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Editorial Introduction



Adam Harwood, PhD

Adam Harwood is Associate Professor of Theology, occupying the McFarland Chair of Theology; Director of the Baptist Center for Theology and Ministry; Editor, Journal for Baptist Theology and Ministry at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

The articles in present issue of JBTM were authored to commemorate the centennial of the founding of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Bo Rice (PhD, NOBTS), assistant professor of evangelism and preaching and associate dean of Supervised Ministry and Mentoring Programs at NOBTS, writes in the first article about the evangelistic emphasis of the seminary's second president, W. W. Hamilton (served 1928–1942). Evangelism is a significant part of the heritage and history of the seminary, as evidenced by the contributions of Hamilton at the institution as well his work among the convention of Southern Baptist churches. In the second article, Scott Moody, assistant professor of preaching at Luther Rice College and Seminary in Lithonia, Georgia, highlights the life and preaching of J. D. Grey, the colorful First Baptist New Orleans Baptist Church pastor (served 1937–1972) and SBC statesman. The third article was penned by Mark A. Rathel (PhD, NOBTS), professor of theology and philosophy at The Baptist College of Florida in Graceville, Florida. Rathel recounts the controversies surrounding the teachings on the atonement by three of its professors: Frank Stagg (served 1945–1964), Theodore Clark (dismissed in 1960), and Fisher Humphreys (served 1970–1990). The final article was co-authored by two NOBTS faculty members, Jeanine Cannon Bozeman, senior professor of social work, and Loretta G. Rivers, professor of social work. In the article, the authors trace the history of social work at NOBTS from the inception of the program in 1954 to the present. The essays concern the history of NOBTS and New Orleans in the fields of evangelism, preaching, theology, and social work. May these articles and the accompanying book reviews be useful for equipping the saints for works of service (Eph 4:11–13), and may its readers be faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ in New Orleans, in the United States, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

The "Bible Evangelism" of William Wistar Hamilton



Bo Rice, PhD

Bo Rice is assistant professor of evangelism and preaching and associate dean of Supervised Ministry and Mentoring Programs at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana.

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is comprised of churches which focus on the Great Commission. Throughout its history, the convention has given priority to evangelism. Due to declines in baptisms, the SBC is giving renewed emphasis to the work. Differing opinions abound but one thing remains, a commitment to the Great Commission.

The current scene is similar to the time of the early 1900s. After the Civil War, Southern Baptists placed great emphasis on church planting in order to accomplish the work of evangelism. As the SBC gradually recovered, a new emphasis on the convention's approach to evangelism came to the forefront.¹

In 1904, the SBC began to discuss its approach to evangelism when Pastor Len G. Broughton of Georgia proposed the following resolution:

RESOLVED, That the Convention appoint a committee of twelve pastors, not members of any Convention Board, to be known as the Committee on Evangelism for the Needy Sections of our Convention Territory;

That this Committee, in cooperation with the Secretaries of our Boards, shall employ a general evangelist, who shall also be Secretary of the Committee;

That said evangelist shall, in addition to his evangelistic work, gather statistics, disseminate information and call to his aid such help and helpers as the Committee may approve;

That the cooperation of the State Boards be secured as far as possible, where work is to be done in needy and destitute fields;

That the salary of the general evangelist be paid by the three Boards of the Convention, and other expenses, including the salaries of special evangelists, be arranged for by the field or cooperating board;

¹See Charles S. Kelley Jr., *How Did They Do It? The Story of Southern Baptist Evangelism* (Covington, LA: Insight, 1993), for a thorough analysis of how the Southern Baptist Convention organized for evangelism.

That collections be taken at every meeting held by the evangelists for the work of the Evangelistic Committee;

That annual reports be made to the State Boards in all the States where work has been done;

That the Committee also report annually to the Convention.²

Charles S. ("Chuck") Kelley writes, "The resolution marked a significant milestone in Southern Baptist life. The action proposed by Broughton was an attempt to have the denomination accept specific responsibility for the task of calling lost people to Christ and become involved in that task in clear, definite ways. As logical as that step may seem to Baptists today, it set off a great storm of controversy lasting two years."³

The convention did not act on the motion. Instead, a study committee was appointed to consider the issue and report back to the convention at the next meeting. The committee reported to the 1905 convention in Kansas City, Missouri. Kelley reports, "Committee members felt the appointment of a permanent evangelism committee and the hiring of a secretary for that committee were inappropriate. Instead they recommended the formation of another committee to study further the situation and suggest a course of action."⁴

The recommendation involved appointing a special committee of five members to consider the "Work of Evangelism in the several States of the Convention."⁵ The committee was instructed to study "the wisest methods in the work of evangelism consistent with our church polity and our denominational policy; to ascertain as far as practicable the special needs, and what is being done in the several States, as to the number of evangelists employed, where, and how employed, and as to the general results obtained."⁶ Also, the committee was tasked with carefully studying the methods of evangelists and "discreetly" recommending such men to churches if "in their view" they possessed the true gift of an evangelist.

The report and recommendation were approved at the Kansas City convention. The second committee was appointed which included Len G. Broughton of Georgia, George W. Truett of Texas, W. W. Hamilton of Kentucky, W. M. Vines of Virginia, and A. J. S. Thomas of South Carolina. This committee began their work and brought its report to the 1906 convention in Chattanooga, Tennessee. What followed is well documented by Kelley:

²"Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1904," "Resolution on Evangelism," available at <http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/501/resolution-on-evangelism>.

³Kelley, *How Did They Do It?*, 9–10. Hereafter, he will be referred to as Chuck Kelley.

⁴*Ibid.*, 10.

⁵"Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1905," 40, available at <http://digitalcollections.baylor.edu/cdm/ref/collection/ml-sbcann/id/926>.

⁶*Ibid.*

The new committee gave its initial report during the first evening session of the 1906 Convention. Further discussion of their recommendations was postponed until Sunday afternoon. This was a parliamentary move intended to make it impossible for the messengers to act on the motion, for business could not be conducted during a Sunday session. Later an attempt was made to move the discussion to a time period when action could be taken. After much debate and in a close vote, the time shift was denied. The failed motion to shift the time was followed by a motion to give the evangelism committee a third opportunity to address the body at a time when the messengers could take action. That motion carried. Vociferous debate and parliamentary maneuvering have not been unknown in Southern Baptist life, but what kind of evangelism report could create this kind of controversy?⁷

The committee reported of great evangelistic harvests that other denominations were seeing. These denominations were utilizing revival campaigns involving groups of churches in a joint crusade. Also, these other denominations utilized evangelists within their denominations. Kelley states, "Other denominations were appointing evangelists to organize and preach these revival campaigns. The committee felt Southern Baptists were not capitalizing on the ready harvest of souls because they lacked evangelists to mobilize their churches for evangelistic crusades."⁸ The committee argued it was time for the Southern Baptist Convention to have the evangelistic organization to match its evangelistic spirit. The committee recommended a more aggressive approach to evangelism:

First, That the Convention instruct its Home Mission Board to create the Department of Evangelism, and that a general evangelist, with as many associates as practicable, be employed.

Second, That the Home Board be requested to adopt such measures and methods as may be found necessary to give effectiveness to this department of the work.

Third, That in view of this advanced work our people be requested to increase their contributions by at least \$25,000 for its support, and that the Home Board be instructed to take the necessary steps to raise this amount in addition to the amount needed for other work.⁹

Oddly enough, a great debate arose as a result of the recommendation. The debate centered upon two issues: the role of the local church in evangelism and the role of evangelists in the church. Some convention messengers were confused as to why the denomination needed to involve itself in the work of evangelism that every local church should be completing. As Kelley states, "This debate was not over the importance or priority of evangelism. The issue was the role of the denomination in a ministry belonging to the local church."¹⁰ The issue that remained though was the churches were not doing the work of evangelism effectively. Many were doing little evangelistic work at all. The committee believed that developing a department of evangelism for the convention would be useful in training the local churches of the SBC to do the work more effectively.

⁷Kelley, *How Did They Do It?*, 12.

⁸Ibid.

⁹"Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1906," 42-43, available at <http://digitalcollections.baylor.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/ml-sbcann/id/7999/rec/1>.

¹⁰Kelley, *How Did They Do It?*, 13.

The second issue that arose from the recommendation was the role of evangelists in the local church. Kelley summarizes the concern:

Did the New Testament teach the calling and ministry of evangelists? Some questioned whether an "outsider" should help a local church do evangelism. Were local church members the only ones with the responsibility or authority to lead a church in evangelism? It appeared the SBC would not vote for a department of evangelism unless evangelists were understood to be fulfilling a New Testament office or function.¹¹

Debate continued until B. H. Carroll, founding president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, spoke to the validity of the office of evangelist. In *History of the Home Mission Board*, J. B. Lawrence commented, "Dr. Carroll proved by the Word of God that the evangelist was an appointee of God to do work of the most permanent character in the kingdom; that the evangelist, like apostles and pastors, was to be set in the church; that the New Testament stated clearly his peculiar functions and qualifications; and that the Word of God offered many illustrations of the work of evangelists in the first century."¹² After Carroll gave his moving speech in favor of evangelists and their work in the local church, the SBC passed the motion easily and instructed the Home Mission Board to form the department of evangelism.

Passing the recommendation was a great moment for the SBC. Messengers from individual churches agreed to unite around the work of evangelism by creating an entity that would focus on reaching the local communities for Christ. As Kelley states, "The decision of the messengers to take a denominational approach to a local church task was an important milestone in the development of the self-identity of Southern Baptists."¹³ Also, the decision gave direction for years to come for the new evangelism department:

The evangelism department was designed for one purpose—to plan, promote, and lead revival meetings. The secretary or head of the department was identified as a general evangelist. His staff consisted of other evangelists, preachers and singers, who traveled from place to place leading revivals. This approach was taken because other denominations and churches were finding revival meetings to be the most effective strategy available for winning people in the cities.¹⁴

The department of evangelism was tasked with assisting local churches in the work of evangelism by creating training materials, offering instruction in their implementation, and assisting churches in mass evangelism through crusades and revival meetings. However, the first task was finding the right man to lead the department.

¹¹Ibid., 14.

¹²J. B. Lawrence, *History of the Home Mission Board* (Nashville: Broadman, 1958), 94.

¹³Kelley, *How Did They Do It?*, 15.

¹⁴Ibid.

The Early Years of William Wistar Hamilton

William Wistar Hamilton was born on December 9, 1868, near Hopkinsville, Kentucky. He was the son of a Scotch-Irish merchant, William Perry Hamilton, who closed his business to fight in the Civil War. His mother, the former Katherine Price Roach, was the daughter of E.W. Roach, a school teacher and Baptist minister who baptized approximately five thousand people during his ministry. His family soon moved to Bristol, Virginia. When he was ten years old, William professed his faith in Christ after a revival service at the First Baptist Church of Bristol.¹⁵

Hamilton attended private schools as a young boy. Upon completion of high school, he enrolled in King College, a Presbyterian school in Bristol, Tennessee. He received his Bachelor of Arts in 1890. Soon after, Hamilton began his wrestle with a call to ministry. The death of Hugh Taylor, a close friend, had a significant influence on Hamilton's decision to enter the ministry. The two had planned on attending together Johns Hopkins University to study law and then return to Bristol as partners. After Taylor's death, Hamilton surrendered his life to serve the Lord.¹⁶

Hamilton attended The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He earned the ThM in 1893. From 1893 to 1896, he served as pastor of two churches in Vinton and Bonsack, Virginia. Later, he served as pastor in East Radford, Virginia, from 1897 to 1898 and in Bluefield, West Virginia, from 1898 to 1900. Hamilton accepted a call to serve as pastor of the McFarren Memorial Baptist Church (later named the Fourth Avenue Baptist Church) in Louisville, Kentucky, in January of 1900. While serving at this church, Hamilton earned his doctorate in theology from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1904.

The “Bible Evangelism” of William Wistar Hamilton

The work of evangelism always had a special place in Hamilton's ministry. He frequently attended Bible conferences at Winona Lake, Indiana. While there one year, Hamilton heard about the “Pittsburg Plan.” This plan was a simultaneous revival strategy developed by J. Wilbur Chapman, who was the founder of Winona Lake and the general secretary of evangelism for the Presbyterian denomination. The Pittsburg Plan was “an effort on the part of all denominations to reach unsaved and unenlisted [sic] people. One church in each section of the city was designated as the host church where services were held each night.”¹⁷ The other churches in the city would help in promoting, supporting, and attending the services.

¹⁵Todd Condell Hamilton, *William Wistar Hamilton: His Leadership Characteristics Compared with Leadership Principles Proposed by Tead, Titus, Ross, and Henry* (DRE diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, May 1965), 1–3.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 5–6.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 13.

Hamilton returned from Winona Lake in 1905 and preached a series of messages where he encouraged the use of the Pittsburg Plan in Louisville. A city wide crusade was set for the spring of 1906. A pastor from Pittsburg was scheduled to lead the campaign but became sick and had to withdraw. Hamilton was selected to preach in his absence. Todd Hamilton states, "The new venture was successful. Hamilton felt that these meetings probably influenced the Home Mission Board to consider him as secretary of the new Department of Evangelism."¹⁸

W. W. Hamilton was approached by the Home Mission Board to serve as its first Secretary of Evangelism in 1906. He served in this capacity from 1906 to 1909, and again from 1918 to 1922. Hamilton later served as the second president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary from 1928 to 1942. During his tenure with the Home Mission Board, Hamilton altered the Pittsburg Plan to the needs of Southern Baptists. Chuck Kelley records,

Crusades were organized to include Baptist churches only. Every Baptist church in the community was used for night services, and one central church hosted united day services. The campaigns concluded with a praise service held in the largest meeting place in the city on the last Sunday afternoon. The approach proved to be very successful for the denomination and its churches.¹⁹

Hamilton took the charge to recruit a "stable of evangelists" very seriously. He recruited white and African American evangelists who would go to churches all over the United States conducting simultaneous revivals and meetings throughout cities and associations. However, Hamilton had to fight a negative image of evangelists in his day while selecting his team. Many people complained of evangelists who cared more about their own ministries than the needs of the local church and who had a long history of financial impropriety. Hamilton made a point to recruit men who had a pastor's heart for the local church. Also, Hamilton paid them a salary so they did not have to rely upon the love offering. Hamilton explained his approach to this new denominational evangelism:

More men who are apt to teach and who have the shepherd heart will be willing to give themselves to evangelism. The churches which these men help will have their interest in denominational affairs quickened and intensified and broadened. Such evangelists are in a position to leave the best impression for good on the whole community, being less tempted to self-seeking and self-exaltation. This plan should encourage a kind of giving which is not done out of pity, or to the individual, but to the cause of Christ. Strong and capable men are available for places which could not otherwise secure them, and there is no reason why the evangelist should hold back any truth which needs to be preached.²⁰

¹⁸Ibid., 14.

