

BOOK REVIEWS 201-228

David L. Allen and Steve W. Lemke (eds.) *Whosoever Will: A Biblical-Theological Critique of Five-Point Calvinism*. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2010. 306 pages. \$24.99. ISBN-10: 9780805464160

Whosoever Will: A Biblical-Theological Critique of Five-Point Calvinism is a compilation of articles based on addresses delivered at the “John 3:16 Conference” held at First Baptist Church, Woodstock, GA on November 6–7, 2008. The work is edited by David Allen, Dean of the School of Theology at Southwestern Seminary, and Steve Lemke, Provost at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Beyond Allen and Lemke, contributors include Jerry Vines, long time pastor of First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, FL; Richard Land from the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission; Jeremy Evans, Kenneth Keathley and Bruce Little from Southeastern Baptist Seminary; Paige Patterson, Kevin Kennedy and Malcolm Yarnell from Southwestern Baptist Seminary; and Alan Streett from Criswell College. All the contributors to *Whosoever Will* self-identify as non-Calvinist Southern Baptists and the book is a focused response to Calvinist soteriology. *Whosoever Will* is divided into two parts. Part one begins with a sermon on John 3:16 by Jerry Vines and then has articles critiquing each of the five points of Calvinist soteriology. Part Two has five articles and focuses on issues tangent with discussions of Calvinist soteriology such as the soteriology of Calvin himself, the practical out-workings of Calvinism in a local church, Calvinism and public invitations, determinism and human freedom, and the problem of evil and God’s sovereignty.

There is much to commend in *Whosoever Will*. Jerry Vines’s sermon in Chapter One on John 3:16 is a splendid mix of exegesis, theological background, and evangelistic passion. Patterson’s discussion of Total Depravity in Chapter Two is simultaneously entertaining and substantive. He affirms the reality that all people are sinners and argues for a Natural Headship view concerning the connection between Adam and humanity. Patterson also notes the importance of the debate concerning the relationship to regeneration and faith: “Some Calvinists (not all) take [total depravity] to mean that in order for a depraved human being to respond to God’s redemptive act in Christ, that person must first be regenerated. . . . Except for citing John 6:44, the argument garners little other biblical support but follows the logical demands of the Calvinistic system.” (35) Patterson then ends his discussion on this important point with a quote from Spurgeon, a noted Calvinist Baptist,

clearly indicating that Spurgeon himself had strong reservations about the idea that regeneration precedes faith.

Patterson's contribution could have been even more helpful if he had more clearly explained the connection between his discussion of regeneration and faith on pages 35–36 and his discussion of Ephesians 2:1–10 on pages 38–39. For adamant Calvinists, the two issues are clearly related. When the average Baptist hears a debate about “Calvinism,” they often assume it is just a debate about God's sovereignty versus man's free will. In reality, most Calvinists and non-Calvinists within SBC life eventually arrive at some theory of compatibility regarding the Divine and human wills: God is sovereign and humans are accountable for their decisions. The issue of the relationship between regeneration and faith seems to be more of a dividing line concerning evangelism and methodology. In fact, the most heated debates in Baptist life about Calvinism are often methodological: Should we give invitations and offer people the opportunity to pray a prayer of salvation? Quite often, these methodological implications of certain forms of Calvinism are the targets of criticism for non-Calvinist Baptists. Furthermore, Calvinists who become Hyper-Calvinists and thus non-evangelistic adopt a very extreme view of regeneration preceding faith. As a result, these Hyper-Calvinists see no need to ask sinners to respond to a message or pray a “sinner's prayer” since it is useless, in their thinking, to invite the unconverted to have faith. Furthermore, in the most extreme expressions of Calvinism, encouraging someone to pray the “sinner's prayer” is even labeled salvation by “works.” Calvinists reach some of these conclusions by inferences they make based on Ephesians 2:1–10. *Whosoever Will* could serve its intended audience better by making these connections more clear.

Richard Land's “Congruent Election: Understanding Salvation from an ‘Eternal Now’ Perspective” (Chapter Three) is remarkable for both its brevity and substantive content. Using an economy of words, Land moves quickly from an overview of Calvinism in Baptist history to his fascinating discussion of the way God views time and decisions made within time. Land says, “If God lives in the Eternal Now, then He has always had not just the knowledge of but experience with every individual” (57). Land differentiates between unconditional election and his own model by saying, “I would posit a distinction between unconditional election's “irresistible call” (one *must* be saved) and congruent election's “solicitous call” (one *will* be saved)” (59). Striking an irenic note, Land says, “If God had chosen to do it the way Calvinists say he did, He would still be a merciful and gracious God” (59). Of

further importance, readers should note that Land rightly emphasizes that ecclesiology and soteriology are not isolated issues within Calvinist thought, delineating the way Calvinists define the relationship between Israel and the Church and its implications for soteriology. Land's model deserves further reflection by all who engage in the debate.

David Allen's response to limited atonement (Chapter Four) is especially notable for his response to John Owen's claim that "world" in John 3:16 means the "elect" world. Allen rightly says, "Owen's arguments are not linguistic or exegetical but *a priori* theological arguments. He has committed the fallacy of begging the question" (80). Surprisingly, Allen does not spend as much time addressing the implications of 1 John 2:2 for the atonement. Though Allen mentions that Calvinists understand the word "world" in 1 John 2:2 to mean "the church" (82-83), he could have made his point even stronger by exegesis of 1 John 2:2. By this, I mean that advocates of limited atonement engage in special pleading and want the word "world" in 1 John 2:2 to mean something other than what it plainly means—the entirety of humanity. Allen's critique of Owen's understanding of John 3:16 apply equally to the Calvinist understanding of 1 John 2:2.

Of special interest to students of the Calvinist debate within SBC life will be Kennedy's intriguing discussion: "Was Calvin a Calvinist? John Calvin on the Extent of the Atonement" (Chapter 7). Kennedy admits that Calvin's comments on 1 John 2:2 do seem to affirm limited atonement. But Kennedy notes, "However, [Calvin's] comments also demonstrate that his greatest fear in regard to [1 John 2:2] was not that someone might interpret this verse as teaching that Christ died for all of humanity but rather that some *had* interpreted this verse to teach that the whole world, including Satan and his demons, will actually inherit eternal life with God." (211) Streett's discussion of "The Public Invitation and Calvinism" (Chapter Nine) is also helpful, but does not specifically address the way in which Calvinists often attribute the idea of giving invitations to Charles Finney.

Since *Whosoever Will's* basic purpose is to critique Calvinist soteriology within Baptist life, the work could be strengthened by a chapter interacting with Baptist statements of faith, in particular the "Abstract of Principles" for Southern Seminary and the *Baptist Faith and Message 2000*. The Founders Group within the SBC often reminds non-Calvinists that the original four faculty members at Southern Seminary were five-point Calvinists in their soteriology. Yet, the Abstracts of Principles drafted by Basil Manly and signed by the original faculty members omits the most debated aspects of Calvinist soteriology:

Irresistible Grace and Limited Atonement. So, even though the original faculty members—Boyce, Broadus, Manly, and Williams—were all five-point Calvinists, they did not make the most debated aspects of soteriology points of fellowship. In this way, many within the Founders Group go further than the “founders” they claim to follow, often suggesting The Second London Confession more accurately reflects SBC heritage. Also, though *The Baptist Faith and Message 2000* is referenced several times within *Whosoever Will*, it would be helpful to have an extended discussion about both Article IV “On Salvation” and Article V “God’s Purpose of Grace.” Too often people deeply involved in SBC life wrongly assume the average Baptist is cognizant of the actual content of our statement of faith. If the target audience of *Whosoever Will* is a broad spectrum of SBC pastors and laity, then a clear delineation of the middle-ground approach to soteriology expressed in *The Baptist Faith and Message* would strengthen the work.

