approaches

Edited by Brian Rosner

Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI / Paternoster, Carlisle,
1995; xiii + 377pp., £14.99; ISBN 0 8028 0749 6 / 0
85364 618 X

This is a collection of important twentieth-century essays on Paul's ethics, brought together by a scholar with a wide knowledge of and interest in the field. The selection includes classic contributions from Adolf von Harnack, Edwin Judge, Gerd Theissen, Rudolf Bultmann, Eduard Lohse, Wolfgang Schrage and Richard Longenecker.

The volume is divided into seven parts corresponding to seven questions which the editor regards as crucial to the study of Paul's moral teaching: the origin, context, social dimension, shape, logic, foundations and relevance of Pauline ethics. Each section has two essays, representing either opposing views or an early and a more recent contribution to the sub-topic. The editor's Introduction helpfully presents the essays and the issues they raise

SCOTTISH BULLETIN OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

or confront. In a Conclusion he applies his seven key questions to 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 as a case study.

This book is to be recommended both as a valuable anthology of significant and representative essays in the subject-area and as a useful way in to the study of Paul's ethics.

Edward Adams, King's College, London

Gospel Ferment in Malawi: Theological Essays Kenneth Ross

Mambo Press, Gweru, Zimbabwe / Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft, Bonn, 1995; 151pp., n.p.; ISBN 0 86922 615 0 / 3 926105 44 5

The title must not mislead the prospective buyer into thinking that this is a book only for those interested in Malawi. Only three or four of its eight essays are really about Malawi. The others, although they refer to Malawi and Africa, could each stand alone as interesting contributions to such subjects as the world-wide discussion about relationships between church, culture, state and politics, Eastern Orthodox ecclesiology, and the place of recreation (in the sense of play and fun) in the Christian life.

The first essay 'The Truth Shall Set You Free' is a good summary of the very pivotal and courageous role the Malawian churches played in the overthrow of Malawi's oppressive one-party state ruled by the dictator Hastings Kamuzu Banda. For those who, like this reviewer, lived through many years of Dr. Banda's rule and know personally a number of the key church figures involved it makes intriguing reading.

The three essays that follow are theological reflections on the relationship of the gospel to the wider world of politics, social reform *etc.* In these three essays we receive a good exposition of Calvin (the whole of life, private and public being embraced by creation and redemption), Bonhoeffer (the relationship of ultimate and penultimate in the kingdom of God), and Moltmann (theology of hope). Running through Kenneth Ross's explanations is his own view (shared by this reviewer) that there is a continuity and discontinuity between the coming kingdom of God and this world. That means that we cannot but be concerned about righteousness in the world of politics, whilst recognising that our final hope is not in the church's own achievements in this world.

He particularly believes that where the government or dictator claims 'omnipotence' the church has the duty to proclaim the Lordship of Christ. But here is the irony. A great deal of political comment from pulpits and church reports makes the implicit

assumption that governments do have something approaching omnipotence and so have the power to redistribute wealth, guarantee full employment *etc.* But is the exercise of such power possible without destruction of the economy? I would like to hear Ross on that.

He refers to the widely-held view that Christ sided with the poor against the rich. This reviewer believes that this is only partly true. It was Christ's show of friendship to certain rich people (*e.g.* the exploiter Zaccheus) that brought down upon him the wrath of the religiously self-righteous – the very people who became most responsible for his crucifixion. The danger of self-righteousness in all our varying theological / political pronouncements is something we need to think through.

The next essay is a fascinating analysis of the actual preaching that is given in Malawi's main churches and the attitudes of preachers and listeners to their faith. From this we move to a good overview of one of the early pioneers of Blantyre Mission, the Revd David Clement Scott. Here we meet a man whose whole missionary strategy revealed his deep respect for African peoples and their languages. Kenneth Ross contrasts this with the mentality prevalent in the white man's political conquest of Africa. These very different attitudes led to the long and painful differences between the missions and their churches on the one hand and the colonial authorities on the other.

The design of the famous church building that Clement Scott constructed in Blantyre leads Ross to write an essay on Eastern Orthodox ecclesiology in which each local church is not so much an outstation of the central church authority, but rather a representation of the whole church of God. He makes a number of interesting and helpful points in this essay, but I could not help wondering whether his view of Eastern Orthodoxy would be quite so rosy if he lived in a country where it is the dominant faith.

The final essay is a plea, on good theological grounds, for Christians from a pietistic / evangelical tradition to re-consider more positively their normally semi-negative attitudes to recreation and play in the Christian life. I certainly recommend this book. It is biblically and theologically well argued, full of good points, very relevant to the modern world and written out of a situation of life-and-death ferment in a country that has long and honourable associations with the church in Scotland.