¹⁹Kelley, *How Did They Do It?*, 18.

²⁰W. W. Hamilton, *Bible Evangelism* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention: 1921), 94.

Hamilton felt this approach would allow for faithful evangelists who were financially secure to have the greatest impact on the local church and the convention as a whole. Churches and associations who were interested in having a revival campaign could contact the Evangelism department. The department would help in the planning, promotion, and execution of the meetings while supporting the local churches.

Kelley points out three significant aspects of Hamilton's approach to denominational evangelism. The first was Hamilton's financial plan for the department. Paying the evangelists a salary allowed for the department to grow the work it was created to accomplish. Kelley states, "Love offerings were still taken at their meetings, but these love offerings went to the Home Mission Board. In this way, the department could recover much of its operating expenses and enlarge its staff. At one point as many as fifty evangelists were employed."²¹ This approach led churches to have confidence in the evangelists who were employed by the Home Mission Board.

A second significant aspect of Hamilton's plan was the pairing of crusades with evangelistic training in the local church. When churches paired together for a revival crusade, the central meeting held daily in the host church would incorporate evangelism training for all who could attend. Kelley comments, "At this time, Southern Baptists had only one seminary. The majority of pastors had little or no theological training. By incorporating various aspects of evangelistic training with the meetings, the evangelism department could provide basic training or continuing education for the pastors and laymen who attended."²² This approach allowed for evangelism training to be contextualized where the lessons taught could be implemented immediately.

The third significant aspect of Hamilton's approach to denominational evangelism was the inclusion of staff musicians who would handle all the singing and musical needs in a crusade. Hamilton commented on music in revivals:

Every great revival has been accompanied by great singing, and the Bible has as much to say about praise as it has about prayer, or about preaching. All the great evangelists have felt as did Mr. Moody, that there must be a Mr. Sankey if the meetings were to be at their best. There is need for the sermon in song as well as for the spoken message, and in going with Jesus after the lost it will always be helpful if we will go with songs on our lips. The great value of gospel singing in the quest for souls should be so emphasized that those who are thus gifted will feel the obligation to dedicate their best to Christ, rather than to the devil.²³

Also, Hamilton stated, "Evangelistic meetings need soulful singing, and for this reason revival music requires that we turn aside from the kind which many churches use in their

²¹Kelley, *How Did They Do It?*, 20.

²²*Ibid.*

²³Hamilton, *Bible Evangelism*, 167.

regular worship.”²⁴ As a result, Hamilton always employed musicians with experience in evangelistic music that churches could call upon to assist in the revivals and crusades.

Implications for the State of Evangelism in Today’s Southern Baptist Convention

The number of baptisms in the Southern Baptist Convention is a statistic that has been tracked for many years. Those familiar with the data rightly point out that the convention is seeing fewer and fewer people come to faith in Christ and attest to that decision through baptism. The SBC is at a point where some of its new initiatives could be reminded of what the Lord has used before. Maybe it is time for old and new to be united for one great commission.

Opinions vary greatly concerning the use of evangelists. The role of evangelist is biblical, and the SBC could benefit greatly from an intentional strategy that is developed for the use of evangelists in local churches. Figuring out ways to address the concerns and misunderstandings of using evangelists in the local church should be a priority. Evangelists and other preachers could be used once again for simultaneous revivals and crusades that focus on reaching entire communities and regions for Christ.

Most important, offering instruction on personal evangelism should be emphasized in the local church on a denominational scale. Doing so in conjunction with revivals and area crusades could still be a successful means of reaching a community with the gospel. Regardless of the methods employed, associations and churches should unite for the purpose of reaching their communities for Christ. SBC entities could partner together in developing resources and trainings that equip local churches for the work of evangelism.

Southern Baptists will continue as a people of the Great Commission. Opinions will vary on how to accomplish the task. Following the example of W. W. Hamilton could prove valuable. We must continue developing new initiatives while building upon proven plans from our past. In the end, we must tell people about the love of Christ and equip our churches to do so as well.

²⁴Ibid., 169.

The Life and Preaching of James David Grey



Scott Moody, PhD

Scott Moody is assistant professor of preaching at Luther Rice College and Seminary in Lithonia, Georgia.

Which way does the wind blow? With seasonal storms of disease, the humidity of indifference and lack of education, the dry days of loneliness, and the restlessness of a new city [being born], those who came first to tell the Baptist story and to read the Bible to the people in New Orleans dealt courageously and sometimes won. The climate for Protestant and Baptist messages was not good, but the need was great.¹

The “winds” of J. D. Grey’s ministry rustled the city of New Orleans for almost four decades. He served as pastor of First Baptist Church New Orleans from May 1, 1937, until December 1972. During his tenure as pastor of the church, Grey had the distinction of becoming the youngest man ever elected (at that time) to serve as president of the Southern Baptist Convention (1952–53). Who is this man who received the call to pastor one of the leading churches of the convention and was elected to its highest office?

This paper will examine the life and ministry of James David Grey. Particular attention will be given to the pastorates, convention involvement, and prophetic preaching of J. D. Grey.

Biographical Sketch

James David Grey² was born in the western Kentucky town of Princeton on December 18, 1906. Shortly after his birth, his parents relocated to Paducah, Kentucky, and joined the Second Baptist Church. At twelve years of age, Grey heard Dr. John W. P. Givens preach on

¹Those words are from the opening paragraph of the 125th anniversary booklet prepared by the members of First Baptist Church New Orleans: *The Story of First Baptist Church* (New Orleans: First Baptist Church, 1968), 3. The quotation serves as a fitting opening for a paper dedicated to the ministry of James David Grey in the city of New Orleans, a city very familiar with hurricanes. One book lauds Grey with the following hagiography:

The centerpiece of Baptist life in New Orleans for over thirty years, [Grey] is more colorful than a Mardi Gras parade, more diverse than the Vieux Carre, more dynamic than the great ships riding in the harbor of the city. Although he is void of the trappings of piety, he is a genuine New Testament saint. St. J. D. would never accept canonization from any name brand denomination, but he would acquiesce to the title if it were offered “prehumorously.” Taken from James Cole and Robert Lee, *Saint J. D.* (Waco: Word Books, 1969), i.

²It seems that J. D. Grey was named only by his initials J. D. at birth but later adopted James David as his name. Baptist Press, July 29, 1985, “Former SBC President J. D. Grey Dies at 77.”

the penitent thief in a revival service and made his profession of faith in Jesus Christ.³ A half dozen years later, Grey preached his first sermon in the same church, having accepted a call to preach the gospel.⁴ Upon graduation from high school, Grey entered Union University and studied under Dr. I. N. Penick, professor of Bible. Routh writes, “Dr. Grey can remember now hearing Dr. Penick say time and time again, speaking of the Bible, ‘Brethren, whet your Jerusalem blade and go down to battle.’”⁵

Grey graduated from Union in 1929 and enrolled in Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He earned the Master of Theology degree in 1932.⁶

Churches

Grey began his pastorates in earnest as a student at Southwestern. During those days, he pastored two churches: Vickery Baptist Church, Dallas (1929–31) and Tabernacle Baptist Church, Ennis (1931–34).⁷ He later accepted the call to First Baptist Church, Denton (1934–37). While at Denton, Grey led the church in Sunday school growth, having attained its highest average attendance (929). Over one hundred souls were baptized the very first year of his pastorate.⁸ Hints of Grey’s subsequent public stands against the social evils of his day surface in this pastorate. The minutes of FBC Denton indicate that Grey led his church to affirm the local sheriff and county attorney “for their actions in suppressing gambling and

³Porter Routh, *Chosen For Leadership: Sketches of 39 Presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention* (Nashville: Broadman, 1976), 67–68. Detailed biographical information about J. D. Grey is rare; there is little anecdotal insight beyond vignettes found in works like the aforementioned Routh book. Al Fasol acknowledges that even “autobiographical information about J. D. Grey is at a premium.” Al Fasol, *With a Bible in Their Hands: Southern Baptist Preaching, 1679–1979* (New York: University Press of America, 1997), 186. He quotes Grey as saying, “The world is flooded with autobiographies about men who wanted the world to remember them. I just want to be remembered as a humble servant of Jesus Christ” (186).

⁴Grey was ordained by the Immanuel Baptist Church in Paducah, Kentucky, in 1925.

⁵*Ibid.*, 68. While at Union, Grey met and married Lillian Gaines Tooke on September 16, 1927. In 1941, they welcomed the birth of their twin daughters, Mary Beth and Martha Ann.

⁶Grey also received honorary doctorates from Union University (DD, 1938), Louisiana College (LLD, 1952), and Baylor University (DD, 1953). Moreover, Grey received the “Distinguished Alumni Award” from Southwestern Seminary in 1964, along with other such Southwestern luminaries as Robert Naylor and Baker James Cauthen.

⁷Grey’s tenure at Tabernacle marked him for ministerial promise: “Tabernacle Church called him for a year and in eleven months experienced an increase of 142 in membership, sixty-four of these for baptism” (*The Story of First Baptist Church*, 18).

⁸L. P. Floyd, *The First 100 Years of the First Baptist Church, Denton, Texas, 1858–1958* (Denton, TX: Terrill Wheeler, 1958), 1964. Floyd highlights Grey’s ability to reach men in this pastorate, having established a Bible study class for men in a downtown theater called “The Downtown Bible Class.” Dr. Grey taught the men’s class throughout his tenure as pastor of FBC Denton.

enforcing other laws.”⁹ On April 18, 1937, Grey resigned his pastorate in Denton to accept the pastorate of First Baptist Church New Orleans.¹⁰ The final summation of Grey’s pastorate was expressed in the formal church minutes: “Dr. Grey’s pastorate began in September, 1934 and continued until April 30, 1937, extending over slightly more than two and one-half years, a rather brief pastorate in point of time, but one that was a distinct success in every sense of the word.”¹¹

Grey’s ministry at FBC New Orleans (1937–72) seemed to move him to the pinnacle of his pastoral influence. It was during this pastorate that he was elected to serve as president of the Louisiana Baptist Convention (1949–50) and of the Southern Baptist Convention (1952–53). Besides holding elected office, Grey served on numerous boards for various international, national, and state Baptist agencies and institutions. He was invited to preach on the prestigious “Baptist Hour” in 1949.

First Baptist Church New Orleans grew in membership during Grey’s tenure from 1,536 members to over 4,000. Facilities were expanded: a new sanctuary costing \$1.6 million was completed. Dr. Billy Graham participated in the dedication of the new building. That was followed by the construction of a new gymnasium at a cost of \$1 million (increasing the total value of church properties to \$3 million). In addition to the expansion of membership rolls and facilities, Grey raised the influence and visibility of the church in the greater New Orleans area, the state and the nation.¹² Grey served as president of the Metropolitan Crime Commission,¹³ as well as of the Greater New Orleans Federation of Churches.

⁹Floyd, *First Denton*, 168.

¹⁰Grey acknowledged his sorrow for having to leave the flock at FBC Denton and expressed appreciation for them:

It is not an easy matter for me to present my resignation to the church. In the Lord’s work our own personal feelings must be made subject to His Divine Will. It is not an easy task to sever the pleasant and tender relations that have held us together these two years and eight months. The Lord’s favor has been upon us and what little may have been accomplished has been due to the great spirit of a noble Church and the blessings of our Heavenly Father. (Ibid., 170)

¹¹Ibid., 172.

¹²On the FBC New Orleans website, the following tribute was paid to J. D. Grey in connection with the dedication of the new sanctuary: “The building was dedicated by Dr. Billy Graham. Dr. Grey led the church during an era of significant ministry expansion and great community involvement” (<http://www.fbno.org/about-fbno/our-history/>, accessed on May 12, 2012; the page is not at the website at publication date).

¹³Grey’s involvement with this organization was preceded by his efforts to formalize the creation of an organization that would directly address moral and civic issues from the perspective of the Bible. He suggested such an organization to a group of concerned leaders meeting in his church study on August 24, 1942, that an organization be established that came to be known as the Louisiana Moral and Civic Foundation (LMCF). The following excerpt narrates the subsequent founding of this organization:

When the founders of LMCF met in September 1942, they spoke of a need “to provide, promote, and protect a positive moral climate for the state of Louisiana.” They wanted to form a “cooperative effort”

Paige Patterson, having studied and pastored in New Orleans during Grey's tenure, described him as one of "the last of the old Plantation Pastors."¹⁴ He elaborated, "This meant that he owned the plantation. He ruled the plantation."¹⁵

Though J. D. Grey did lead an impeccable life, he maintained one habit which drew a lot of attention: he smoked cigars. Paige Patterson relates that *TIME* magazine once featured him in an article and wrote about that he smoked cigars. Grey fired off a letter to the editor in response to the article which said, in part, "It has been improperly reported that I smoke cigars. Not true. I smoke good cigars."¹⁶

Grey believed that his duties as pastor compelled him to be prophetic in his preaching: "He believes that in the prophecy of the pulpit and the centrality of preaching as an act of worship."¹⁷ Like Savonarola of old, Grey was involved with the Word of God and the world of his people: "Like Florence, New Orleans required a pastor who could live in the midst of a fun-loving city and at the same time challenge it prophetically to its very core."¹⁸ Cole and Lee point out how Grey avoided any vestige of compromise: "[Grey] learned early in his ministry that if a person compromises with politicians by accepting government favors for public silence he has painted himself into the corner of their contempt."¹⁹ One heralded example of Grey's prophetic ministry toward the politicians of his day occurred

so that people of "all faiths and of no faith" could work together to make Louisiana a better place in which to live. Plans for a "front-line organization" to "equip" those who wanted to impact the moral climate of our state and to serve as a "facilitator" for concerned citizens was set into motion. The organization was named . . . the Louisiana Moral and Civil Foundation. In 1942, the first President of LMCF, Dr. Edgar Godbold, described the goal of the newly formed organization, as providing an opportunity where people of all faiths, and of no faith, could work together to make a better Louisiana (Louisiana Moral and Civic Foundation, <http://www.lmcf.org/home.html>, accessed on May 13, 2012; the page is not at the website at publication date).