Whosoever Will is a needed counterbalance to the endless pro-Calvinist publications within SBC life. The contributors offer a rigorous response to Calvinism. Calvinism also raises several ecclesiological issues within Baptist churches and it would be very interesting to see another volume dedicated solely to ecclesiology from a similar group of non-Calvinist Baptists.

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Brill's New Pauly: Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World: Antiquity, Volume 9 (Mini-Obe). Cancik, Hubert and Schneider, Helmut. (eds.) Leiden: Brill, 2004. ISBN 9789004122727 Seires and Series Number BNP-009. List price EUR 228.-/List price US \$308.00.

Brill’s New Pauly is the English edition/translation of the *Der Neue Pauly*. This is considered by most scholars as the authoritative encyclopedic work of classical antiquity. This work presents up-to-date research and scholarly trends of the Greco-Roman world. It covers the eras from the prehistory of the Aegean (2nd millennium BCE) to late antiquity (600-800 CE). It also indirectly brings to an English speaking audience some of the best of European scholarship.

Brill’s New Pauly is a 20 volume encyclopedia of the ancient world originally published by Verlag J.B. Metzler beginning in 1996. Fifteen of the volumes (*Antiquity*) are dedicated to Greco-roman antiquity with

articles ranging from the second millennium BCE to early medieval Europe. There is a conscious effort by the editors to focus on the interaction between Greco-Roman culture and Semitic, Celtic, Germanic, and Slavonic cultural spheres; as well as ancient Judaism, Christianity, and to some extent Islam. The other five volumes (*Classical Tradition, I-V*) are devoted to the discipline and history of classical scholarship.

The name *Pauly* originates from the original work of the *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. The founding editor was August Friedrich (von) Pauly (1796-1845) who was a German classicist. The *Pauly* was published in German in 68 volumes between 1839 and 1980. A popular, five volume, abridged version was published between 1964 and 1975 (*kleine Pauly*). The successor to these original works, *Der neue Pauly*, appeared in German in 15 volumes between 1996 and 2003. It is this successor to the original work that is now available in English.

Only one volume from the Antiquity series (Volume 9 MINE-OBE) was available for review. Nevertheless, an accurate picture of the whole can be obtained. The overall approach of the contributors places this work within the framework of the classical ancient historian. The entries are descriptive and centered on ancient historical sources, albeit incorporating the results of archaeological investigations.

While most of the articles address a specific place or person, several address broad issues covering a wide geographical and chronological field. For example, the entry on music is written by several experts in their area of expertise such as Aegean, Egyptian, Ancient Israel, Rome, and Christianity. In addition there are sections on musical instruments, notations, musical terms and musicians.

Each signed entry contains a succinct article that contains references to historical texts and the term in its original language (e.g. Greek, Latin). Each article also includes a bibliography. Naturally, there are references and links to other entries. Most of the entries reference persons, places, institutions, events, artifacts, technical terms, ideas and concepts.

Realizing that this is a reference work and encyclopedic in nature, the articles present the basic data and give the impression that the reference work takes a traditional cultural-historical approach to the ancient world. Most avoid scholarly disputes or theoretical discussions. It is assumed that these approaches are to be found in the volumes of the *Classical Tradition*—unavailable to this reviewer.

This is an impressive scholarly resource. The price of the encyclopedia will keep it out of the scholar's library as well as many

small colleges. Those who are studying the New Testament or the world of the Early Church will find this resource useful—especially since it provides a wider *western* view (e.g. western Europe) of the ancient world than most reference works. Ironically, for a current scholarly resource heavily influenced by European scholarship, the references to biblical history are positive. Unfortunately, the best of European scholarship will still be elusive to the average student of North America, and especially seminary students, as this work will only be found in discerning libraries.

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***Preaching the Cross.* By Mark Dever, J. Ligon Duncan, III, R. Albert Mohler, Jr., and C. J. Mahaney. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007, 176 pp. ISBN-10: 9781581348286**

In 2006 Mark Dever, J. Ligon Duncan, R. Albert Mohler, and C. J. Mahaney began a biannual conference called *Together for the Gospel*, which was formed to encourage pastors to stand together for the gospel. At their first conference they all spoke, and they also invited John MacArthur, John Piper, and R. C. Sproul to present messages. *Preaching the Cross* is a compilation of those messages in book form. All seven messages focus on a different aspect of pastoral ministry and preaching, but they are all united around the theme of keeping the gospel, the message of the cross, central in everything that a pastor says and does. In addition to the addresses from the conference, the book also contains a brief history of the conference written by Mark Dever, as well as the *Together for the Gospel Affirmations and Denials*, presented at the inaugural conference in 2006.

The seven messages can be divided into two groups. Four of the essays concern the pastor's preaching ministry in general, while three focus on a particular aspect of preaching. Beginning with the former group, Mark Dever opens the book with a sermon from 1 Corinthians 4 on the three marks of a real minister. The marks of a real minister are a cross-centered message, a cross-centered life, and producing cross-centered followers. A pastor's ministry in all ways must be centered on the cross. John Piper contributes a chapter on the kind of preaching that is based upon and portrays God's glory. Those who are familiar with Piper's work will not find anything new in this chapter, but it is still a powerful reminder of the primary purpose of preaching, which is to glorify God with the proclamation of the gospel. C. J. Mahaney bases his

chapter on Paul's admonition in 1 Timothy 4:16 to "keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching." His chapter is unique in that it focuses on the first part of the statement, the pastor's life, while all of the other chapters focus on the second part, the pastor's teaching. Mahaney offers some excellent practical suggestions on how pastors can preserve themselves from sin, and therefore be authentic preachers of the gospel. John MacArthur's essay is an autobiographical account of why he continues to preach expositively from the Bible. MacArthur gives ten reasons he still preaches from the Bible, and his chapter is a reminder of what faithful and consistent biblical preaching can accomplish in the life of a church.

Of the three chapters that focus on a particular aspect of preaching, the first is an essay by J. Ligon Duncan on preaching Christ from the Old Testament. Duncan notes that even those who practice expository preaching often neglect the Old Testament, and offers eight exhortations to preachers in the hopes of reversing this trend. His main message is that preachers can and should preach the gospel of Jesus Christ from the Old Testament, just as Jesus himself did (Luke 24:25-27). R. Albert Mohler addresses the topic of preaching with the culture in view. He offers a balanced and biblical view of addressing one's culture with the gospel. Preachers must be cognizant of their culture in order to reach it with the gospel, but they must also realize that they are first and foremost elect exiles, citizens of the City of God, not the City of Man. The last of the essays is a lecture by R. C. Sproul on the importance of the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Sproul presents the history of the debate between the Reformed faith and the Catholic Church over this doctrine. He concludes by emphasizing the importance of that debate and the need for preachers to recognize that the doctrine of justification by faith alone is the gospel. If that doctrine is missing from one's preaching, then the gospel is missing.