*Howard Taylor, St. David's Knightswood, Church of Scotland,
Glasgow*

Authentic Christianity

John Stott

Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, 1995; 424pp., £9.99;
ISBN 0 85111 155 6

This book contains selected passages from Stott's writings, chosen and introduced by Timothy Dudley-Smith. Reading this book makes one aware of the massive contribution John Stott has made to Christian thinking and living during the second half of the twentieth century. While the writings are largely from the 1960s to the present day, several pieces date back to the 1950s, the earliest being a sermon from 1951. The range is most impressive. Their quality is outstanding, largely justifying Michael Baughen's comment: 'John Stott has been the most influential and significant Christian leader of the late nineteen-hundreds.' Some may wish to qualify this verdict, to read 'one of the most influential....'

As well as rekindling memories of my early indebtedness to Stott, *Authentic Christianity* provoked a sense of gratitude to IVP for its continuing commitment to bringing work of such high quality to the student world, in particular. One notes how many Christians (no longer young!) owe so much to Stott's writing for a substantial part of their grounding in 'Authentic Christianity'. Through Stott's 'concern... to teach and expound a revealed faith, and to interpret authoritative and timeless Scripture for a contemporary world', many have come to affirm, with deep conviction, that 'Christianity is authentic only when it is truly biblical'.

Timothy Dudley-Smith tends to play down his own achievement in compiling this volume. It may be quite accurate to say 'that this book is neither a systematic theology nor even a full and balanced exposition of John Stott's thought and teaching'. There is no extended comment on Stott's work – just a four-and-a-half page 'Foreword' from Dudley-Smith. I suspect that, while the compiler's 'sole criterion... has been to select the telling or instructive or (above all) *thought-provoking* quotation', this book will ensure that the work of John Stott (born 1921) will not be forgotten. It may also provide an extremely valuable 'source' for younger theologians to write the kind of 'systematic theology' or 'full and balanced exposition' which this book does not claim to be. A final point, touched on by the compiler, which I would wish to underline, concerns the fact that 'some of his most valued and lasting writing' is to be found in the series *The Bible Speaks Today*. Time and time again, the quotations which sent me to the 'List of Sources' were from this series. As well as its sixty-seven sub-headings, located under twelve more general headings,

REVIEWS

Authentic Christianity contains an extensive index, which makes it a very useful reference book. Even allowing for the clarity of Stott's exposition, it is hardly likely that many readers will read this book from beginning to end. Nevertheless, it is to be hoped that this book will not become the kind of reference work that is dipped into so very occasionally that it is hardly worth having.

Charles M. Cameron, Burnside Presbyterian Church, Portstewart

Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament

Ronald S. Wallace

Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1995; 253pp.,
£9.25; ISBN 0 7073 0747 3

This is a welcome and economically priced reprint of a book first published in 1953, which has become a standard resource for English-language readers wanting access to Calvin's teaching about the Word and the sacraments. Latin and French are very largely confined to footnotes. If it perforce takes no account of scholarly discussions over forty years, this is entirely in keeping with the original, which sought exclusively to expound Calvin without bothering with his other interpreters. No one, of course, expounds Calvin in a vacuum, but the Barth-inspired renewal of interest in the Reformer has left few overt traces in this comprehensive study.

D.F. Wright, New College, University of Edinburgh

Paul's Narrative Thought World. The Tapestry of Tragedy and Triumph

Ben Witherington, III

Westminster / John Knox Press, Louisville, KY, 1994;
352pp., \$24.99; ISBN 0 664 25433 0

Ben Witherington is one of today's most prolific writers in the field of New Testament study. In this volume, he offers an account of Paul's theology. He approaches Paul's thought from the (highly fashionable) point of view of 'narrative' or 'story'. He argues that Paul's theology and ethics are shaped by four interrelated stories which together comprise one larger drama: 1) the story of a world gone wrong; 2) the story of Israel in that world; 3) the story of Christ which arises both out of the story of Israel and humanity and the story of God as creator and redeemer; 4) the story of Christians, including Paul, which arises out of all

SCOTTISH BULLETIN OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

these previous stories and is the first instalment of the story of the world set right again. Christ is the turning-point and climax of the whole drama.

Using this narrative framework to arrange his discussion, Witherington deals with most of the main topics usually treated in works on Pauline theology. The following subjects are discussed: the fall; Satan and the powers; the human condition; Abraham; the law; Israel; Christ as wisdom, Messiah, eschatological Adam; Paul and the Jesus tradition; cross and resurrection; the parousia; Paul's conversion; justification; new creation and union with Christ; the Holy Spirit; anthropology; ecclesiology; resurrection. Detailed exegesis is given of key passages.

The merit of this book is that it is an attempt to do justice to the whole of Paul's thought. For Witherington, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Hence the author does not fix on certain Pauline ideas, such as justification by faith or participation in Christ, and try to make these the controlling or dominant ones for Paul's theology. The coherence of Paul's thought, he claims, lies not in some theological centre or core but in the fundamental story out of which all his discourse arises.

As an analysis of Paul's theology, however, this book has its limitations. Witherington's treatment of the various topics is uneven, detailed at some places, superficial at others (the section on the law is highly unsatisfactory). The level of his engagement with the scholarly debates leaves much to be desired. There is also a lack of penetrating insight on most of the issues discussed.