¹⁴Paige Patterson. Interview with Scott Moody. Email and phone interview, April 13, 2012.

¹⁵*Ibid.* A rather humorous incident narrated by Grey himself would seem to agree with this assessment:

[T]he church was gathered on a Wednesday evening at prayer meeting and the congregation was granting letters. I was reading off a list of names of people and letters being granted. I said, "All in favor of granting the motion, say 'Aye.' All opposed, say 'No.'" A loud "No" startled the crowd. I didn't know who it was. Then he staggered up. He was a drunk who had slipped in and he continued, "I don't object, Reverend, but, read the list again." About that time two of the men who were there grabbed him and ushered him out. It was so tense that you could hear a pin drop, so I added, "Anybody else want to raise a question about we do in this church?" (Cole and Lee, *Saint J. D.*, 32)

¹⁶Patterson, phone interview, April 13, 2012. Grey responded in kindness to a pastor brother who had written to excoriate him for this habit: "Dear Brother . . . Yes, you have been correctly informed. Occasionally I do enjoy a good cigar. But I tell you, if you don't smoke, I don't blame you a bit and wouldn't criticize you because that is your business, and I wouldn't try to force you against your will. And if anybody ever does try to force you to start smoking, you let me know and I'll try to come to your defense" (Cole and Lee, *Saint J. D.*, 31).

¹⁷Cole and Lee, *Saint J. D.*, 62.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 61.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 126.

in connection with the inauguration of Earl K. Long. Long announced that Proverbs 14:34—“Righteousness exalteth a nation”—would serve as his inaugural text. Grey, seizing the opportunity to proclaim the biblical meaning of the text in light of the governor-elect’s selection, announced that he would preach on that text the following Sunday morning. He sent the governor a telegram informing him of sermon text and inviting him to the service. The governor respectfully declined, but the transcript of Grey’s sermon was printed on the front page of the Monday edition of the *Times Picayune*. Grey’s counsel to the governor garnered front page coverage.²⁰ Grey remarked that he did not want the governor’s audacity in selecting such a text to go unchallenged if he had no intention of living by such truth.²¹

The FBC pastor sought to enlist the help of clergy from other denominations and even other faiths in order to provide a spiritual influence on the city. He deliberately, and unapologetically, pursued an ecumenical agenda to that end. In address to the 1967 Southern Baptist Convention, Grey decried the exclusivism which has isolated Southern Baptists:

As Southern Baptists our image has been often been marred by an exclusivism that has kept us in our local communities from being good neighbors and friends of other Christians. . . . In years gone by when we were largely limited to parochial, county, and even state areas, we could practice exclusivism. However, in this space age this is a luxury we can ill afford. We can no longer be little isolated islands in the great oceans of mankind. We cannot, we must not, draw our Pharisaical robes about us and remain aloof from other Christians and men of goodwill.²²

Such ecumenism marked Grey’s ministry in New Orleans. He once chaired the Social Betterment Committee of [the] Protestant Ministerial Union, an ecumenical effort to provide spiritual guidance, prophetic witness, and benevolent ministry to the greater New Orleans area. He had no compunction in meeting with the Roman Catholic Archbishop Rummel of the New Orleans Archdiocese to ask him to join them in their crusade. The meeting proved successful: “Suffice it to say that soon thereafter a letter from the Archbishop was read in every church in the Archdiocese condemning gambling, vice, and corruption.”²³

Why did Grey seek to have such a conspicuous presence in “the city that care forgot”? He explains, “I have said about New Orleans, frequently and even recently, that is the type of town that first gets on your nerves; next in your hair (or maybe get in your hair first, then on your nerves); and finally on your heart. Then you’re stuck. . . . The Antique Lady on the Mississippi has gotten on my heart and I’m stuck with her.”²⁴

²⁰Ibid., 126–27.

²¹J. D. Grey, “Unchristian America,” audiocassette. Sermon delivered (n.d.) at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, TX: A.W. Roberts’ Library, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Audiocassette.

²²Cole and Lee, *Saint J. D.*, 103.

²³Ibid., 104.

²⁴Ibid., 86–87.

Convention Involvement

J. D. Grey actively served at the state and national levels of Southern Baptist life. It already has been noted that he was elected president of both the Louisiana and Southern Baptist Conventions. He provided steady leadership in some very tense moments. During his time as president of the SBC, the tumultuous issue dealing with Southern Baptists' involvement with other religious bodies surfaced at the 1953 convention in Houston. The Committee on SBC Relations with Other Religious Bodies would present its report to the SBC calling for messengers to set doctrinal parameters in relation to other faiths. The secular press gathered expecting a bloodbath of controversy. Grey recalls:

There were some good recommendations in the report, which were acceptable to the vast majority present. But there were many among these who objected that the committee was too authoritarian in demanding that the Southern Baptist Convention be a body to exact doctrinal positions and enunciate them. We were not a body that would issue edicts and encyclicals because of the democratic structure of the convention.²⁵

After a lengthy, heated discussion, one messenger moved that the work of the committee be continued for another year, effectively tabling the recommendation and allowing the controversy to continue to fester. More fiery rhetoric erupted. The allotted period for discussion of the report having expired, messengers voted to continue discussion later that night at 9:30 PM. The afternoon papers were predicting a cataclysmic split in the SBC. Grey possessed a keen sense of what was at stake in these deliberations; he met personally with the messenger—E. D. Solomon—who had moved to continue the work of the committee for another year. Solomon asked Grey, “Do you feel that maybe it would be best for us not to continue the committee? If you think so, I will go in and ask that my motion to continue the committee be withdrawn.” Grey responded, “Brother Solomon, I believe it would be a great service to the Convention.” With the press and messengers assembled to discuss the motion, everyone was expecting dissension. To everyone’s amazement, Solomon withdrew his motion. The convention then adopted the committee report and within minutes Grey was ready to call for adjournment, but not before reveling in the moment and taking opportunity to upbraid the secular press in underestimating the resolve of Southern Baptists to discuss matters thoroughly, though sometimes heatedly, in order to reach a peaceful resolution. He made his remarks to sustained applause and frequent laughter. These remarks have been called Grey’s “Second Presidential Address.” The full text of his statement is worth reading, since it shows Grey’s remarkable ability for extemporaneous speech.²⁶

Speaking of humor, Grey skillfully interjected humor in order to diffuse tense situations. Often his humor was spur-of-the moment: “I just of sort fly by the seat of my pants or

²⁵Ibid., 49.

²⁶Ibid., 49–55.

wait for impressions to come up naturally.”²⁷ In another discussion at the 1953 convention in Houston, Grey spoke up against a recommendation—The Booz, Allen and Hamilton Report—to abolish the Home Mission Board (now the North American Mission Board). He remarked, “Brethren, it looks to me like we are trying to kill the Home Mission Board, which has been the mother of most of us; and if this is going to be Mother’s funeral, I want more than a shirt-tail full of people here this afternoon to debate this Booz, Allen and Budweiser report.” The assembly responded to Grey’s not-so-subtle slur on the report, and the Home Mission Board survived.

Grey retired from his pastorate of the First Baptist Church New Orleans in 1972, following almost 36 years of ministry. He spent his retirement years in ministry as actively as his body would allow him to be. Grey died in 1985 at the age of 79.

Preaching

This paper will examine four sermons of J. D. Grey. One of the sermons—The presidential address of J. D. Grey—was preached at the Southern Baptist Convention in 1952 in Miami. The next sermon—“The Marvel of Saving Grace”—was included in an anthology of sermons edited Gerald Martin (1969). The third sermon—“The Story of New Orleans”—was a pre-recorded sermon preached by Grey in Ft. Worth and released for distribution to the Southern Baptist Convention churches and pastors (1971). The final sermon—“Some Things Seminary Professors Can’t Teach You”—was preached at the Southwestern Seminary chapel service on May 4, 1958. These sermons will demonstrate the homiletical style and method of J. D. Grey. With the bulk of Grey’s pastoral sermons unavailable, the wit and wisdom of Grey regarding preachers and preaching is available from one of Grey’s few books—*Epitaphs for Eager Preachers*.²⁸

The Presidential Address of the 1952 Southern Baptist Convention

J. D. Grey fulfilled one of his responsibilities as president of the Southern Baptist Convention by preparing and delivering the president’s address.²⁹ This is a time when the

²⁷Ibid., 42–43. Grey diffused the tension of a particularly controversial deacons’ meeting at FBC. At the end of heated discussion all eyes were on the pastor. What would their undershepherd say? Grey picks up the story,

Brother Chairman, I’ve been thinking in all of this discussion—and you could have heard a pin drop—I’ve been thinking of a beautiful philosophy that I heard not long ago that I think will give up guidance: “Wet birds never fly at night.” “Yes, wet birds never fly at night.” Then I sat down, leaving them completely bewildered and befuddled. As the meeting broke up, the deacons left in an amicable spirit. . . . I never did explain [the saying], and I never will. (Ibid., 44–45)

²⁸J. D. Grey, *Epitaphs for Eager Preachers* (Nashville: Broadman, 1972).

²⁹Grey’s 1952 Presidential Address can be found on pages 59–64 of *Annual of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1952*, available at http://media2.sbhla.org.s3.amazonaws.com/annuals/SBC_Annual_1952.pdf.

president sets the tone for the convention by challenging and inspiring the messengers in keeping with the theme of the convention. This sermon highlighted the history of Southern Baptists, starting with William B. Johnson of South Carolina in the nineteenth century. Grey traces the work of Southern Baptists from their founding on May 8, 1845, to his present day. He seizes upon a particular statement in the preamble of the constitution of the convention which states that the Southern Baptist Convention exists “for the purpose of carrying into effect the benevolent intention of our constituents by organizing a plan for eliciting, combining, and directing the energies of the denomination for the propagation of the gospel.”³⁰ The remainder of the sermon is driven by the explanation and expansion of the meaning of this text. This is really the text of the sermon, rather than a text of Scripture. A litany of Southern Baptist heroes and heroines, both recent and remote, are summoned up by Grey to remind convention goers of their past and rally them to their future, a future which will require their greatest commitment to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ and govern themselves by historic Baptist principles.

Because of Grey’s oratorical abilities, one is left with little doubt that his message was received with great appreciation and adulation by the messengers. He rang the bell for the heritage and history of Southern Baptists. Yet, one searches in vain for even a single reference to Scripture, let alone a passage of Scripture. To be fair, it may not have been Grey’s intent to preach a sermon, as much as it was to make a speech.

The Marvel of Saving Grace

Grey’s sermon titled “The Marvel of Saving Grace” was included in an anthology of sermons edited by Gerald Martin for his book, *Great Southern Baptist Evangelistic Preaching*.³¹ Grey’s message occupies the first chapter in Martin’s book and is based on Ruth 2:10, “Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?” Grey looks at Ruth’s question to Boaz and makes it our question to the Lord Jesus Christ: “As we look at this question, and as we relate it to our standing before God, we who are saved are made to marvel at God’s saving grace. Let us come closer to the question—let us apply it to the matter of salvation and let us ask again and again: ‘Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?’”³² Viewed in this light, the question at once becomes: a plea of amazement, an acceptance of beneficence, and a cry of confession.

This is perhaps the most biblical sermon that this writer has found of Grey’s. It follows the text reasonably close as it ponders this question from Ruth’s perspective as one in need of the benevolence of Boaz. Grey then connects Ruth condition to our own. We are in need

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Gerald Martin, *Great Southern Baptist Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969), 13–18.

³²Ibid., 14.

of a benevolent Kinsman-Redeemer like Boaz. The sermon closes with an emotional appeal to respond to God's offer of love: "So it is with the love of God the Father. It reaches to the hardest heart today. He offers the worst sinner who lives complete forgiveness if that one will confess his sins and fall into the loving, forgiving arms of the Father who for Christ's sake will forgive every sin."³³

The New Orleans Story

The sermon titled "The New Orleans Story" is vintage Grey.³⁴ The man known as "Mr. Baptist of New Orleans" preaches a sermon on Titus 1:5, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee." Grey connects Crete with New Orleans, using the pejorative epithet "slow bellies" (1:12) to make his point. But what does God think about Crete, New Orleans, or any city? "God needs men, warm hearted men who will love the city and preach His Word. So many preachers try to be relevant, when the need of the hour is to preach the Gospel and live by that Gospel. God will be with such a man and use him to impact his city."³⁵

Grey calls upon preachers to feel a sense of mission, like Paul in Crete. Just as God sent Paul to Crete, he also sent Baptists to New Orleans. Grey highlights the history of Baptists in the Crescent City, beginning with Cornelius Paulding, a layman who provided the first Baptist witness in 1843. Grey cites Isaiah 60:22—"A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in his time"—as scriptural corroboration for God's work in the city.

Grey then develops his message of engaging the city according to God's own heart by calling on his listeners to demonstrate the qualities of cooperation and concern. He concedes that these qualities are not enough without the help of others. Baptists must work with others if a city is to be impacted. Lest others accuse Grey of liberalism because of his ecumenical emphasis, he remarks, "I am rock-ribbed, dyed in the wool, west Tennessee, west Kentucky, J. R. Graves-type Southern Baptist who believes the Bible from kiver to kiver. But that doesn't keep me from cooperating with people of other faiths, or no faith."³⁶ The groups mentioned by Grey included any, religious or secular, that desired to improve the city. For example, Grey teamed up with service organizations, other religious bodies (Protestant and Catholic), and government entities in order to establish righteousness in the city. Grey's ethical agenda had a practical bent to it.

³³Ibid.

³⁴J. D. Grey, "The New Orleans Story," audiocassette. Sermon delivered in 1971 at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, TX: A.W. Roberts' Library, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Audiocassette.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

Grey closes his sermon by calling on his listeners to follow the example of Christ who wept over Jerusalem (Matt 23:37). He closes with this appeal:

Instead of diagnosticians, we need surgeons. Instead of curses, we need cures. Instead of condemnation, we need compassion. Instead of excoriation, we need example. Instead of critics, we need Christians. Instead of taunts, we need tears. Among us, many there are who can condemn, but who can construct? Many can warn but who can weep? Many criticize but who can Christianize? Many can cut deep gashes of vituperation but who can pour in the oil of deep healing? Many who can send them away into oblivion but who can bring them to the Savior? Many who can damn them into a devil's hell for eternity but fit them for habitation in heaven for eternity through regenerating faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? Many who can make them Satan's slaves but who can make them the Savior's servants?³⁷

This sermon reveals both the pastor's heart and prophetic spirit of the preacher. He yearns for his city with the compassion of Christ. Grey's prescient insights into the strategic importance of the cities in the overall plan of God for reaching the world make him an "urbanologist" living in the middle of the twentieth century.