All seven chapters of this book are worth reading, and there is little in them to evoke disagreement. All preachers ought to have the gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ at the center of every facet of their ministries. Perhaps the only drawback to the book is that as I read each essay, I found myself wanting to hear the messages straight from the authors. Several of the chapters, most notably Dever's, read as sermons. I have had the privilege of hearing each of these men preach, and as I read I could easily imagine all of them proclaiming these words. Fortunately, for those so inclined, one can find each of the messages available to download at the *Together for the Gospel* website. For those who would rather read the book, though, it is well worth the time. Pastors

will come away from these essays challenged, encouraged, and convinced of the necessity of preaching the cross.

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***Who's Tampering with the Trinity: An Assessment of the Subordination Debate.* By Millard J. Erickson. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2009, 272 pp., \$19.99 paper. ISBN-10: 9780825425899**

Is the relationship between the Father, Son, and Spirit one of eternal authority and submission, with the Son in eternal submission to the Father and the Spirit in eternal submission to the Father and the Son; or is their relationship one of equal authority for all of eternity, with only temporary periods of submission necessary for the fulfillment of certain tasks? Within evangelical theology there are those who hold to both positions, with those on both sides claiming the support of Scripture, church history, and theological consistency. The purpose of Millard Erickson's book is to determine which one of these views is true. Erickson is well-qualified to investigate this issue, having written two previous books on the Trinity as well as several papers on this specific subject.

Erickson begins by carefully defining and explaining what he terms the "gradational view" (there is an eternal hierarchy of authority among the three divine persons) and the "equivalence view" (the three divine persons are eternally equal in authority). He thoroughly and fairly summarizes each view, particularly as it is presented by its contemporary advocates. Before he begins to weigh evidence for each view he includes a short and helpful chapter on the necessary criteria for evaluating theological alternatives, especially (as in this case) when each seems to be based in Scripture. The internal factors include the consistency and coherence of a view, while the external factors are its applicability (in the case of evangelical theology, how well a theory represents the Bible), its adequacy (how well a theory explains all of the available data), and its pragmatic value.

Having established his definitions and method, Erickson examines the biblical evidence for and against each position, the historical considerations pertinent to the debate, the philosophical issues involved, the theological dimensions of each view, and the practical implications of each view. On the basis of all his criteria, Erickson comes to the conclusion that, while neither view is fatally flawed or

unambiguously supported by all of the evidence, the equivalence view is considerably stronger than the gradational view. According to Erickson the strongest biblical argument in favor of the equivalence view is that no action of any person of the Trinity is done in isolation, meaning that each divine action is actually that of the entire Godhead. This means that all of the texts that refer to the Father's authority should not be taken as applying to the Father alone, but as applying to the entire Godhead, and therefore are not evidence of an inherent authority-submission structure within the Trinity. Some texts taken on their own could favor the gradational view (esp. 1 Cor 15:24-28), but in light of this biblical principle these texts are better interpreted as fitting the equivalence view. Erickson also believes that the historical evidence supports the equivalence view, and that this view has fewer problems theologically. Philosophically he believes that eternal function subordination logically leads to ontological subordination, and that gradationists have not yet explained why this would not happen. A major practical issue for Erickson is the idea that the gradational view implies that prayer should only be made to the Father, but the New Testament contains several instances of believers praying to the Son. He believes this gives the equivalence view a clear advantage when it comes to practical implications.

Erickson's book is valuable because it presents a reasoned and well thought-out critique of the gradational view while providing a defense of the equivalence position. Erickson lets the advocates of each view speak for themselves, represents each view accurately, and explains what he believes are the strengths and weaknesses of each. As one who holds the gradational view I was challenged by Erickson's fair and thorough work, though I disagreed with several of his conclusions (as those who hold the gradational view would), particularly concerning the biblical and theological evidence, and I fail to understand his genuine concern that the gradational view could easily morph into Arianism. I was, however, compelled to thoroughly think through the basis and implications of my position. There are a few areas where those who hold the gradational position will be pressed by Erickson to nuance and further explain their view, particularly in the practical and philosophical realms. In this way Erickson's book helps to advance the debate, and ought to be read by those on both sides of the issue.

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***Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs.* Apollos Old Testament Commentary Series. By Daniel C. Fredericks and Daniel J. Estes. Downers Grove, IL: InverVarsity Press, 2010, 472 pp., \$40.00, cloth. ISBN-10: 9780830825158**

Daniel Fredericks is an evangelical scholar who has championed Ecclesiastes since he argued for an early dating of the book in his dissertation. This current work is largely an expansion of a short volume, *Coping with Transience*, which he wrote over 15 years ago. The purpose of this commentary series is to offer readers the best of evangelical scholarship concerning Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs in an accessible and usable format. It seeks to combine textual scholarship with real life application to the church. This volume does not fall short of that goal.

The section on Ecclesiastes begins with an extensive introduction in which Fredericks argues that biblical Wisdom Literature in general—and Ecclesiastes in particular—has been missing from contemporary sermons for too long. He argues that this book has often been viewed as either the musings of a pessimistic hedonist or the warnings of a man who strayed away from God. Instead, Ecclesiastes is the work of a sage who has sought to understand the ways of God, reconciling what he knows to be true with what he sees in everyday life. Fredericks' argument that the key word of Ecclesiastes, *hebel*, is best translated by “transient “ is important to his reading of the text. He gives sound support of this reading. This volume is important in the field of Ecclesiastes scholarship because Fredericks' understanding of the book's message provides readers with an understanding of the text that coheres with the theology of the Old Testament.

In the second portion of the commentary Estes also complains that Song of Songs has been missing from the life of the church. His commentary is an effort to rekindle interest in Song of Songs and provide pastors and laypeople with a book that will help them understand the meaning of the text. He argues that the book is a poem that celebrates erotic love within the boundaries of marriage, which is a gift from God. By celebrating this aspect of life, the book is meant to cause the reader to reflect on the love that one experiences in one's relationship with Christ. His adherence to a literal interpretation, which he then applies to the believer's relationship with God, is useful both for pastors and scholars alike.

Since this commentary series aim to reach a broad audience, it necessarily avoids lengthy discussion of more technical issues, such as

textual criticism. The commentators point the reader in the direction of resources that will help with these issues, but more interaction within the commentary itself would have been helpful, so that pastors would not have to look elsewhere for the information. Also, since interpretation history is becoming more popular in biblical studies, the Ecclesiastes section of the commentary would benefit by more thoroughly interacting with this area. It represents only a fraction of the introductory matters, and most of that is devoted to the history of the interpretation of *hebel*. By contrast, the Song of Songs section provides an extensive, thematically organized overview of the history of interpretation.

Both sections of the commentary are arranged in such a way that makes them helpful to readers at many levels. They begin with an original translation (which is much needed in Fredericks' case, as no major translations understand *hebel* the way he does). This is followed by a section that discusses more technical aspects of the text, such as form, grammar, and textual criticism. This is followed by a thorough exegesis of the passage, and a section that offers application to everyday life in the church. The organization, sound scholarship, and engaging writing style of the authors makes the commentary a fantastic resource for pastors, scholars, and laypeople alike.