This volume serves as a helpful presentation of Paul's theology from a conservative point of view, but (students be warned) it is not quite at the cutting edge of the scholarly discussion.

Edward Adams, King's College, London

Evangelical Faith and Public Zeal: Evangelicals and Society in Britain 1780-1980

Edited by John Wolffe

SPCK, London, 1995; 221pp., £10.90; ISBN 0 281047 820

In his introduction to this book John Wolffe says that events leading to its publication are 'the continuing history of the movements with which it is concerned'. Certainly the project as a whole effectively deals with and assesses evangelical concern and public action over the last two hundred years. The nine essays come from a distinguished range of international and inter-denominational contributors brought together by the Evangelical Alliance and are comprehensive in their coverage. The evangelical

REVIEWS

contributions to nineteenth-century life in the areas of welfare, anti-slavery campaigns, politics and commercial, educational and colonial developments are well documented. Thus apart from dealing with leading figures such as Wilberforce and Shaftesbury the contributors trace the wide-ranging commitment to social issues throughout the evangelical movement.

The overall coverage of the book is illustrative rather than comprehensive. Thus whilst drawing material from all parts of Britain it fails to address the Scottish, Welsh and regional experiences. What does emerge however are the debilitating effects of internecine strife within Evangelicalism despite the threats from theological liberalism, and this is particularly emphasised in Kenneth Brown's essay. I was encouraged, however, to see that modern Evangelicals, unlike their nineteenth-century counterparts who so often ignored women's efforts, now acknowledge the contribution that women made to the movement as a whole. The changing role of women in the twentieth century has obviously influenced Evangelicals; hence the inclusion of Jocelyn Murray's lively account of the role of women within Evangelicalism in the nineteenth century.

Clive Calver in his Afterword is particularly optimistic about the role of evangelical social action in the twentieth century and points to a need to learn from the past in order to face the future, triumphantly enumerating recent evangelical initiatives from Tear Fund to Cause for Concern. Calver depicts Evangelicals in the latter years of the twentieth century wanting to recover the identity and emphasis of their predecessors. Certainly politicians seem to be jumping on this bandwagon but whether one could say that this applies wholesale to Evangelicals and whether they actually are a force to be reckoned with could perhaps be food for argument.

One minor correction: the Glasgow Bible Training Institute (now Glasgow Bible College) was the outcome of Moody and Sankey's campaigns in 1892, and not of the Keswick Convention.

Janet L. Watson, Glasgow Bible College

A Matter of Life and Death

John V. Taylor

SCM Press, London, 1986; 88pp., £3.50; ISBN 0334 00977 4

John V. Taylor is known from his earlier book, *The Go-Between God*, as a theologian of the Holy Spirit, and this subsequent volume confirms this general impression. Like many who engage with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, he is also a man with a deep

SCOTTISH BULLETIN OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

interest in Christian spirituality and life. The key theme of *A Matter of Life and Death* is Christian life, 'life in all its fullness', lived in the power of the Holy Spirit and grounded in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The five chapters which constitute the book are five addresses given at a mission in Oxford in 1986. The content is geared to the context: the addresses were and are intended as unashamed evangelistic meditations on the life to which Christ calls us. As such, they cover many of the classic themes of the evangelistic campaign: the human dilemma, the divine answer, its basis in the person and work of Christ, and the Christian fellowship. They do so, however, without once either beating the drums of evangelical rhetoric, or ossifying in theological jargon the many fresh insights offered.

There are many things of value in these pages, not the least Taylor's insistence that the work of the Spirit is not confined to the 'religious' sphere as it is traditionally and narrowly defined. If God is the one 'in whom we live, and move, and have our being', he seems to say, then we must understand ourselves as living always in relation to God, or perhaps better, as having the potential to discover ourselves and live most fully when we are open to the winds of the Holy Spirit and the person of Jesus Christ. Taylor's insistence, even in the context of a series of mission addresses, that this does not lead necessarily to a 'religious life' marks the most refreshing aspect of his work: just as Jesus was against religion that inhibits life and obscures the love of God, so we ought to be. Towards the end of the book, Taylor constructs a case for the church and for the necessity of Christian fellowship, but it is one which is honest enough to acknowledge the extent to which those who look for life within the church are likely to be disappointed. It is this honesty, which is so often missing in religious writing, and perhaps especially in the evangelistic address, which I most appreciate in this book.

If the strength of *A Matter of Life and Death* is its non-technical and fresh grappling with the wellsprings of Christian life, its weakness is that in so doing it does not present anything like a theological system. I was at times left wondering, for example, whether Taylor's was a Spirit or a Logos Christology. Given the book's aims, it probably does not matter, but it is a theologian's lot to be troubled by such questions. Certainly Taylor leaves a great deal unsaid, but at the same time he writes beautifully and says more than most.

Gary Badcock, New College, University of Edinburgh