One striking story emerged from this sermon. Grey related how the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce wanted to enlist the local ministers in a "Clean Up the City" campaign. On a given Sunday, the Chamber asked its ministers to preach on cleaning up New Orleans. Grey agreed to preach about the campaign. He sent a letter to the executive director of the Chamber and other public officials, inviting them to the service in which he would preach on cleaning up the city. On that Sunday, Grey indeed preached on cleaning up the streets of New Orleans, but he did not stop there: "We must go beyond that. We must clean up the gambling in the city. We must clean up the corruption in city hall. We must clean up the slot machines out of the city of New Orleans. We must clean up the police force. We must clean up the dives, the places of iniquity, the strip-joints from our city. We must make New Orleans completely clean."³⁸

Though the mayor was absent, Grey sent him a copy of his sermon. He also dispatched one to the New Orleans newspapers. His sermon gained momentum in the city through the newspapers. The service clubs picked up on it, as well as the ministerial alliance, and the "Clean Up the City" campaign gained traction and began to change the city.

Soon thereafter, Grey preached a message entitled, "Vice Incorporated." In the message, he launched into the evils of organized crime and how its corruption had benighted the city for too long. The Associated Press (AP) picked up the transcript of the sermon and printed it. Some time later, producers from Universal Pictures read the AP story and decided to cast Dr. Grey in a small part in their upcoming motion picture—*Damn Citizen*—a story featuring the life of Col. Francis Grevemburg, a reform-minded state-superintendent of

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid.

police. The opening scene of the movie shows the marquee of First Baptist Church New Orleans announcing J. D. Grey's sermon title—"Vice Incorporated." Grey asked, the movie's producer, Herman Webber, "How did a Baptist preacher get in this script?" The producer replied, "When we were researching for this picture in New Orleans, the name 'J. D. Grey' kept popping up. It looked like you were constantly arguing for good government."³⁹

Some Things Seminary Professors Can't Teach You

Grey preached a sermon titled "Some Things Seminary Professors Can't Teach You" at a chapel service at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.⁴⁰ He acknowledged that the sermon had been a work in progress since its inception at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary more than a decade earlier. The message, completely topical and moralistic, focuses upon the character issues of ministry. He calls the sermon part of the "The J. D. Grey Endowed Lectures."

The "things that seminary professors can't teach you" include:

- (1) Gratitude
- (2) Loyalty
- (3) Friendliness
- (4) Fundamental honesty

Grey does joke about honesty and his preaching: "When better sermon are built, I'll preach them. When you read one sermon and preach it, that's plagiarism. When you read several sermons and preach them, that's research. I'll get my first roman (point) from Truett, get my last roman from Lee, and the second roman from Campbell and I'll have a very good, stolen sermon."⁴¹

- (5) Alumniology ("Be a booster for the school")
- (6) Gumption ("horse sense, stable thinking")
- (7) Graciousness
- (8) Industry

Grey concludes this sermon with the first mention of a biblical text, Prov 22:29, "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men." The sermon, interspersed with humorous stories, is laced with moralisms and

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Grey, "Some Things That Seminary Professors Can't Teach You," audiocassette. Sermon delivered in 1958 at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, TX: A.W. Roberts' Library, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Audiocassette.

⁴¹Ibid.

pithy exhortations. Certainly a message on the character of ministers is needed. But one wonders why Grey did not develop such a message from the text of Scripture.

Based on this study of the homiletical efforts of J. D. Grey, the following conclusions are offered:

(1) Grey combined compassion and courage in his prophetic preaching. He held the city in his heart as he heralded against its sin. Roland Q. Leavell, former president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (1946–58), writes about the primary requirements of prophetic preaching:

It takes conviction, character, and courage to fulfill the duties of a true prophet. . . . Such courage can be maintained only by a character which is built on faith in God. That type of courage is everlastingly essential when a preacher attacks social unrighteousness. . . . Deep convictions against social unrighteousness are based on deep convictions about the righteousness of God.⁴²

He further states, “All too many pulpit gestures are made by wide-spreading arms rather than by pointed fingers. The Old Testament prophets were not given to preaching vague generalities; they called sins by their names. They were not like hunters using shotguns which scatter the shot; they used high-powered rifles.”⁴³ This writer is left wondering how much more effective a preacher might be who possessed the courage, charisma, wit, and humor of Grey along with the skills and commitment to preach text-driven sermons.⁴⁴

(2) Grey utilized humor in his sermons. He never seemed to take himself too seriously. Grey engaged his rapier wit almost every time he mounted the pulpit. However, it seemed at times that he used humor for humor’s sake. Perhaps, Jeter’s counsel to Grey years earlier should have been heeded:

⁴²Roland Q. Leavell, *Prophetic Preaching Then and Now* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1963), 39, 40.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 41–42.

⁴⁴In retrospect, one wonders why Grey did not engage in more text-driven preaching. His topical, moralistic sermons avoided exposition of the biblical text. Phillip Sumrall wrote his doctoral dissertation on the preaching of J. D. Grey in 1979. See Phillip Ernest Sumrall, “A Study of the Preaching of James David Grey,” ThD dissertation (New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1979). After thoroughly researching Grey’s sermons and personally interviewing Grey, Sumrall reached the following conclusions:

- Grey was mainly a topical preacher and not an expositor: “Grey used the text for a basis for the sermon, but the structure of the sermon was not usually found in the text” (198).
- Grey faltered in the preparation phase of the sermon: “If Grey had spent more time preparing his sermons, he probably would have preached more expository sermons. Consistent exposition of the Scriptures apparently took more time than he had to devote” (200).
- Grey’s sermon structures were more often derived from his subject rather than the text of Scripture: “Though his sermons were rich in quotation from the Scriptures, they were not on the average expositions of Scripture. The result was that Grey sometimes spoke for the Bible rather than letting the Bible speak for itself” (202).

J. D., you have a great gift for the use of humor and sarcasm. You use it well, but always regard it. Do not use humor just for humor's sake; do not have sarcasm to the point of destruction; use them only when they get over a point and when they can help you to put across a message and help you to influence people.⁴⁵

(3) Grey took seriously his role as pastor to his congregation and to his city. His position would compel him to preach hard messages, but those messages would always be preached with a heart of love. Grey seemed to look through his congregation to see the city. He preached with the city on his heart. He was a man ahead of his times. He sensed the importance of the great urban centers.

Conclusion

J. D. Grey is in one sense a product of his day. He revels in his Baptist heritage, his institutional parentage, and his fraternal connections. All of these factors contributed to his preaching style and methods. Yet, it cannot be disputed that God used this man in his ministry. His peers recognized the touch of God on his life. He received the Distinguished Alumnus award from Union University at thirty-one years of age and was the youngest man (at that time) elected as president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

In spite of his many denominational activities, Grey never lost sight of his call to pastor First Baptist Church New Orleans. He combined a prophetic ministry which confronted sin and unrighteousness with the compassion of a pastoral ministry which compelled him to embrace the city of New Orleans.

This writer is from Louisiana and, while in college, had the pleasure of hearing J. D. Grey preach in person. The years had taken their toll on him; he was stooped and bent over in the pulpit. Yet, when he began to speak, his voice resounded through the auditorium with vibrancy and volume. He still possessed his rapier wit and engaging humor. He preached with spiritual power. Southern Baptists should continue to be thankful that, in the kind providence of God, the "winds" of J. D. Grey's ministry rustled through the city of New Orleans for almost four decades.

⁴⁵Cole and Lee, *Saint J. D.*, 69.

The Cross and the School of Providence and Prayer: Atonement Controversies at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary



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The Apostle Paul summarized the good news of Jesus Christ through a confessional statement in 1 Cor 15:3–8 detailing four key aspects of apostolic preaching: Christ’s death for our sins, burial, resurrection, and a series of resurrection appearances.¹ Regarding the cross, Paul stated “that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures” (NASB). Christian theological reflection on the connection between the death of Christ and “our sins” resulted in theologians developing several models and analogies to communicate the relationship between the death of Jesus and human sin. Three times in the history of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS), professors’ explanations of the connection between the death of Jesus and sin created controversy. In this article, I will describe some aspects of the controversies that arose due to the teachings and writings of Frank Staggs, Theodore Clark, and Fisher Humphreys and offer some concluding comments.

Atonement Controversies at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

The atonement controversies at NOBTS occurred in a period James Nalls characterized as a “Period of Extreme Multiformity (1959–1985).” Nalls described this as a period of creativity and experimentation, novelty replacing traditional categories, abandonment of biblical models in favor of contemporary models, rejection of legal and forensic categories for moral and personal categories, and expansion of the salvific events to include the incarnation, earthly life, and resurrection.²

¹The genesis of this paper was a lecture on “Baptist Soteriology” delivered at Ken Keathley’s Doctrine of Soteriology PhD seminar in Fall 2012 at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. For the sake of disclosure, I once favored a non-substitution understanding of the atonement. John Stott’s book *The Cross of Christ* strongly influenced my re-embracing substitution as a fundamental understanding of the atonement.

²James Ray Nall, “The Concept of the Atonement in Southern Baptist Thought,” (ThD dissertation, Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, 1985), 122. Nalls included Staggs in the “Period of Extreme Multiformity (1959–1985).” I think this is in error. The germinal ideas of Staggs’s understanding of the atonement are found in his 1951 presentation at the South Carolina Baptist Convention Evangelism Conference. Furthermore, the

Frank Stagg

Frank Stagg served for twenty years as professor of New Testament at NOBTS (1945–1964) and then returned to his alma mater, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS) and taught until his retirement (1964–1981). Stagg received his education at Louisiana College and SBTS. Robert Sloan commented that some identified Stagg as the premier Southern Baptist New Testament scholar in the middle third of the twentieth century.³ The center of his academic career and teaching ministry in churches focused on the meaning of the cross.⁴ From the 1950s until the time of his retirement, Stagg explicated a consistent understanding of the cross.

In 1951, Stagg addressed the annual Evangelism Conference of the South Carolina Baptist Convention on the topic “The Cross—A Rationale.”⁵ Stagg critiqued some of the historical theories of the atonement, namely Anselm’s satisfaction as well as the ransom, substitution, and penal theories. He failed to critique the moral influence or example understandings of the atonement. He denied the substitutionary theory because the theory set forth a “divine mechanical transaction through punishment, rests partly on faulty logic and a view of God that is not found in the life of Jesus.”⁶ Stagg described his understanding of the poverty of the substitutionary view of the cross. “By no means of the imagination can the innocent person be guilty or the guilty person become not guilty.”⁷ He critiqued the penal concept of the atonement, “One simply sublimates his egocentric depravity if he desires that Jesus be punished for one’s sin.”⁸ Stagg maintained that the problems between humans and God were from the human side rather than a barrier hindering forgiveness within God. In his rationale for the cross, he set forth what I call an “example plus” theory. “But it is not merely the influence of an example, it is the impact of one person on another. In that encounter man is won over from his self-centeredness to the way of God, even the way of the cross.”⁹ Furthermore, Stagg denied the necessity of the death of Christ. “Jesus would not have had to die had men been willing to die—to die the death of self.”¹⁰

trustees examined Stagg’s views in 1956.

³Robert S. Sloan, “Frank Stagg,” in *Theologians of the Baptist Tradition*, eds. Timothy George and David S. Dockery (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2001), 260.

⁴*Ibid.*, 47.

⁵For an analysis of Stagg and his South Carolina Baptist Evangelism Conference Presentation, a discussion of Stagg’s examination by the Trustees, and his troubles associated with his views on racial reconciliation see Mark Wilson, “Southern Theologian in Crisis: Frank Stagg, Atonement, and the Post-War South,” *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 30 (Spring 2003): 5–19.

⁶Stagg, “The Cross—A Rationale,” 6. I appreciate the labors of the archival department of Samford University for sending me a digital copy of Stagg’s presentation.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸*Ibid.*, 13.

⁹*Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁰*Ibid.*

His unpublished article was the beginning of a lifetime of controversy over his views regarding the meaning of the death of Christ. Yet, Roland Q. Leavell, president of NOBTS, expressed to the faculty high praise for Stagg's manuscript, calling it "the finest thing he had ever read on the subject."¹¹

In 1956, four Old Testament doctoral students complained Stagg taught in opposition to the Articles of Belief of NOBTS.¹² President Leavell received additional letters of complaint from inside and outside the seminary community. In April 1956, the instructional affairs committee questioned Stagg about his personal views for two days regarding Stagg's view of the Scriptures and the atonement. The trustees by unanimous vote refused to terminate Stagg.¹³ As a result of this conflict, Stagg became "almost immune to further criticism."¹⁴

Stagg's 1951 unpublished manuscript delivered at the South Carolina Evangelism Conference set forth key themes in Stagg's soteriology. First, Stagg consistently opposed what he called transactionalism, a view he associated with many objective theories of the atonement particularly penal substitution. Throughout his career, Stagg opposed transactionalism,¹⁵ which he defined in the following manner:

¹¹Fisher Humphreys, "Frank Stagg," in *Encyclopedia of Religious Controversies in the United States*, 2nd ed, Vol. 2, ed. Bill J. Leonard and Jill Y. Crainshaw (Santa Clara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2012), 777.

¹²Wilson, "Southern Theologian in Crisis," 17. According to Wilson, the students were guests in a seminar rather than enrolled in Stagg's New Testament Theology Seminar. The four students were Robert L. Hughes, Theron V. Farris, Franklin Atkinson, and Thurman Lewis. Farris received an appointment as a Foreign Mission Board missionary to Japan on 8 October 1957. Farris served as a missionary to Japan, associate in the Evangelism Division of the Texas Baptist Convention, and professor of Old Testament at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. Atkinson became vice president and professor of Religion at East Texas Baptist University. Hughes became the dean of Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary and served as the associate editor of the *The New King James Bible*. I have not discovered any information about Thurman Lewis.