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***God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology.* By James M. Hamilton, Jr. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010, 640 pp., \$40.00 hardcover, ISBN: 978-1-58134-976-4.**

In the field of biblical theology many have abandoned the quest for the Bible's one "theme to rule them all"—but not James M. Hamilton, Jr. In this substantial volume Hamilton presents a biblical theology that "highlights the central theme of God's glory in salvation through judgment by describing the literary contours of individual books in canonical context with sensitivity to the unfolding metanarrative" (p. 44). Hamilton demonstrates his expansive knowledge of the biblical corpus and proves to even the most skeptical reader that his motivation is not fool-hearty. Dr. Hamilton presently serves as Associate Professor of Biblical Theology at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and has authored numerous articles addressing biblical theological themes, as well as the book *God's Indwelling Presence: The Ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments*.

Chapter one begins by challenging the trends of modern scholarship to emphasize the diversity found in the Bible over against any sense of unity. Hamilton explains his pursuit of a “center” stating, “The center of biblical theology will be the ultimate reason that the Bible gives to explain what God has done” (p. 48). Immersed in the same theological stream as Jonathan Edwards and Thomas R. Schreiner, Hamilton argues that the central purpose of God in creation—his glory—is the central focus of the biblical writers. And God’s glory is most plainly displayed in saving his people through judgment. Hamilton recognizes that many have given up on the pursuit of a central theme and have resorted to multi-thematic approaches to biblical theology. To this he responds that other possible “centers” (such as creation, God’s self-revelation, the holiness of God, promise and fulfillment, and the love of God) fall underneath his proposal as secondary themes, all of which ultimately serve the greater focus of God’s glory. Hamilton organizes his theology according to the canonical divisions of the Hebrew Bible (Torah, Prophets, and Writings) and treats the New Testament in three sections—Gospels and Acts, Letters, and Revelation.

Hamilton’s discussion of the Old Testament covers three chapters—each devoted to one of the major divisions in the Hebrew text. In the section devoted to the Torah, Hamilton offers a theological commentary of the Pentateuch focusing on Gen 1-3 and the pattern of creation, fall, redemption which begins in these early chapters of the Bible. The divine response to sin in Gen 3:14-19 presents the first instance of salvation through judgment as the *protoevangelion* in Gen 3:15 holds out the hope that seed of the woman will one day crush the head of the seed of the serpent. After Pharaoh (seed of the serpent) is judged in the exodus, God reveals himself to Moses in Ex 34:6-7 as both a God of mercy and justice—the two motivating aspects of the divine nature behind salvation and judgment. Hamilton’s treatment of the Prophets and the Writings picks up the continuation of the pentateuchal narrative found in the Former Prophets. He highlights God’s persistent salvation in the conquest of Canaan, the appointment of judges, and the rise of David. However, even during David’s lifetime, it is evident that Israel needs a greater king, which becomes increasingly clearer with each subsequent generation. In Isaiah and the Latter Prophets, Hamilton notes the frequent undulations between salvation and judgment that all seem to be progressing to a final deliverance and reversal of the curse. “Yahweh’s glory will be seen in the rollback of the curses, when the nursing child plays by the hole of the cobra (Isa 11)...when [Yahweh] slays the dragon in the sea (Isa 27)...[and] when he makes the desert a new Eden (Isa 35,

51)” (p. 211.) Similar to the Prophets, the voice of wisdom found in the Writings passes judgment on the foolish ways of the world in order that the listener might live a blessed life that glorifies God and is spared future judgment. Throughout the Writings, wisdom calls people back to the message of the Torah and the Prophets because “The fear of judgment leads to salvation” (p. 273). According to Hamilton, the Old Testament ends in eschatological tension. He writes, “[The Old Testament] ends with the demonstration of God’s faithfulness to the promises he has made to his people. It also ends with the frank acknowledgement that not all the promises have been realized, and those with eyes of faith strain to glimpse their fulfillment” (p. 351).

Chapters 5-7 address the New Testament. Hamilton understands the gospels to declare that Jesus’ coming is the typological fulfillment of the seed of the woman who will overcome the seed of the serpent, the promised offspring of Abraham, the true Davidic king, the true Israel, a new exodus, and an eschatological return from exile. These various themes run throughout the gospels and all culminate in the ultimate picture of salvation through judgment—the cross and empty tomb. Acts and the New Testament letters preach this salvation. The letters teach growing churches that God’s glory is seen in the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises of Messiah and “that God has sent the Spirit, who has given new life to those who believe; and the Spirit will keep them to the end, so that on the last day, when Christ comes to save through judgment, they will be those who glorify God for his mercy” (p. 538). Hamilton concludes his survey of the New Testament in Revelation, focusing on new exodus themes seen in the apocalyptic bowls and trumpets and arguing that the literary and thematic centerpiece of the book lies in verse 11:15, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever” (ESV).

The final two chapters of the book include Hamilton’s brief but adequate attempt at anticipating challenges to his proposal. The chapter is built around the insightful critiques of I. Howard Marshall, and consequently does provide some needed clarification. The final chapter of the volume transitions the reader from theology to action, as Hamilton explores the applications of his biblical theology within the life of the individual believer and the church.

Two points of interaction are worthy of note. First, Hamilton reiterates his thesis at the end of each section, but such repetition does not overcome the sense of superficiality that arises in his discussion of Job, Esther, Ecclesiastes, and Proverbs. Like many other biblical

theologies, Hamilton appears to struggle with the Writings, where at times his exegesis wanes and his theology waxes. Secondly, Hamilton's use of the word "judgment" can be unclear or strangely used. It functions as an all-encompassing term that ranges in meaning from God's judgment upon sin to fuzzy abstractions like "God's glory renders judgments against the norms of Roman society" in the book of Philemon. Frequently, when judgment and salvation are not actually themes *in* the text, Hamilton steps back to the speech-act itself, with the author judging the readers behavior in order to lead them to salvation. This is not necessarily inappropriate, but sudden shifts in meaning like this render some sections unclear.

All "judgments" aside, much of the book is textually sound, theologically viable, and rather convincing. Hamilton helpfully illuminates the primacy of God's glory and demonstrates that the theology of the Bible demands both faith and obedience. *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment* offers a thorough theological commentary of the entire Bible which is easily accessible and will greatly reward anyone willing to work through it. The volumes clear book-by-book organization makes it a ready companion to personal Bible study or teaching preparation. Dr. Hamilton's work contributes greatly to the field of biblical theology, but in this reader's opinion, the search for a center continues.

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***Spirit-Led Preaching: The Holy Spirit's Role in Sermon Preparation and Delivery.* By Greg Heisler. Nashville, TN: B&H, 2007, 156 pp., paper. ISBN-10: 9780805443882**

Spirit-Led Preaching is a book that every preacher of God's Word should read at least once. All preachers are helpless without the Holy Spirit's empowerment in the pulpit and the Holy Spirit's illumination in the minds and hearts of their hearers (cf. 1 Cor 2:4). Therefore all preachers need to be constantly reminded of the Holy Spirit's importance in preaching. The purpose of this book is to properly emphasize the Holy Spirit's role in the preparation and delivery of sermons. Sermons must not only be biblical, but they must also be Spirit-led if they are to make any impact upon their hearers. Greg Heisler, a professor of preaching at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, defines Spirit-led preaching as preaching that is "birthed and delivered by the powerful moving of the Spirit so that the Spirit takes hold of us and compels us to preach" (5).