¹³Humphreys, "Frank Stagg," 457. In contrast, Wilson claimed the issues divided the trustees. "The trustees divided over the matter, and according to Stagg, 'reached no clear vindication or conviction.' Forced to declare a mistrial, the trustees dismissed the charges." Wilson, 17. Humphreys identified six issues of the "heresy" trial—four of which are primary. First, the trustees examined Stagg's views of the nature of Scripture. Second, the trustees questioned Stagg's view of the Trinity. Third, the trustees discussed Stagg's view of the atonement. Fourth, they examined his understanding of the wrath of God. Stagg denied wrath as a personal attribute of God; instead, he interpreted God's wrath as the inevitable consequences of sin.

¹⁴Wilson, "Southern Theologian in Crisis," 17. Reflecting on this experience, Stagg wrote, "As a young professor, my first major struggle was for academic freedom, a struggle first with my own fears and then with obscurantists who, like dogs in the manger, could not eat the hay and were determined that no one else would." Frank Stagg, "A Continuous Pilgrimage," in *What FAITH Has Meant to Me*, ed. Claude A. Frazier (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1975), 148.

¹⁵Stagg's opposition to transactionalism led him to deny a forensic understanding of justification in opposition to all versions of Baptist Faith and Message and the seminary's confessional statement. The Articles of Religious Belief of NOBTS defines justification as "the judicial act of God by which the sinner is declared forgiven and freed from the condemnation of his sin, on the ground of the perfect righteousness of Christ, imputed by grace through faith." Stagg affirmed transformative justification rather than a legal justification. He understood justification in terms of "actual righteousness," or "making righteous." Stagg, *New Testament Theology* (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1962), 95–100. Sixteenth-century Anabaptism was a diverse movement.

In popular approach the whole Bible is creedally affirmed as equally authoritative, but in implementation the center of gravity tends to shift to proof texts taken largely from an often misunderstood Paul. It is not altogether a caricature to say that often the result is salvation seen as the work of a binitarian God, compensating for inherited sin, through an event of transactional atonement, theologically described, and creedally or ritually appropriated.¹⁶

Stagg denied the necessity of the cross for salvation. “However sophisticated any transactionalism which sees God as unable to forgive sins and save persons until the completion of certain saving events runs against massive biblical evidence. This invests the power to forgive and save in events rather than in God himself.”¹⁷ Second, Stagg professed a preference for the biblical Gospels as expressing the theology of Jesus in contrast to Paul’s misunderstanding of Jesus. Third, Stagg’s understanding of the cross was a subjective rather than an objective view. The purpose of the cross was to affect transformation in us. The cross calls humans to “authentic existence.” Fourth, Stagg based salvation on the nature of God rather than historical events. “To recognize that salvation has always rested in the person of God himself and never in events as such and to recognize that ‘the cross’ is eternal clears the way for taking seriously and not explaining away the recurrent claim of the Gospels that Jesus could and did forgive sins and save people then and there, with no contingency upon ‘salvation history.’”¹⁸

Stagg’s career opposition to transactionalism impacted his interpretation of the doctrine of justification. Stagg downplayed a legal, forensic understanding of justification. Thus, Stagg’s view seemed to conflict with the NOBTS Articles of Religious Belief, which states, “Justification is the judicial act of God by which the sinner is declared forgiven and freed from the condemnation of his sin, on the ground of the perfect righteousness of Christ, imputed by grace through faith.” Stagg critiqued a standard Reformation understanding of justification as the idea as “to count right what is not right.”¹⁹ Stagg defined the Greek noun and verb of justification in terms of “making right” or “actual uprightness.”²⁰ In my opinion, Stagg’s advocacy of transformative justification shares similarities with an Anabaptist understanding of justification.²¹

Despite the diversity, sixteen-century Anabaptist theologians did not make the language of “justification” central to their soteriology as did the Magisterial Reformers.

¹⁶Frank Stagg, “Salvation in Synoptic Tradition,” *Review and Expositor* 69 (Summer 1972): 355.

¹⁷Frank Stagg, “Reassessing the Gospels,” *Review and Expositor* 78 (Spring 1981): 189.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 192.

¹⁹Frank Stagg, “The Great Words of Romans,” *Theological Educator* 7 (Fall 1976): 97.

²⁰Stagg, *New Testament Theology*, 100.

²¹In my opinion, Stagg shared common concerns with Anabaptists: justification as a truth into which believers grow, the ethical/ontological transformative nature of justification, and the corporate nature of discipleship. In addition to some common themes regarding soteriology, I think Stagg affirmed similar Anabaptist concerns such as justice, reconciliation, and pacifism. I cannot support a direct connection, but I think the evidence of shared concerns is telling. Sixteenth-century Anabaptists did not use justification language as the centerpiece of their soteriology in comparison with the centrality of justification language in the Magisterial Reformers. In a chapter titled “Unusual Doctrines & Institutions,” George Huston Williams noted, “Anabaptists in general

Theodore R. Clark

Theodore R. Clark served as associate professor of theology at NOBTS. He graduated from Mississippi College and NOBTS. In 1959, he published *Saved by His Life*.²² The title of Clark's book derives from Paul's phraseology in Romans 5:10: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (KJV). The trustees of NOBTS dismissed Clark in 1960 citing him for unacceptable communication skills.²³ After his firing from the seminary, Clark taught at Pan-American College in Texas. I have not discovered any connection between Clark and Southern Baptist life or any publications after his leaving NOBTS.

continued medieval Catholic usage when they interpreted justification in the sense of sanctification." George Huston Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 3rd ed. (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2000), 434. William Estep commented on article 1 of Hubmaier's articles of faith (titled "Faith alone makes us holy before God"), "In the first article there is the familiar *sola fide* ring, but instead of using Luther's term for justification (*Gerechtigkeit*), Hubmaier employs the word translated 'holy' (*frumm*=*Fromm*). By making this change in the familiar evangelical formula, Hubmaier is doubtless attempting to say that saving faith brings about more than a declared righteousness—it produces a new quality of holiness in life." (William R. Estep, *The Anabaptist Story: An Introduction to Sixteenth-Century Anabaptism*, 3rd ed. [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans], 197). Malcolm Yarnell recognized that Leonhard Schiemer understood "justification" as "more akin to 'make righteous' rather than the forensic sense of 'declare righteous.'" (Malcolm Yarnell, "Suffering the Cross: The Life, Theology, and Significance of Leonhard Schiemer," in *The Anabaptists and Contemporary Baptists: Restoring New Testament Christianity Essays in Honor of Paige Patterson*, ed. Malcolm Yarnell [Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2013], 54). In a summary of Hubmaier's soteriology, Simon V. Goncharenko affirmed Eddy Mabry's description of Hubmaier's rejection of the forensic nature of justification, the ability of a believer to 'to reach perfect righteousness through grace,' and the progressive continuing nature of justification "into a totally righteous person." Also, "works of brotherly love," or "works of faith," were elements in "the process of justification." (Simon V. Goncharenko, "Balthasar Hubmaier's Integration of Discipline and Theology," in *The Anabaptists and Contemporary Baptists*, 163). Anabaptist theologian Thomas Finger describes Hubmaier's soteriological emphasis as ontological transformation rather than forgiveness or imputed righteousness. (Thomas N. Finger, *A Contemporary Anabaptist Theology: Biblical, Historical, Constructive* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004], 116). Finger described theology of the South German-Austrian Anabaptists (Hut, Denck, and Schiemer) as similar to Catholic theology, "It referred mostly to the process of becoming righteous and its final goal, as in Catholicism." (Finger, 119). Finger isolated the concept of "divinization" rather than justification as the key soteriological concept of sixteenth century Anabaptists (Finger, 131). In a recent doctoral dissertation on Anabaptist soteriology, Michael Whitlock analyzes "an implied theology of justification" within key Anabaptists leaders. (Michael Whitlock, "Justification by Faith and Early Sixteenth Century Anabaptism," [PhD dissertation, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2013], 101). Whitlock understands "justification" and "forgiveness" as synonymous even though the biblical terms come from different semantic domains (Whitlock, 105). Whitlock analyzed the Anabaptist understanding of justification language through four central components of the Magisterial doctrine of justification. I personally do not think he demonstrated the agreement of Anabaptists with the Magisterial Reformers' emphasis upon the alien righteousness of Christ or the agreement of Anabaptists that justification, regeneration, and sanctification are distinct aspects of Anabaptist soteriology.

²²Theodore R. Clark, *Saved By His Life: A Study of the New Testament Doctrine of Reconciliation and Salvation* (New York: Macmillan, 1959).

²³Fisher Humphreys, "New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary," *Encyclopedia of Religious Controversies in the United States*, 2nd ed, Vol. 2, ed. Bill J. Leonard and Jill Y. Crainshaw (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2012), 555.

Clark set forth his thesis in the following statement: “This book, then, will attempt to show that the authors of the New Testament were in full agreement that the Cross *and* the Resurrection together constitute the grounds of man’s reconciliation and salvation, or in other words, the Atonement.”²⁴ According to Clark, the problem with a “theology of the cross” is that such a theology becomes a theology of the past and results in the “worship of Jesus.”²⁵ “When salvation is understood solely in the ‘blood of the Lamb,’ it is but a short step to a concept of salvation rooted in the man Jesus, or in a theology of the ‘past.’”²⁶ Clark argued that God was not in the cross reconciling the world, rather “God was in the [Risen] Christ reconciling the world unto himself.”²⁷ He proposed that salvation must be understood within the context of the total event. “In fact, it seems evident that when the constellatory nature of the New Testament teachings is taken into consideration no one event or aspect of the working of God in Christ can have any meaning of efficacy in isolation from all other events or aspects.”²⁸ Clark thus emphasizes the necessity of the Total Event for salvation.²⁹ His fullest statement of the Total Event broadens the salvific work of God beyond the Christ event.

By Total Event is meant the Total Working of God in human life and history. The Incarnation, Cross, and Resurrection of Christ as historical events are to be bracketed within the Total Event of God’s reconciling and saving works. In other words, the historical events connected with Jesus Christ were only historical manifestations of God’s continuous working with and in men from the beginning of human history to the end. The Total Event is past, present, and future at the same time.³⁰

If the cross event is merely the historical manifestation of God’s salvific purposes in time, then what was the necessity of the cross? As I understand Clark, the cross-resurrection event is revelatory of the need of self-crucifixion and self-resurrection.

But man is no passive recipient of the saving work of Christ; rather, he must actively give himself in death by denying self to receive the life-giving grace and power of God through the Christ-Spirit. In other words in loving faith, he must say No to self and say Yes to God in the Spirit. By denying self and affirming God he discovers in this psycho-spiritual process that God through the Christ-Spirit is already at work within him enabling him to die to self and to rise to walk in newness of life.

How does one know that this is what is happening to him to deliver him from the law of sin and death? The answer is: by seeing what God has revealed and done in the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus.³¹

²⁴Clark, *Saved By His Life*, xii.

²⁵Ibid., 177.

²⁶Ibid., 69.

²⁷Ibid., 177.

²⁸Ibid., 30.

²⁹Ibid., 48.

³⁰Ibid., 215.

³¹Ibid., 207.

In a review of Clark's book, T. A. Kantonen faulted Clark for never explaining the resurrection, creating a bifurcation between the historical Jesus and the living Christ, and collapsing the identity of the Risen Christ into the Holy Spirit.³² Clark denied the wrath of God upon sinners in that hell becomes not the immoral, unjust concept of God-inflicted wrath but the self-inflicted demise of rejecting the Life.³³

Fisher Humphreys

Fisher Humphreys served as professor of Theology at NOBTS from 1970 to 1990 and at Beeson Divinity School of Samford University from 1990 until his retirement in 2008. Humphreys received degrees from Mississippi College, NOBTS, Oxford University, and Loyola University.³⁴ He published a short introduction to theology titled *Thinking about God: Introduction to Christian Theology*.³⁵ As well, he authored a monograph on the atonement, *The Death of Christ*.³⁶

In *The Death of Christ*, Humphreys set biblical models within the culture of the period.³⁷ He inquired about the value of modern humans adopting models, even biblical models that fail to communicate in modern culture.³⁸ Humphreys defined a theory of atonement as "a familiar finite model employed to illuminate the infinite mystery of Christ's death."³⁹ The components of an atonement theory include the history, setting, presuppositions, capabilities, and limitations of the single model. In his analysis of historical atonement models, Humphreys critiqued the penal-substitution model for three reasons. First, Humphreys claimed the model created a tension between the love and righteousness of God.⁴⁰ Second, Christ did not experience punishment from God.⁴¹ Third, the concept of substitutionary death is morally reprehensible.⁴²

³²T. A. Kantonen, review of Theodore R. Clark, *Saved by His Life*, in *Interpretation* 14 (1960): 229–31.

³³Clark, *Saved by His Life*, 176.

³⁴Timothy George, "Introduction," in *Theology in the Service of the Church: Essays Presented to Fisher H. Humphreys*, ed. Timothy George and Eric F. Mason (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2008), Googleplay books.

³⁵Fisher Humphreys, *Thinking about God: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, rev. ed. (New Orleans, LA: Insight Press, 1994). Humphreys published the first edition in 1974. The first edition of *Thinking about God* delineated four views of the cross: example, revelation of God, costly forgiveness, and Christus Victor. He did not mention substitution. In contrast, the revised edition discusses substitutionary atonement under the heading "The Most Influential Interpretation." In the revised edition, Humphreys affirmed substitution as one of the biblical understandings of the atonement. Humphreys, *Thinking about God*, 125–28.

³⁶Fisher Humphreys, *The Death of Christ* (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1978).

³⁷During my college days, Humphreys presented his "cruciform" view as part of the Staley Lectures at William Carey University.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 28–29.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 30.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 59.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 60.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 61–62.

Humphreys proposed a model he described as “cruciform forgiveness,” an advantageous model from the realm of interpersonal relationships. At the end of his book, Humphreys set forth an extra-biblical, political parable to explain the cross. Bill takes control of a South American country and embarks on a program of racial genocide. Bill’s father travels to his son’s kingdom and publicly opposes his son and calls him to repentance. Bill executes his father and other opponents. Then the father experiences resurrection. As a consequence of the father’s suffering, the son renounces his vicious reign and experiences transformation and becomes a benevolent ruler.⁴³

Because he based the model upon the realm of interpersonal relationships, two important caveats should be noticed in Humphreys position. First, God is free. Therefore, God freely chose to become the victim and offer forgiveness to repentant humans. Second, no theological necessity exists for the cross for humans to experience salvation or forgiveness.⁴⁴ He described “cruciform forgiveness” as “God in Christ accepted suffering as his way of forgiving the men whose sins caused him to suffer. He went to all that trouble and experienced all the pain to call men to himself for forgiveness.”⁴⁵ Humphreys understood his model of the atonement as an objective model. The objective nature of the cross applies to the nature of God rather than humans.⁴⁶ Humphreys contends his objective model possesses significant subjective appeal.⁴⁷ Consequently, cruciform forgiveness leads to transformation. In Humphreys’s political metaphor, the father lacked knowledge that his death would transform his son. As an application to God the Father, it seems to me the implication is that God the Father then lacked no certain knowledge that humans would respond.