The book can be divided into two sections. Chapters 1-5 explain the what and the why of Spirit-led preaching by building a theological foundation for the Holy Spirit and preaching. Chapters 6-9 then answer the how of Spirit-led preaching by exploring its practical implications.

Heisler maintains that Spirit-led preaching is expository, because expository preaching most faithfully reflects the relationship between the Word and the Holy Spirit. The intimate and inseparable relationship between the Word and the Spirit is the theological foundation for Spirit-led preaching, and Heisler emphasizes the importance of this relationship throughout the book. The biblical foundation of this truth is found in the preaching of the Old Testament prophets, Jesus, and Paul. Paul's preaching, for example, was in the power of the Spirit, based upon God's Word, and centered on Christ (1 Cor 2:1-16). The doctrines of inspiration and illumination also support this truth. The Holy Spirit inspired the Word of God (2 Tim 3:16), making it completely accurate and authoritative. He also illuminates the truth of the Word of God (John 16:13). Preachers who hope to bring a message in the power of the Spirit must therefore preach from the Word of God. Finally, the ministry of the Holy Spirit demonstrates the need for expository preaching. The Holy Spirit's ministry is to reveal Christ (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-14), and he does this through the Word. The Word and the Spirit both witness to Jesus Christ, and if the preacher hopes to witness to Christ he must preach from the Word in the power of the Spirit.

After establishing the biblical and theological basis for Spirit-led preaching, the latter half of the book focuses on particular aspects of the Holy Spirit's work in preaching. The Holy Spirit's work in preaching begins in the preacher's sanctification. The Holy Spirit is the one who converts the preacher, calls the preacher, prepares the preacher, and transforms the character of the preacher. Preachers first must live in the power of the Spirit before they can preach in the power of the Spirit. Much of the Holy Spirit's work in preaching takes place before sermons are even written. There is a special work of the Holy Spirit, however, in the preparation and presentation of sermons. As the preacher prepares his sermon, the Holy Spirit aids in the selection of the text, in the study, and in the shaping of the message. This is not an automatic work of the Spirit, however, because the Spirit works through the preacher's prayer, exegetical work, and effort at internalizing the message. The Holy Spirit's special work in the delivery of sermons is a result of the preacher's openness to the Spirit. Preachers must do all they can to prepare their messages, but at the same time must be open to the Spirit's leading during their messages. The Spirit helps the preacher and the

congregation to connect, and aids in the application of the sermon. Heisler closes the book with a chapter on the anointing of the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit's special empowerment for preaching. His treatment of this controversial issue is careful, clear, and biblically based, and deals with characteristics of the anointing, frequency of the anointing, and hindrances and helps to the Spirit's empowerment.

The strength of *Spirit-Led Preaching* is its solid biblical and theological basis. Heisler effectively demonstrates the necessity and the importance of the Holy Spirit's role in preaching by appealing to a number of important doctrines, including inspiration, illumination, original sin, sanctification, and the inter-trinitarian relationship between the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ. All of the book's practical application for preaching flows out of this theological base. Heisler is also careful to support and defend his conclusions with Scripture. There are times when he assumes a particular understanding of a verse without defending that understanding against other legitimate interpretations, such as with John 16:8 and 16:12 (e.g., 44), but the length and tone of the book seem to prohibit sustained exegesis. These times are few, however, and do not detract from the book's message.

Heisler's purpose is not to present a particular method for preaching, but to help preachers understand how the Holy Spirit is involved in preaching and how their preaching should be affected by that truth. He accomplishes his purpose. The book is well-written, with helpful chapter subdivisions and a number of engaging illustrations. It is an excellent theology of preaching, explaining not only the Holy Spirit's role in preaching but also the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. *Spirit-Led Preaching* could be used as a book in almost any preaching class, though it probably fits best in an introductory course, as it deals with issues of fundamental importance. It should not be limited to students, however. Even seasoned preachers and theologians need to be reminded of these truths again and again. As I stated at the beginning of this review, I would heartily recommend this book to any preacher. We all need to be reminded that without the work of the Holy Spirit our preaching is in vain.

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***'The Sufferings of Christ are Abundant in Us' (2 Corinthians 1.5): A Narrative Dynamics Investigation of Paul's Sufferings in 2 Corinthians.* By Kar Yong Lim. LNTS 399. Editor Mark Goodacre. New York: T & T Clark, 2009, 240 pp., \$130.00 ISBN-10: 0567107280**

Kar Yong Lim is a current lecturer at Seminari Theoloji Malaysia (Malaysia Theological Seminary) in the area of New Testament studies. This work is a testimony to the paradox of strength in weakness (2 Cor 12.10) due to the experiences of his mother's illness, pain and hospitalizations. These occurred while he was researching and writing at Oxford, thus, the book in its finished form is an adaptation of his doctoral dissertation.

The issue of suffering is a subject that scholars are forced to address with respect to Paul and his letters. Lim takes on this issue within Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, a letter replete with descriptive catalogues of suffering. His method, explained in chapter 1, for examining Pauline suffering is a two phase narrative approach that locates the story of Jesus within the sufferings of Paul. In the first phase, Lim examines the discourse allusions to the story of Jesus in the vocabulary and imagery of five passages in 2 Corinthians: 1.3-11; 2.14-16; 4.7-12; 6.1-10; 11:23-12.10; and 13.4. The second phase of his study explores this discourse further through a close reading of the texts listed. This is accomplished through detailed exegesis leading to a discussion of how the passages relate to the overall argument of 2 Corinthians. His purpose is to discover what Paul is saying about his sufferings, how they lead Paul to respond and confront the Corinthians, and ultimately what bearing they have upon Paul's theology as reflected in the story of Jesus. Lim's belief is that the narrative approach is a fresh way of evaluating Paul's thought and theology. Included in this chapter is a well-thought out critical review of Pauline scholarship as it relates to suffering. This includes exegetical studies, historical and background studies, and topical and thematic studies.

Chapter 2 examines the epistolary function of the thanksgiving period in 2 Corinthians 1.3-11. Lim argues here that Paul's epistolary thanksgiving reveals major themes for the letter and as it should be well noted, that insufficient attention has been given to this area of Pauline study. Lim posits that Paul's suffering, because it is placed at such a crucial juncture, reveals its importance and significance as a controlling argument in the letter. This argument is expressed by five key motifs seen in the epistolary thanksgiving, but which are also traced through the

entire letter: suffering, comfort and deliverance, life and death, solidarity between Paul, the Corinthians and Christ, and hyperbolic language. In summation, Lim argues that these motifs can only be fully appreciated as they are grounded in the story of Jesus.

Lim builds on his argument from Chapter 1 by further examining 2 Corinthians 1.3-11 in Chapter 2. He seeks to accomplish this by analyzing the story of Jesus and the meaning of *περισσεύει τὰ παθήματα τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς ἡμᾶς* (the sufferings of Christ are abundant in us). His goal is to scrutinize how this phrase contributes to Paul's understanding of suffering and as a result, his relationship to the Corinthian church. By giving attention to this expression, Lim establishes it as the crux of the interpretation for his study. He concludes that it cannot be understood as it has been historically, that is, within the categories of messianic woes, mystical union, or the imitation of Christ. His theory is that this phrase is only appreciated through the understanding associated with the story of Jesus in 2 Corinthians related to Paul's theology and apostolic mission. So, for example, the sufferings that Paul experienced in Asia are narrated in such a manner that the reader is directed to the story of Jesus' sufferings. Paul's motivation for doing this is to encourage Corinthian partnership in suffering and ministry.