Fisher Humphreys’s controversial book resulted in sharp critique from Paige Patterson.⁴⁸ In October 1987, NOBTS hosted a debate between the two men, yet the discussion continued in written form after the debate.⁴⁹ Patterson focused on several

⁴³Ibid., 180–87.

⁴⁴Ibid., 132.

⁴⁵Ibid., 116.

⁴⁶Ibid., 126. Humphreys located other objective theories of the atonement as external to God’s nature. Anselm affirmed the work of Christ as objective in reference to God’s honor. Calvin claimed the work of Christ as objective in reference to God’s justice. Gustav Aulen affirmed the work of Christ as objective to God’s victory. In my opinion, in terms of humanity Humphreys “cruciform” understanding of the cross functions as a subjective view of the atonement.

⁴⁷Ibid, 127.

⁴⁸Although once close friends during seminary, Patterson included Humphreys in his list of liberals within the SBC. Presumably, the issue of the atonement was the rationale. David T. Morgan, *The New Crusades, The New Holy Land: Conflict in the Southern Baptist Convention, 1969–1991* (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1996), 50.

⁴⁹C. Lacey Thompson, “2 Theologians Discuss Differences over Atonement,” Baptist Press, October 29, 1987. Patterson provided a chapter-length defense of the atonement based on his reaction to the position of Humphreys. See Paige Patterson, “Reflections on the Atonement,” in *Defending the Faith: Engaging the Culture:*

primary issues with Humphreys's interpretation: the denials of a theological necessity of the atonement, Humphreys's preference for a non-biblical model of the atonement and critique of penal substitution.⁵⁰ During the debate, Humphreys begrudgingly admitted that C. E. B. Cranfield's commentary on Romans 3 demonstrated the New Testament affirms propitiation and therefore substitution.⁵¹ Yet, he denied that penal substitution functioned as the primary biblical explanation of the cross-atonement. Duesing correctly pointed out that most of the discussion occurred on the level of epistemology, but that epistemology affected theological conclusions.⁵²

At the end of the discussion, Humphreys offered a delineation of five affirmations of agreement and requested Patterson document with Humphreys as a "gesture of clarification and peace." The five statements affirmed: 1) the historicity of the cross and resurrection; 2) the gospel as stated in 1 Cor 15:3–4; 3) the truthfulness and authority of the biblical teachings regarding the cross and resurrection; 4) a call for the church to remember, celebrate, and proclaim the cross and resurrection; 5) that "no human understanding of the cross can exhaust the infinite meaning of that unique event."⁵³ Probably because Humphreys did not discuss his proposed affirmations with Patterson before the atonement debate, Patterson publicly refused to sign the document.

Since the engagement with Patterson, Humphreys has affirmed penal substitution but denies that penal substitution is the primary motif of the New Testament.⁵⁴ Humphreys gave three reasons for his belief that the model of substitution is not primary. First, he affirmed that all of the New Testament interpretations of the atonement are important; consequently, he does not have authority to assign priority of one interpretation over the other. Second, substitution was not the dominant view for much of Christian history. Third, he claimed the burden of proof lies with those who ascribe preeminence to penal substitution.⁵⁵

Essays Honoring L. Russ Bush, ed. Bruce A. Little and Mark D. Liederbach (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2011), 27–46. Both Patterson and Humphreys contributed articles on the issue in the *Criswell Theological Review*. For a helpful analysis of precursors and content of the Patterson-Humphreys discussion listen to Jason Duesing's presentation at the Andrew Fuller Center at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, available at <http://d3pi8hptloqhh4.cloudfront.net/media/audio/andrew-fuller-center/2010/15-2010-andrew-fuller-conf-parallel-duesing.mp3>.

⁵⁰Patterson, "Reflections on the Atonement," 37–40.

⁵¹Conference Audio.

⁵²Duesing. Andrew Fuller Center download.

⁵³I express my appreciation to faculty colleague Dr. Ed Scott, former doctoral student of Humphreys, for providing me a copy of Humphreys's statement.

⁵⁴In his first edition of *Thinking about God*, Humphreys discussed the cross using the following the rubrics: example, revelation of God, costly forgiveness, and liberation. Fisher Humphreys, *Thinking about God* (New Orleans, LA: Insight Press, 1974), 109–21. In his revised edition published after his debate with Paige Patterson, Humphreys acknowledged biblical passages such as Isaiah 53 and Galatians 3:13 affirm penal substitution and labeled penal substitution "The Most Influential Interpretation." Fisher Humphreys, *Thinking about God*, rev. ed. (New Orleans, LA: Insight Press, 1994), 125–28.

⁵⁵Fisher Humphreys, "Christ Died for Our Sins According to the Scriptures," *Criswell Theological Review* 3.2 (1989): 301.

Conclusion

Visionary leaders developed a vision for a Baptist seminary that came to fruition in 1917. During the history of NOBTS, three controversies arose focusing on the interpretation of the death of Jesus for sins. Stagg, Clark, and Humphreys shared commonalities regarding the atonement of Christ. All three men questioned the theological necessity of the cross in terms of the forgiveness of God. Moreover, all three men critiqued the penal substitution understanding of the atonement. In my opinion, all three men espoused a version of a subjective understanding of Christ's atonement—although, in a revision of his textbook, Humphreys acknowledged substitution as a biblical metaphor. Although separated by a decade, the trustees' decision regarding the discipline/employment of Stagg and Clark is interesting. In a private conversation, one Southern Baptist theologian expressed the view that Clark may not have been dismissed if controversy regarding Stagg had never arisen.

What lessons can Baptists learn from the history of these controversies? First, doctrinal controversies are never fully and finally settled. For example, the controversies regarding the theological positions of Stagg, Clark, and Humphreys shared common issues. Second, we must not forget the personal aspect of doctrinal battles. Stagg emerged relatively unscathed. Clark, however, was dismissed and may have abandoned any connection to Southern Baptists. The issue of the atonement disrupted the close friendship that Patterson and Humphreys shared during seminary days. A theological battle may end, but people carry the scars of the battle for a lifetime. Third, in my opinion, NOBTS is stronger today because of these three discussions regarding the interpretation of the cross.

A History of Social Work at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary



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&

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The celebration of the one hundred-year anniversary of the founding of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS) will take place during the 2017–2018 academic year. In addition, the social work program wishes to celebrate our history within our beloved institution. This article is presented for that purpose.

Our program is indebted to C. Ferris Jordan, former chair of the Division of Christian Education Ministries at NOBTS, for the summation of the first social work feasibility study, which is incorporated into this history of social work at our institution. Jordan played a significant role in the development of the social work program at NOBTS by his contribution of articles, courses in gerontology, and encouragement to professors and students prior to his death in 2014.

The social work program at NOBTS began in 1954. The program was placed in the School of Religious Education under Dean John M. Price Jr. Allegra Lapraire, the director of the Sellers Home for Unwed Mothers, a Home Mission Board agency in New Orleans, served as tutor in social work from 1954 to 1956. She held the Master of Social Work (MSW) degree.

In 1956, Margaret Leverett was employed as tutor to teach social work in the School of Religious Education. Leverett served in that capacity until 1959, when she was promoted to instructor after earning the MSW degree. She advanced to assistant professor of Social Work for the 1961–1962 academic year and continued to teach courses in social work while pursuing the Doctor of Religious Education degree, which she received in January 1965. The subject of her dissertation was the Good Will Centers in New Orleans.¹

¹Margaret Leverett, “A Study of Good Will Centers in New Orleans” (DRE diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1965).

While tutors were teaching social work courses, two courses were offered at the seminary: Social Case Work and Good Will Center Work. The curriculum was expanded to seven courses in the 1956–1957 academic year following Leverett’s full-time appointment to the faculty. Further expansions in the social work curriculum within the Master of Religious Education (MRE) degree program continued through the 1960s and 1970s. The 1956–1960 catalog noted an agreement between the Tulane University School of Social Work permitting students to enroll in degree programs at each institution and pursue the MRE and the MSW degrees in three- to four-year tracks. Advanced seminars in social work in the religious education doctoral program were included in the 1969–1970 catalog. Charles McCullen and Paul Adkins were employed as adjunct faculty in 1969 and served as coordinators of Clinical Social Work. McCullen and Adkins were both employees of the Home Mission Board in Atlanta, Georgia. New social work courses in the MRE curriculum added in the early 1970s included Juvenile Delinquency, Social Work with the Aging, and Medical Social Work Information. Leverett resigned from the NOBTS faculty during the 1974–1975 academic year to accept a position to serve as a psychiatric social worker in the mental health field in Selma, Alabama.

Following Leverett’s resignation, Ann Daniel was contacted by Jack Watson, chair of the Division of Religious Education (the separate schools at the seminary had been disbanded by then in favor of five academic divisions), to teach social work effective August 1975. She began teaching later that fall under the chairmanship of Bill Rogers. Daniel was a social worker on the staff at the Sellers Home for Unwed Mothers and held the MRE degree from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and a MSW degree from the University of Louisville. She taught two courses: Weekday Ministries and Introduction to Social Work. Mildred Streeter, director of a Home Mission Board agency, the Carver Baptist Center, worked as Daniel’s co-teacher. Daniel began teaching full time in the fall of 1975. During her tenure, she revived the program of social work since it had declined during the years when there was no full-time faculty. Daniel faithfully recruited students who chose social work as their specialization in the MRE degree program. Through field placements, she provided professional experience for the students, linking them with the community. A further step forward was taken when she proposed that all religious education students be required to take Church Community Ministries. Daniel resigned in 1985, married Joe Carlino, and moved to Fayetteville, Georgia, where she started the Clay Home, a 1986 maternity home for Roswell Street Baptist Church, Marietta, Georgia. She later became a trainer for social workers in Georgia, where she provided continuing education training.

C. Ferris Jordan, chair of the Division of Religious Education Ministries, recruited Jeanine Cannon Bozeman, a school social worker in New Orleans Parish, to succeed Ann Daniel Carlino in 1985. Bozeman held the MSW degree from Tulane University School of Social Work and the Doctor of Education from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, which she converted to the Doctor of Philosophy degree in 1999. Her dissertation was entitled “An Investigation of Virginia Satir’s Concept of Communication to Determine

Possible Implications for Education in Marriage Communication.”² Bozeman was promoted to associate professor and achieved tenure in the minimum time allowed. She established cooperative relationships with Louisiana State University, Southern University of New Orleans, and Tulane University, and encouraged seminary students specializing in social work to pursue the MSW degree with one of those institutions.

During the 1989–1990 academic year, Jordan introduced a specialization in gerontology into the Master of Arts in Christian Education (MACE, formerly the MRE) Program. Three social work courses were offered as choices in the gerontology specialization. This specialization, with additional courses, could serve now as a basis for a gerontology emphasis when an MSW degree is developed at NOBTS.

In August 1992, a committee composed of faculty from the Division of Christian Education Ministries was appointed to study the feasibility of establishing at NOBTS a graduate school of church social work. Serving on the committee with Bozeman were C. Ferris Jordan and Tom S. Roote. The committee met monthly to study the curriculum and to develop plans for the study. In November 1992, the seminary administration authorized Bozeman to consult with C. Anne Davis, dean of the Carver School of Church Social Work at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, regarding the establishment of an MSW program at NOBTS. During the spring of 1993, Bozeman was on sabbatical leave taking graduate courses at Tulane University and continuing the feasibility study. Three committees continued to work under her guidance: the faculty committee, an alumni committee, and a student committee.

The feasibility study was completed by the fall of 1993 and subsequently submitted to the administration. No action was taken. Bozeman added more social work courses to the curriculum, including Group Leadership; Social Work with Individuals and Families; Death, Loss, and Grief; and Social Work with Children and Families. Two doctoral seminars were developed and offered: Social Context of Christian Education and Group Leadership. Social work students Scott Bates, Anita Malley, and Claire Pennington worked with Bozeman to organize the Christian Association of Student Social Workers in February 1994. The purpose of the club was to promote professional Christian social work. The club has continued to function, meeting monthly to promote social work on campus and to recruit social work students. This club also has promoted mission projects and has raised awareness about social issues including racism, AIDS, and mental health under the leadership of recent presidents Megan Gorum and Elizabeth Terrill.

The Division of Christian Education Ministries, under the leadership of Bozeman and the chairmanship of Robert Mathis, explored the possibility of a cooperative agreement

²Jeanine Canon Bozeman, “An Investigation of Virginia Satir’s Concept of Communication to Determine Possible Implications for Education in Marriage Communication” (EdD diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1984).

with area schools that offer a master's in social work. The University of Southern Mississippi and NOBTS established an articulation agreement in 1996 that provided for an exchange of credits between the two schools.

Charles S. Kelley Jr. assumed the presidency of NOBTS in March 1996. Kelley challenged the faculty to dream dreams and develop innovative programs to fulfill the mission of the seminary. He encouraged students to combine their classroom training with ministering to the city of New Orleans in order to prepare most effectively for future ministry.³ In January 2000, Kelley authorized another study to determine the feasibility of an MSW program at NOBTS. The provost, Steve Lemke, supported this authorization granted at the request of the Division of Christian Education, which included the social work program. In the feasibility study, the division presented the following concerns:

1. The present social work specialization offered at the seminary is not accredited by the Counsel of Social Work Education, the national accrediting body of social work. The lack of accreditation excludes seminary graduates from eligibility for licensing positions that require a Master of Social Work Degree and membership in programmed organizations (graduates are not accepted in the professional social work community).
2. The current social work specialization of 12 hours is inadequate for students to impact and change the problems affecting society and churches. Our graduates need a minimum of two years of professional education to be prepared adequately to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through church-related social work ministries. The limited program restricts students from employment opportunities within church-related entities as well as the profession at large.
3. Some social work specialization students who also have bivocational ministry goals have been forced to take nonprofessional jobs. This circumstance has handicapped them in the professional sphere.