Lim continues to advance his argument in Chapter 4 by exploring the story of Jesus in the Roman triumphal procession metaphor and fragrance metaphor in 2 Corinthians 2.14-16. He proposes a fresh reading for the Roman metaphors employed by Paul. Lim reasons that the focus of the imagery is not Paul (the object of the triumph), but rather God (the subject of the triumph). This shift in focus results in a new understanding of the metaphor, namely, that God is a Divine Warrior who leads a triumphal procession through the Messianic Servant as described in the Isaianic new exodus. Paul's role, therefore, is best seen as a cruciform servant of the gospel message rooted in the story of Jesus. Ultimately, Lim argues here for a parenetic reading of this text. Paul is pleading with the Corinthians to join in the narrative of God by suffering in the same manner as Jesus and Paul.

Chapter 5 delves into a oft-studied passage as it relates to Pauline suffering, 2 Corinthians 4.7-12, the first of Paul's *peristasis* catalogues. After an examination of the structure and line of thought of the passage, a rubric utilized consistently by Lim, he again attempts to connect the story of Jesus with the language of treasure in an earthen vessel. This paradoxical description is described as the most profound Christological interpretation in the letter. The interpretative statements of the metaphor are fleshed out in the story of Jesus in three ways: in relation to his

sufferings, in relation to his understanding of mission, and in relation to the Corinthians. If the Corinthians grasp this truth, they will participate with Paul in the story of Jesus.

Next, in the longest chapter in the book, Lim attempts to further substantiate the connection to the story of Jesus by comparing it with 2 Corinthians 6.1-10. He takes his study a step further by saying that Scripture is in view, not only the story of Jesus. Specifically, Scripture such as Isaiah 49:8. Lim explains that Paul has chosen this citation in order to make a link between his ministry and that of the Isaianic Servant. If this association can be made, Lim believes that Paul is pleading to the Corinthians to accept his sufferings as a necessary consequence of the apostolic ministry of the gospel.

The final chapter gives attention to the longest description of Paul's hardships, 2 Corinthians 11.23-12.10. Lim sees Paul's boasting referenced in the OT pericopae of Jer 9.22-23/1 Kgdms 2.10. This boasting in weakness has a theological purpose as it relates to the story of Jesus. Thus, the paradigm of Jesus crucified in weakness but raised with power is mirrored in Paul's suffering and heavenly vision. For Lim, the congruency between Jesus and Paul is complete through the narrative exploration of this crucial passage. To sum up, the narrative methodology he has adopted has demonstrated the connection between Jesus and Paul.

Kar Yong Lim's work deserves to be commended. His attention to detail is impressive. He leaves no stone unturned when examining historical interpretations of difficult passages before coming to his own conclusions. His marriage of narrative study and exegesis is tempered with a proper understanding of how intra- and inter-textuality operates. In the end, his conclusions merit attention by Pauline scholars who wrestle with and are perplexed by the motif of suffering located in 2 Corinthians.

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***Reception Theory and Biblical Hermeneutics.* By David P. Parris. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publication, 2009, 326 pp., \$38.00 softcover, ISBN: 978-1-55635-653-7.**

“Reception theory protects a text such as the Bible from being taken captive by the trained scholars and opens its interpretation and the history of its effects to a much wider community than a theory such as

the historical-critical method does.” (169) This statement underscores the strength of this book’s argument and its current relevance. It stands in the tradition of the Reformation by trying to place the biblical text in the hands of everyone, not only the scholarly elite. David Parris exemplifies this model by teaching courses in New Testament literature, Greek, biblical interpretation, and hermeneutics at Fuller Theological Seminary’s extension campus in Colorado. He completed his doctoral work under Anthony Thiselton, the father of modern hermeneutics.

Parris posits that reception theory or history of interpretation has received little of the attention it deserves. He argues that reception theory is vital to the church because the history of interpretation *is* the history of the church (x-xi). He seeks to build upon the work of Ebeling, Froehlich, and Luz in order to integrate reception theory into church history and commentaries. His rationale is two-fold. First, “if the post-history of the text functions as a hermeneutical bridge between our contemporary understanding of the bible and the text itself, then we ignore this historical dimension at our own peril” (xvi). Second, he argues that his forerunners can be “strengthened and advanced by incorporating recent work in philosophical hermeneutics and literary theory, specifically the work of Hans Robert Jauss” (xvii). Parris indeed strengthens our understanding of hermeneutics and the importance of reception theory for the church.

Reception Theory and Biblical Hermeneutics is divided into three sections. The first discusses Hans Georg Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics, giving special attention to those aspects that most influenced Hans Robert Jauss, including reception theory. The second section discusses Jauss’s appropriation and development of Gadamer’s thought as it relates to reception theory. The final section, the book’s primary strength, examines reception theory and applies it to specific biblical texts.

Two aspects of the section on Gadamer are worth noting. First, Parris is to be applauded for his masterful explanation of Gadamer’s complex thought. He boils down Gadamer’s work to its essential components while adequately explaining its importance for biblical hermeneutics. Throughout the section, as well as the book, he uses examples to explain difficult concepts and applies the concepts directly to biblical hermeneutics. His discussion of the I/Thou is particularly helpful. He argues that if the biblical interpreter is to understand the text correctly and apply it to his life, then he must subject himself to the text, allowing it to confront his preunderstanding and challenge the way he views the world. This application of Gadamer is cogent in light of the

hermeneutical theories currently in vogue—theories that often elevate the interpretation above the text.

Second, Parris offers a needed corrective to Gadamer's view of universal history, which is that there is none. Parris argues instead that the death and resurrection of Christ necessitates a view of universal history. Parris states, "the death and resurrection was an eschatological event that occurred in the middle of time...In the resurrection, we see the historically conditioned nature of truth and also an anticipatory, proleptic, understanding of universal history, which is still open" (29). This view of universal history means that one must take the future into account in one's hermeneutical circle. Christ is the lens that all hermeneutics must use.

Parris' discussion of Jauss also has several notable points. First, his examination of Jauss' lecture, "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory," demonstrate how each of the seven theses relates to biblical hermeneutics. For example, he shows how the importance of understanding a text's original context allows readers to compare past and present understandings of a text so that they can then correctly understand the text's meaning. Parris points out that this model allows multiple correct interpretations, but that this does not necessitate that *all* interpretations are correct. By examining texts in their original context and in view of their reception history, the interpreter is able to decide which interpretations are valid and which are invalid. This places an important guardrail around exegesis. Here Parris offers a vital expansion of Jauss' theory by introducing the role of the Holy Spirit in interpretation: "The Holy Spirit guides the Church by clarifying the truth through the communal life of the Church" (142). The Holy Spirit, through the church, plays an essential role in interpretation by ensuring that valid interpretations are adopted and invalid interpretations are rejected. Parris' argument is cogent and reminds the biblical interpreter of the importance of illumination in the hermeneutical process.