Bozeman became the chair of the Division of Christian Education Ministries in June 1998; she was the first woman ever to chair a division at NOBTS. Though passionate about social work, Bozeman provided balanced leadership and gave attention to the various practice areas in Christian Education.

Loretta Rivers joined the social work faculty in August 1998 as instructor in Social Work. Rivers held the MACE with specializations in Social Work and Gerontology from NOBTS and a MSW from Louisiana State University. She was enrolled in the doctoral program in social work at Tulane University, and her background included service at Carver Baptist Center from 1989 to 1994 and practice as a medical social worker from 1996 to 1998. Rivers taught the following courses: Church Community Ministries, Introduction to Social Work, Social Work with the Aging and their Families, Social Welfare Policy and Planning, Juvenile Delinquency, Social Work with Organizations and Communities, and Introduction to Group Work.

³"Mission, Core Values, and Target," *New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Graduate Catalog*, 1999–2000, 10.

President Kelley authorized a second feasibility study in January 2000. A study committee, composed of Bozeman, Rivers, and Joel B. Sherrer, associate professor of Adult Education in the Division of Christian Education Ministries, was appointed. Also, student committees and an Advisory Committee were formed to assist in the study.

The following committees were involved in the feasibility study:

1. Advisory Committee
 - a. Freddie Arnold – church planting/missions director, Baptist Association of Greater New Orleans
 - b. Dean Doster – executive director, Louisiana Baptist Convention
 - c. Allen Kirk, PhD, LCSW – professor, Southeastern Louisiana University
 - d. Ann Madden – LCSW, BACS, McFarland Institute
 - e. Judy Nelson – chaplain, Methodist Hospital, New Orleans
 - f. Tobey Pitman – director, Brantley Baptist Center
 - g. Dick Randels – former director, Greater New Orleans Federation of Churches
 - h. Philip Vandercook – director, Global Maritime Ministries
2. Student Committee
 - a. Chelle Brazzel – MACE Student
 - b. Sharon Hyatt – MACE Student
 - c. Kitten McClain – MACE Student
 - d. Robyn Miller – MACE Student
 - e. Christine Saladino – MACE Student
 - f. Katie Starkey – MDIV Student
 - g. Kerrie Tilton – MDIV Student
3. Faculty Committee
 - a. Jeanine C. Bozeman – PhD, LCSW, ACSW, BACS, BCD, LPC, AAMFT Clinical; chair, Christian Education Division
 - b. Loretta Rivers – MSW, LCSW, instructor in Social Work, Christian Education Division
 - c. Joel B. Sherrer, EdD, associate professor, Christian Education Division

Other faculty, alumni, and students gave support and encouragement. An estimated total of 1,250 work hours were involved in this study. The committees desired to provide the administration with adequate information to authorize the continued development of an MSW program at NOBTS.

The feasibility study contained the following information. The purpose and objectives of the program were presented in chapter 1. Chapter 2 addressed evidence of community needs, including the aging population, poverty, and the prevalence of violence. Evidence of community resources and support was presented in chapter 3. This confirmation included letters from social service agencies, deans of schools of social work in Louisiana, state executive directors of the Southern Baptist Convention, and church community ministries directors. Chapter 4 provided evidence of employment demands for graduates of the program. Verification of student interest in the program, based upon interviews

with present and former NOBTS students, prospective students, and social work students at other colleges and universities, was provided in chapter 5. Students in the following degree programs at NOBTS were surveyed: Master of Divinity (MDiv), MDiv in Christian Education, MACE, and Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Counseling. Chapter 6 gave evidence of institutional support for the program, including administration, division chairs, and faculty. The John T. Christian Library at NOBTS had holdings of social work resources to support the program. Administrative issues were included in chapter 7. Appendices included (1) letters of support, (2) letters from university social work schools in the New Orleans area, (3) reports from the John T. Christian Library, and (4) survey instruments.

The feasibility study culminated in a proposal for a Master of Social Work Program:

The MSW program operating within the context of the seminary's purpose statement shall seek to provide quality education at the graduate level built upon a foundation of biblical and theological studies. The program aims to provide professional social work education from a Christian perspective for use through local churches, denominational institutions, and other community service agencies. Our intention is to assist the seminary in accomplishing the mission to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the ministries of the local church.⁴

The objectives of the social work program state that the program will seek to enhance the mission of NOBTS by developing leaders in the field of social work who are spiritually mature, intellectually informed, professionally skilled, and compassionately committed to the ministries in the 21st century.

Specifically the objectives are:

1. To assist in the accomplishment of the mission of NOBTS by
 - a. Providing quality education to students in professional Christian social work.
 - b. Encouraging faculty and student involvement in research, writing, and community ministries.
 - c. Offering consulting services to the local church in social work ministries.
2. To equip students for
 - a. Serving in the field of social work from a Christian perspective.
 - b. Providing direct and administrative services within the church setting for positions requiring professional social work skills and theological knowledge.
 - c. Offering supervision for workers in a church setting.
 - d. Supplying needed social services to enhance the quality of life for individuals and families within the local community.

⁴"Mission, Core Values, and Target," *New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Graduate Catalog*, 1999–2000, 10.

3. To be involved in service to churches and community agencies by
 - a. Training students to minister holistically to the needs of people.
 - b. Increasing the vision for positive change in issues faced by persons within the church and community.
 - c. Seeking to increase the professional standards of church related social work services.

After the completion of the feasibility study, the committee submitted the study and a proposal for the development of an MSW degree to the faculty, administration, and trustees for consideration. Approval was granted for the development of an MSW degree. However, the necessary funding was not available at that time. In 2005, Hurricane Katrina devastated the New Orleans region and further contributed to the delay in developing the program.

The Advisory Committee created as part of the feasibility study efforts continues to function as the MSW Advisory Board providing insight and guidance to the social work faculty. The Advisory Board during the 2016–2017 academic year consists of the following members: Dianne Boazman McGraw, gerontological social worker; Leslie Quartano, clinical social worker in private practice; Joyce Overstreet, owner of Stage Coach Restaurant, Stockton, Alabama; Tobey Pitman, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Pearl River, LA; Philip Vandercook, Executive Director, Global Maritime Ministries; Mark Graves, CPA; and Dick Randels, retired Baptist minister.

Bozeman retired in 2002 but continued to serve as Senior Professor of Social Work. The seminary honored her with the Distinguished Alumnus Award for faithful commitment in 2014. Perhaps Bozeman's greatest contribution was the development of one of the most popular elective courses ever taught at NOBTS: Death, Loss, and Grief. Bozeman developed this course in the midst of grieving the death of her mother. In preparation for creating the course, Bozeman completed a thanatology certificate at the University of Alabama and additional studies at Tulane University. Death, Loss, and Grief has been a practical help to students in confronting their own grief experiences and in ministering to others in times of loss.

Rivers completed her doctoral work at Tulane University in 2008. Her dissertation focused on the Baptist settlement houses in New Orleans, 1946–1969.⁵ After completing her doctoral degree, Rivers co-taught the following doctoral seminars at NOBTS: Social Work, Adult Education, Ministering to Persons in Crisis, and Charting Adult Ministry in the New Millennium.

Rivers's passion for working with older adults led to the organization of Senior Fest, a one-day event for adults 55+ hosted by the social work program. Senior Fest provides an opportunity for adults 55+ to visit the NOBTS campus, participate in a chapel service,

⁵Loretta Rivers, "Southern Baptist Settlement Work in New Orleans, 1946–1969" (PhD diss., Tulane University, 2008).

and attend breakout sessions led by NOBTS professors and staff. Significant in the establishment of Senior Fest were the following individuals, who served on the Senior Fest Planning Committee: Jeanine C. Bozeman, Darryl Ferrington, Judi Jackson, Wanda Gregg, and Joy Tolbert. This celebration continues to be an annual event at NOBTS.

In addition, Rivers received the following honors at NOBTS: Ola Farmer Lenaz Grant in 2011 and Outstanding Classroom Teacher of the Year in 2016. Rivers also received the Norman W. Cox Award in 2012 for the best article published in the *Baptist History and Heritage Journal* in 2011.⁶

Bozeman and Rivers worked to build professional relationships and promote social work by presenting at state and national conferences. Presentations were made in the following venues: National Association of Social Workers, Louisiana; Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services; Association for Death Education and Counseling; North American Association of Christians in Social Work; and National Association of Child Care Professionals. Presentation topics included foster care; compassion fatigue; stress; interpersonal relationship skills; aging; and death, loss, and grief.

In 2012, Bozeman and Rivers began meeting with University of Southern Mississippi faculty Timothy Rehner, director of the School of Social Work, and Jerome Kolbo, MSW program coordinator, to explore the development of a dual degree program in social work. In 2013, NOBTS and the University of Southern Mississippi entered into a dual academic award arrangement allowing students to pursue the Master of Social Work degree from the University of Southern Mississippi and the MACE or the MDiv in Christian Education with a specialization in social work at NOBTS.

In 2014, NOBTS formed a new academic division, Church and Community Ministries, composed of counseling and social work. Kevin Brown joined the Social Work faculty at the start of the 2014–2015 academic year. Holding the BA in Psychology and the MSW from the University of Illinois at Chicago, Brown successfully completed a Master of Science degree and the PhD in Urban Studies at the University of New Orleans in March 2016. His dissertation explores the intersection of race, neighborhood, and violence in the inner city of New Orleans.⁷

Brown's early professional career was spent as a clinician, first working with abused and foster children as a contract therapist with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, and later as director of Children and Family Services with the Minirth-Meier Clinic

⁶Loretta Rivers, "Baptist Centers: Influences and Education," *Baptist History and Heritage Journal* 46, no. 2 (Summer 2011): 77–89.

⁷Kevin J. Brown, "You Could Get Killed Any Day in Hollygrove: A Qualitative Study of Neighborhood-Level Homicide" (PhD diss., University of New Orleans, 2016).

of Wheaton, Illinois. During his tenure at Minirth-Meier, Brown appeared weekly on the clinic's nationwide radio broadcast, hosted his own weekly broadcast, traveled extensively as a speaker, and co-authored three self-help books.

After twelve years as a clinician, Brown was called by Trinity Christian Community (TCC) in New Orleans to become the organization's executive director. During the years of 1998–2005, Brown helped inner city youth become spiritual and academic leaders in their community. Because of Katrina's damage in August 2005, Brown spent the next ten years rebuilding the community center, neighborhood homes, the community's school, and its senior center. During these years he also served as an adjunct professor at the New Orleans School of Urban Missions, teaching Pastoral Counseling, and at the Tulane University School of Social Work as a field instructor.

Brown's background in both clinical and macro social work assisted the newly formed Division of Church and Community Ministries. His counseling background qualified him to teach Group Counseling and Counseling in Ministry courses, while his urban missions experience was an appropriate foundation for teaching Introduction to Urban Missions, and Contemporary Missions Methods and Movements. Brown's experiences in macro social work was useful for teaching Juvenile Delinquency, Church Community Ministries, Organizations and Communities, Essentials of Helping, and Social Work Practicum. He developed a new course, Social Work and Christianity. Brown also was named associate director of Prison Ministries, assisting and overseeing the four-year college degree programs housed inside five prisons located in four states.

Brown is active in the North American Association of Christians in Social Work (NACSW) and has been nominated to the board. He has been invited to present his dissertation to the organization and to develop some continuing education modules. In addition, Brown has served on several local boards and has received numerous awards. He is a licensed clinical social worker through the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners.

The social work faculty, consisting of Bozeman, Brown, and Rivers, worked together to create a new degree, Master of Arts in Church and Community Ministries. The 47-hour degree was approved and accredited in 2016. The purpose of the degree is to prepare students to minister effectively in church and community ministries within the local church and social service agencies.

The desire of the social work faculty is to one day have an accredited MSW degree at NOBTS. To that end we continue prayerfully to work within the Division of Church and Community Ministries to recruit and train students while praying for a committed donor who will see our dilemma, catch our vision, and assist us in fulfilling the dream of an accredited Master of Social Work degree program.

***Acts: A New Vision of the People of God.* By Gerald L. Stevens. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2016. 690 pages. Paperback, \$72.00.**

Gerald L. Stevens is professor of New Testament and Greek at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary where he earned a MDiv and PhD. He has taught at his alma mater since 1988. Prior to writing *Acts: A New Vision of the People of God*, he authored or edited five books: *New Testament Greek Primer* (1994), *New Testament Greek Workbook* (1994), *New Testament Greek Intermediate: From Morphology to Translation* (2008), *Essays on Revelation: Appropriating Yesterday's Apocalypse in Today's World* (2011), and *Revelation: The Past and Future of John's Apocalypse* (2014).¹

Acts: A New Vision of the People of God consists of three parts:

1. Thematic Analysis: Thematic Foundation of Characters and Plot
2. Narrative Analysis 1: The Spirit Empowers Messianic Israel (Acts 1–12)
3. Narrative Analysis 2: The Spirit Empowers World Mission (Acts 13–28)

Parts 2 and 3 mirror Stevens's outline of the Book of Acts.

- I. The Spirit Empowers Messianic Israel (Acts 1–12)
 - A. The Spirit Empowers Messianic Israel's Renewal (1–5)
 1. Renewal Beginning (1)
 2. Renewal Empowerment (2)
 3. Renewal Witness (3–5)
 - B. The Spirit Empowers Messianic Israel's Hellenists (6–12)
 1. Hellenist Leaders Emerge (6–7)
 2. Hellenist Mission Advances (8–10)
 3. Hellenist Center Shifts (11–12)
- II. The Spirit Empowers World Mission (Acts 13–28)
 - A. The Spirit Empowers World Mission Journeys (13:1–21:17)
 1. 1MJ: From Cyprus to Conference (13–15)
 2. 2MJ: From Asia to Europe (16–18)
 3. 3MJ: Ephesus (18:23–21:17)
 - B. The Spirit Empowers World Mission Destiny (21:18–28:31)
 1. Destiny Denied: Jerusalem Disaster (21:18–23:32)
 2. Destiny Delayed: Caesarean Custody (23:33–26:32)
 3. Destiny Achieved: Journey to Rome (27–28)

According to the Library of Congress, *Acts: A New Vision of the People of God* is a “commentary.” It offers much more—specifically, figures and videos. The figures consist of 257 pictures, 80 charts, five images, and 66 maps. They reveal Stevens's talent as a

¹Titles and publication dates refer to first editions.

photographer and his knack for designing graphics. The Appendix: Video Resources directs readers to Stevens's website, www.drkoine.com, where he has uploaded videos of his travels to Paul's world.²

Stevens employs a narrative approach. He reasons, "If Luke is compressed at times, selective at others, and does not pretend to give the whole life of Paul, then he is working the material at a narrative level, not strictly biographical. Narrative study, then, is quite useful for reading Luke-Acts, even though Luke does have an extensive amount of historical material" (301). Stevens's literary-critical methodology discerns the function of each narrative "part." Hence, *inclusio*³ and *chiasm*⁴ matter. Characterization⁵ and plot⁶ receive attention because they advance the message. Stevens assumes that Luke writes purposefully and proficiently. Regarding 28:14–16, for instance, he insists, "Commentators have speculated Luke here carelessly has combined two sources. . . . Such a low evaluation of Luke's literary skills does not correspond with the facts of the narrative we have been engaging. . . . Luke does not show himself to be that clumsy a writer" (535).