Second, Parris discusses Jauss' three levels of reading—understanding, interpretation, and application. Parris argues that these three readings are distinct and involve different types of investigation; but he also asserts that these three levels are interrelated and are never truly separated from each other. Each level is interested in each aspect of reading. This is important for biblical hermeneutics because it offers a hermeneutical model that forces the interpreter always to have the questions, "What did the text say" and "What does the text say, and what do I say to it" in mind as he engages the Bible in dialogue (165). Therefore, this model prevents the reader from relegating the text to an

ancient relic and also prevents him from jumping too quickly to application so that he misunderstands the meaning of the text.

Third, Parris examines macro and micro shifts within a tradition, arguing that changes in a tradition account for multiple correct interpretations of a text. He uses the story of the “moon-struck” boy in Matthew 17 as an illustration to illustrate how the prevailing scientific paradigm (following Thomas Kuhn) controls the way the text is interpreted. The illustration succeeds in showing the usefulness of reception theory, but Parris fails to criticize Kuhn for his view that those who operate within a particular paradigm are not necessarily wrong when they misunderstand texts. It seems that a wrong interpretation is a wrong interpretation, regardless of one’s place in history.

Finally, he discusses Jauss’ summit-dialogue, the conversation between the most significant interpretations of texts throughout history. Most of the chapter is devoted to a reception history of the Wedding Feast. This section is one of the strongest points of the book as it provides the reader with a useful example of how both reception theory and summit-dialogue affect biblical hermeneutics.

A few other aspects of the work deserve criticism. First, though it does not affect the book’s content, it is filled with typographical errors such as misspelled words, missing spaces between words, and missing verbs. This makes the reading more difficult as the reader stumbles over errors that should have been corrected during the copy-editing phase. Second, Parris does not transliterate Greek words, which is unfortunate in a book otherwise accessible to the non-technical reader.

Overall, *Reception Theory and Biblical Hermeneutics* is an excellent work. Parris succeeds in his goal of describing the thought of Gadamer and Jauss and applying it to biblical hermeneutics. He makes a sound case for the application of their hermeneutical philosophy to the Bible and issues the call for reception theory to be integrated into church history as well as biblical commentaries. Readers would be hard pressed to find such a lucid explanation of the issues involved in reception theory or such a clear delineation of the major contributions of these two theorists. This work is heartily recommended for anyone, from novice to expert, who wishes to understand reception theory and its importance for biblical hermeneutics.

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Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation.
By James K. A. Smith. Cultural Liturgies, vol. 1. Grand Rapids:
Baker Academic, 2009, 238 pp., \$21.99 ISBN-10: 9780801035777

James K. A. Smith is Professor of Philosophy and Adjunct Professor of Congregational and Ministry studies at Calvin College, as well as serving as a Research Fellow of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. Additionally, Smith serves as the Executive Director of the Society of Christian Philosophers. His primary areas of academic interest are philosophy, theology, and cultural criticism. This volume is the first in a projected three-volume series in which Smith intends to set forth a philosophical theology of culture whose foundation consists of the primacy of worship. *Desiring the Kingdom* serves as the general introduction to the larger project, aimed at a slightly less scholarly audience than its sequels.

Smith has Christian educators and students clearly in mind in this volume. The more scholarly or technical arguments or elements are still present, but have been relegated to excurses as he intends to approach educators and students at a very practical level: anthropology and pedagogy. The book is Smith's opening argument for what amounts to a paradigm shift in the way education and formation are viewed and pursued.

In *Desiring the Kingdom*, Smith presents a vision of humanity in which the *primary* force behind decision-making, education, and all other aspects of how a life is lived in terms of desire, rather than cognition or belief. Smith does not deny the cognitive a role, but he wants to argue that people are not *primarily* driven by their adopted belief systems or philosophical commitments. At the most basic level, we are pulled and pushed about by our desire or longing for what we perceive to be the good life. Decisions and life-choices begin in the seat of desire or love, which Smith argues is the *kardia* of the NT and the "gut" of contemporary Western parlance (18). Human beings are creatures of love and worship, and it is the object of that worship and love that is at stake in Christian education. Competing educational/formative forces exist, and Christian educators must deploy appropriate "countermeasures" in order to produce Christians who worship and love in a manner consistent with the biblical witness and historic Christian orthodoxy.

People are not simply "thinking things" or "believing things." Instead, people are "worshiping things," what Smith labels *homo liturgicus* (40). In keeping with so much of contemporary apologetic

thought, Smith argues against a religious/nonreligious dichotomy. All people are religious. All people worship *something*. Therefore, all people are involved in some form of liturgy, sacred or secular. These liturgies are formative in ways that models of education that overemphasize “the life of the mind” cannot be. We are shaped by the practices in which we engage regularly, much more so than the ideas we seek to adopt into a carefully crafted “worldview.” These practices shape and become habits (55-62), and avoid a mind-body dualism that historically has been so damaging to the Christian faith by involving not just the mind in the process of Christian formation, but also involving the body. Worship is not simply a cognitive task to be undertaken, but rather a holistic experience that engages every part of what makes the worshiper human.

Education, then, is not so much about *information* as it is about formation. The typical Christian approach to education is lacking in efficacy precisely due to its misunderstanding of this foundational distinction. Since human beings are, at their core, “lovers,” the aim of education should be to shape what human beings will take as the object of their love, what vision of “the Kingdom” they will embrace and seek over the course of their lives. The love or desire of students does not reside in the intellect, asserts Smith while marshalling St. Augustine to support his contention. If this understanding is correct, and Smith argues quite convincingly that it just might be, then a great deal of reflection and revision is in order for educational institutions and individual educators that wear the label evangelical. As Smith points out, much of evangelical pedagogy focuses on worldview inculcation and analysis, both of which have come to be viewed in almost purely intellectual terms. Much evangelical education aims at getting the right ideas, perspectives, or interpretive lens in place within the mind of the student: “a pedagogy that thinks about education as primarily a matter of disseminating information tends to assume that human beings are primarily ‘thinking things’ and cognitive machines. Ideas and concepts are at the heart of such pedagogies because they are aimed primarily at the head” (28). Smith argues quite effectively that such an approach belies a paradigm that is distinctly “modern” (as opposed to “ancient” or “postmodern”) in its philosophical orientation and approach. It is, in other words, incorrigibly Cartesian (41-43). When one attempts to move from a “man as thinking being” anthropology toward a “man as believing” model, Smith again counters that no positive or constructive movement has occurred at all: “the person-as-believer model still gives us a somewhat reductionistic account of the human person—one that is still a tad bit heady and quasi-cognitive....Is the ‘believing’ pedagogy really going to

look much different from the ‘rationalist’ pedagogy? Insofar as the former still doesn’t seem very attentive to embodiment and formation by practice, it seems to me that the ‘believing’ pedagogy will simply be a tweaked version of the *informative paradigm*” (45).

How, then, must a distinctly Christian pedagogy be formulated and implemented? Smith’s answer may seem radical at first glance, but further reflection reveals its time-tested quality and simplicity. Educators must, first of all, be willing to undergo a serious revision of basic pedagogical principles and practices that seeks to understand, along with Marshall McLuhan, that “the medium is the message.” Educators and educational institutions must come to grips with the fact that *what* is being taught, is inextricably linked to *how* it is being taught (33). Content is important, of course, but methodology must never be mistaken for a neutral or purely pragmatic element of the overall educational endeavor. Smith’s model is characterized by four traits. First, it treats persons as “embodied actors rather than merely thinking things.” Second, it places a higher premium on “practices rather than ideas at the site of challenge and resistance.” Third, it understands human beings to be worshiping beings, and as such seeks to understand cultural practices and institutions through the lens of worship and liturgy.” Fourth, it maintains a sense of antithesis that is more robust than other models that can be properly termed “anti-cultural” or “anti-intellectual” (35).

There is much about *Desiring the Kingdom* that is commendable. Perhaps its greatest strength is Smith’s basic thesis regarding a needed paradigm shift in philosophical/theological anthropology as it relates to intentionally Christian education. Smith’s criticisms regarding the overly cognitivist or Cartesian flavor of much professional or institutional education in American evangelical circles certainly seem valid in many respects. One thinks of the multitude of educational research supporting the idea that lecture is probably the least effective pedagogical methodology, and yet the lecture, the sermon, and the contemporarily termed “talk” remain the primary means of reaching educational goals among North American evangelicals. If the goal is truly to make disciples rather than to engage in abortive attempts at doctrinaire downloading, might not Smith’s thesis and suggestions be a wise place to begin discussions regarding our methods as well as the content unconsciously inculcated by them?

The book is not without weaknesses, however. Chief among these weaknesses is Smith’s lack of concrete suggestions for the understanding or implementation of the alterations in methodology he assures practitioners that they must adopt. While the historic liturgical elements

Smith mentions remain quite common in more mainline-type churches, many individuals and churches within his target audience will find them either unhelpful in the ongoing quest for “relevant” worship or they will deem them too alien to allow for successful adoption. This may be more a weakness of the audience than of the book, but the disconnect will be felt, even within some churches in the Reformed tradition out of which Smith writes. Smith acknowledges these difficulties (151-54), and his irenic tone in dealing with them is helpful. Nevertheless, a gap of sorts remains between the worship language and forms Smith urges evangelicals to adopt and the language and forms with which so many are familiar.

All in all, the book is a great place to begin conversations about education or theological or philosophical anthropology. Smith’s thesis is interesting and, if as sound as it seems, could represent a significant change in the way education is pursued and received in the coming decades. The book will continue to be controversial among evangelicals of a certain theological or ecclesiological pedigree, but its content should be a topic of serious discussion, and its conclusions must be weighed carefully by both individual educators and educational institutions as both seek to better discharge the divine mandate to educate.

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***Doctrine That Dances: Bringing Doctrinal Preaching and Teaching to Life.* By Robert Smith, Jr. Nashville, TN: B&H, 2008, 207 pp., paper. ISBN-10: 9780805446845**

Doctrinal preaching is an important, but often neglected, facet of homiletics. Thankfully, Robert Smith, professor of Christian preaching at Beeson Divinity School, has offered an engaging portrayal of what doctrinal preaching is and why it is important. In his first chapter, Smith defines doctrinal preaching generally as “the escorting of hearers into the presence of God for the purpose of transformation” and more specifically as “the magnifying of Jesus Christ through the explanation and application of the basic truths of the Christian faith” (25). These definitions bring together what Smith keeps together throughout the book, the head and the heart of preaching, or teaching and proclamation. Doctrine must not only lead people to learn more about God, but it also must lead them to worship God. Doctrinal preaching is therefore necessary for God’s people to be transformed by God’s truth.

Smith holds together the head and the heart of preaching with the metaphor of dancing. He develops and defends this metaphor in chapters 2 and 3. The preacher is to be both the “exegetical escort” who, through the teaching of Scripture, brings people to God, and the “doxological dancer” who leads people to “exult in the exalting of God” (36). The doctrinal preacher’s content must adhere to the text of Scripture, but his delivery also must reflect the style of the text. Doctrinal preaching must have both a vertical orientation, the Word of God, and a horizontal orientation, the human beings who need to hear a relevant word from God. Smith illustrates his idea of doctrinal preaching from how the Bible itself teaches doctrine. The Bible uses visual aids--such as creation and the incarnation, words, songs, pictures, biographical snapshots, proverbs, metaphors, discipline, symbolic actions, types, parables, secular images, and benedictions--to teach doctrine. The Scriptures communicate the truth of who God is and what he does in relevant, understandable ways and the doctrinal preacher must do the same.

Chapters 4 and 5 further develop the metaphors of exegetical escort and doxological dancer. An exegetical escort relates the truth of Scripture to the people in ways that they can understand. In chapter 4 Smith elucidates several problems that he sees with contemporary preaching, including the dilution of grace, the eclipse of the cross, the demise of doctrine, and the detachment of God’s mystery from God’s revelation. The solution to these problems is for the preacher to escort the congregation to the text. Jesus serves as the ultimate example of the exegetical escort, as this is what he did with the two disciples on the Emmaus road (Luke 24:13-36). God shows up in the message when our exegesis matches his meaning in the biblical text. The preacher as a doxological dancer keeps praise and application at the forefront of his preaching. A doxological dancer, through his passionate and fervent delivery of the sermon leads the congregation to take joy in God. This does not mean, however, that the delivery of the sermon trumps the content of the sermon. Smith helpfully employs the five canons of criticism to debunk this idea. Many preachers invert the canons by starting with delivery and then moving to invention, when doctrinal preachers ought always to start with the preparation and content of their sermons. Jesus again serves as the ultimate example of the doxological dancer, as Smith uses Luke 24:13-36 to demonstrate that Jesus not only leads the disciples to the biblical text, but also leads to exalt in God.

Smith offers additional explanations and illustrations of doctrinal preaching in chapters 6 and 7. Chapter 6 explains the need for maintaining balance in doctrinal preaching between the head and the

heart. Doctrinal preaching is where transcendence and immanence meet, where the Spirit and the Word meet, and where Christology and an intratrinitarian community meet. Chapter 7 illustrates doctrinal preaching with the metaphor of jazz music. Smith sees seven connections between jazz and preaching: earthiness, perpetuity with improvisation, camaraderie with the spirit, a collaborative community, organization and organism, spontaneity versus stasis, and Christological components. This final chapter essentially summarizes the themes that Smith has explored throughout the book. The book ends with two sample sermons that serve as examples of doctrinal preaching.

Smith's jazz metaphor is appropriate not only for doctrinal preaching, but his entire book as well. *Doctrine that Dances* is a delight to read, and like jazz music it introduces the main themes at the beginning and continually comes back to them, adding something new and different each time. This does lead to some repetition of the book's main themes, but in a manner that does not feel redundant. While some may be put off by the use of "escort" and "dancer" as metaphors for preaching, Smith carefully nuances these terms and show exactly why they are appropriate for the preacher and how they are based in Scripture. They are metaphors that are applicable to all biblical preaching. To that end, Smith perhaps could have focused more on what makes doctrinal preaching different from other kinds of preaching, as much of what he says about doctrinal preaching applies to biblical preaching in general. Also, those looking for a book on how to put together doctrinal sermons will be disappointed, as Smith focuses on what doctrinal preaching is and what it looks like, not on how to do it. His sample sermons accurately illustrate his idea of doctrinal preaching, but do not serve as templates for it. *Doctrine that Dances* is almost a theology of preaching, as it continually emphasizes the importance of the Word and the Spirit, preaching before God and preaching to human beings, and the purposes of preaching doctrine. I would recommend this book to any preacher who is struggling to see the importance of theology for preaching, and to any theologian who is struggling to see the importance of preaching for theology.

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