The subject of Acts is a redefined kingdom of God in light of Luke's new vision of the people of God. Stevens elaborates, "This new people is not defined by ethnicity and Moses, but by faith and Jesus" (551). What enlightened Luke was Pentecost,⁷ when the Spirit empowered Jesus's followers to execute his mission, a plan that includes Gentiles (1:8)—a future that Amos announced (quoted by James at the Jerusalem Council, 15:13–18). Stevens reiterates, "Historical Israel once defined nationally has transformed into the eschatological reality of messianic Israel now defined socially across national boundaries" (551).

In Part 1, Stevens prepares readers to grasp the subject of Acts by devoting chapters to the following topics: Pentecost, Antioch, and Saul-Paul. Each one is a hermeneutical key. Pentecost, based upon Deuteronomy 16:11 and Tobit 2:1–2, concluded with a communal meal celebrating the abundance of God's harvest. Converts are the harvest in Acts. Stevens, therefore, shows how characters facilitated (e.g., Barnabas) or frustrated (e.g., Ananias and

²Images and maps, in addition to journal entries and museum resources, supplement each video of every location that Paul visited on a missionary journey or during the eventful trip to Rome.

³Acts 2:10 and 19:21–28:31 (170); 2:12–14 and 2:41–47 (179–80); chapters 3 and 5 (207); 6:5 (214); 8:36–40 and 21:8 (243); 11:27–30 and 12:24–25 (276); 16:3 and 18:18 (394); 16:8–10 and 20:7–12 (427); 26:13 and 26:22–23 (493); 1:3 and 28:23 (551, 574).

⁴"God Resisted": Chapters 3–5 and 11–12 (120); Damascus Road Story in Six Scenes: Chapter 9 (252).

⁵E.g., "The Character Saul-Paul" (113–43); "Puteoli Observations: Characters and Plot" (536).

⁶E.g., Stevens asserts, "Luke launches his narrative with Pentecost" (47). He argues that Stephen's speech "[drives] the entire plot of Acts" (574) and that "Acts reaches its narrative climax with Paul in Rome" (567).

⁷No other evangelist mentions Pentecost.

Sapphira) Pentecost's promotion of inclusiveness. He summarizes, "Pentecost defined the profile of the early church mission and the social parameters of her eschatological life in the world" (71). Antioch was the headquarters of the Hellenists, featured in chapters 6–12. The Hellenists, unlike the Hebraists in Jerusalem, heartily embraced the global scope of Jesus's mission. Consequently, Jerusalem becomes the "foil" for Antioch.⁸ Antioch exemplifies what is "Christian" (11:26). Saul-Paul, for Stevens, embodies the themes of Stephen's speech: "God Active" (7:2–8) and "God Resisted" (7:9–19).⁹ Stevens documents exegetically how the apostle either did God's will (e.g., Ephesian ministry) or defied it (e.g., trip to Jerusalem). Saul-Paul "drives the plot in the second half of Acts." (140)

Stevens opines, "What if Paul had gone straight to Rome in the power of his Ephesian mission? What if Paul had arrived in Rome three years earlier than he did, when he was supposed to, *but without chains*, and, like Ephesus, working miracles, inducing magical book bonfires, sending associates into surrounding regions to establish satellite churches? . . . We cannot know. However, one could muse on the connection another gospel writer, Mark, makes between gospel proclamation and second coming realization (Mark 13:10) and wonder if Paul's fateful decision in Ephesus to detour to Jerusalem before going to Rome even impacted the timing of the second coming" (570; see also 516, 537, and 575). Albeit speculation, Stevens's comments qualify as an overstatement. Two facts expose the exaggeration. First, the mission was bigger than the apostle (Phil 3:12–14). Kingdom work dwarfs us all. When Elijah presumed that he was God's last hope, God informed the prophet that 7,000 Israelites had not bowed to Baal (1 Kgs 19:18). Second, God's sovereignty guarantees the mission's success; thus, Jesus could assure his disciples that suffering on behalf of the gospel would not be meaningless (Matt 24:14). A better contemplation would be what Paul himself missed by being disobedient. The gospel advanced not only through him but also in spite of him.

Four highlights of Stevens's book warrant a few remarks. First, its narrative approach allows Acts to speak unfiltered. Stevens defers to Luke, not to scholarly opinions about Luke's work. Second, its assessment of the storyline (big picture) illuminates four visions¹⁰ and all three "we sections." Each vision was a course correction for Paul. Each "we section" coincides with the issue of Paul and God's will. Third, its critique of the Jerusalem church, as well as Paul's ministry, are bluntly honest; Stevens, for example, uses "so called" to describe the second missionary journey before the Troas vision. Fourth, its profile of Saul-Paul counters the idealization of Paul.¹¹

⁸Stevens observes, "Antioch is the premier paradigm of mission in Acts" (97).

⁹Stevens expounds, "This character is a complex mix of two antithetical sides: fighting God with profound stubbornness (Saul the Pharisee) and serving God with inspiring commitment (Paul the apostle). What most forget that Luke does not is that, even after the Damascus Road, Paul never stopped having the potential to be Saul" (130).

¹⁰The four visions are Damascus Road (9:3–9), Troas (16:9–10), Temple (22:17–21), and Antonia (23:11).

¹¹The profile of Saul-Paul does not incorporate Paul's epistles. Stevens explains, "We have

Acts: A New Vision of the People of God is user-friendly. Each chapter ends with a summary,¹² sometimes a conclusion; also, some sections end with a summary. Footnotes grant quick access to Stevens's research. Four indices (Scripture, ancient documents, modern authors, and subject) expedite searches for specific content.

Acts: A New Vision of the People of God appeals to a broad audience—namely, scholar, practitioner, and student. It rivals any textbook but reads more like a novel because technical jargon does not taint it. The exegesis of Acts, section by section, will aid the pastor planning to preach through the Bible book. The frequent citations of the Greek text, always in parentheses or a footnote, should please anyone in biblical studies.

- Ivan Parke, Mississippi College, Clinton, Mississippi

***Becoming a Pastor Theologian: New Possibilities for Church Leadership.* Edited by Todd Wilson and Gerald Hiestand. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016. 231 pages. Paperback, \$25.00.**

Todd Wilson and Gerald Hiestand have provided yet another work for aspiring pastor theologians. Their first, *The Pastor Theologian: Resurrecting an Ancient Vision* (Zondervan, 2015), focused primarily on a paradigm shift of how both pastors and academics view theology and pastoral ministry. *Becoming a Pastor Theologian: New Possibilities for Church Leadership* builds upon this paradigm further with a collaboration of essays from a conference held by the Center for Pastor Theologians. These essays are focused on three main sections, and the editors hope the contributions made by various authors help clarify the “identity crisis” for many pastors (1–3). Wilson serves as senior pastor of Calvary Memorial Church in Oak Park Illinois, and is the co-founder and chairman of the Center for Pastor Theologians. Hiestand is senior associate pastor at Calvary Memorial Church in Oak Park, Illinois, and is the co-founder and director of the Center for Pastor Theologians.

Section one, “The Identities of the Pastor Theologian,” approaches the identity of the pastor theologian from five different angles: biblical theologian, political theologian, public theologian, ecclesial theologian, and cruciform theologian. Fundamentally, the pastor theologian is a biblical theologian, and Peter J. Leithart builds a biblical theology for what

intentionally restricted our comments to the narrative in Acts, not using Pauline correspondence. Our desire was to focus on Luke's narrative strategy and plot development, which is not advanced by appeal to Paul” (141).

¹²Chapter 3 is an exception.

it means for the pastor theologian to be “from the church for the church.” It is “a biblical theology produced by pastors who serve local congregations for the edification of fellow believers in their own and other churches” (7). James K. A. Smith argues a theology of politics is no longer about securing a platform to express beliefs, but a formation of habits and desires which define an evangelical (24). The pastor is also a public theologian in that they should be “evangelicalism’s default public intellectual” (37), an ecclesial theologian who contributes to “contemporary theological discourse” (54), and a cruciform theologian who dies to himself daily so that “life might be at work in the pastor’s flock” (71).

Section two examines a historical perspective of the pastor theologian through the lens of four pastors. Scott M. Manetsch examines John Calvin’s structure of the pastoral office and theological leadership in Geneva, with a pertinent discussion on the distinction between a professor and pastor (85–86). Philip Ryken provides a helpful overview of the life of Thomas Boston, who served the smallest church in the smallest parish in Scotland (93). Chris Castaldo considers John Henry Newman as an example of a pastor theologian mentor. Newman was a convert to Catholicism later in life (120), but Castaldo surveys his proposal to revise the tutorship at Oxford University (113–14) and shows the benefits found therein for evangelicals (114–20). Last in this section is the ecclesial theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Joel D. Lawrence investigates Bonhoeffer’s theological method and shows that “his theology resisted the criteria of the academy because of his commitment to doing theology in and for the church, and also his identity [belonged] to the church” (133).

Section three contains six chapters that pursue the topic of the pastor theologian and Scripture. Edward W. Klink III works through a hermeneutic that calls for an ecclesial exegesis and notes the importance of having a proper doctrine of Scripture in which to perform the exegetical task (138–44). When the pastor theologian speaks of Scripture, he claims that “Scripture is the locus of revelation, not merely a mediator of revelation” (142). Jason A. Nichols continues in a similar thought and examines the pastor theologian as depicted in the Pastoral Epistles, and provides five helpful mandates for how these mandates shape the pastor theologian today. Laurie L. Norris examines the role of the female ecclesial theologian and asks what vocational settings a female theologian might pursue outside of the pastoral office. The pastor theologian also serves as an apologist, as Josh Chatraw helpfully examines the pastoral function in this discipline. The pastor apologist does not need to be created *ex nihilo* but rather needs to be resurrected (182). The pastor is also to be a giver of wisdom, as Eric C. Redmond argues from Prov 30:10–14, since “the pastor theologian’s tasks necessitate wisdom” (187). Last, Douglas Estes examines 2 John as a creative theological *écriture* and highlights the creativity the Apostle John used in this brief epistle.

Becoming a Pastor Theologian continues the pastor theologian discussion that has recently garnered much attention from both academics and pastors. Exactly what is a pastor theologian and how is he to function? This book approaches this question at various

angles and offers a helpful landscape of possibilities. That said, the book does a helpful job of presenting the all-encompassing role of the pastor theologian and the different venues he serves. Whether or not one agrees with the adjectives, the pastor must serve as an apologist, biblical, political, public, ecclesial, and cruciform theologian at some point in his ministerial life. The respective chapters provide the pastor theologian the necessary groundwork to envision how that may appear in his life.

Of note is the chapter on Thomas Boston by Ryken. The extent of his pastoral influence was limited only to the borders of his parish, and Ryken believes this, not his posthumous success, makes Boston a valuable model for pastor theologians (94). This chapter will encourage small church pastors to continue their labor which, perhaps for many, may seem to have little influence upon their congregation.

As significant as the pastor theologian's view of Scripture, Klink's desire calls for an "ecclesial exegesis" is noteworthy but may be claimed by those with a less-than-orthodox view of Scripture. Those who hold to a moderate or liberal understanding of the Scriptures would disagree with Klink's assessment of the importance of an evangelical view of the Scripture, but they, within their own tradition, could rightly lay claim to performing "ecclesial exegesis" since they use an exegetical method that fits within their ecclesial location. Perhaps it is best to use a more defined word, such as evangelical, rather than "ecclesial exegesis."

As for the structure of the book, Wilson and Hiestand inform the reader the first five chapters are those from the plenary session (2) while the rest were breakout sessions. Each of these chapters deals with "The Pastor Theologian as . . ." However, two chapters in section three fall under the same classification. Despite the fact they were not delivered in the plenary, it would have been more appropriate to group the chapters by Chatraw and Redmond in section one for thematic reasons.

This book is a welcome addition to the discussion of the pastor theologian. Wilson and Hiestand have provided a gift to the church and her pastors. If one is interested in the pastor theologian model and how they might replicate it in their ministry, this is the place to begin.

- Jason P. Kees, *Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Missouri*

***The Book of Zechariah.* By Mark J. Boda. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016. 911 pages. Hardcover, \$58.00.**

Mark J. Boda is professor of Old Testament at McMaster Divinity College and is also on the Faculty of Theology at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. Boda's work in the field of biblical studies is extensive; he has authored more than twelve books and more than one hundred articles. Some of his works include *Haggai, Zechariah* (Zondervan, 2004), *After God's Own Heart: The Gospel According to David* (P&R, 2007), and *A Severe Mercy: Sin and Its Remedy in the Old Testament* (Eisenbrauns, 2009). Boda is also working on two commentaries on the book of Psalms.

The goal of The New International Commentary series is to provide an interpretation of Scripture from an evangelical perspective. As such, Boda's commitment to Scripture as God's authoritative word is seen in the outline of the book. He places a discussion of the text of Zechariah at both the beginning and end of his introduction, spanning only forty-five pages. Then Boda spends more than seven hundred pages commentating on the fourteen chapters of Zechariah. Thus, Boda's purpose is to demonstrate, almost exhaustively, how Zechariah is relevant for the church and "that all that has been written will prompt greater glory to the God whose speech and action is depicted within the book of Zechariah" (xvi).

As stated above, Boda's analysis of the book of Zechariah is divided into two main parts—introduction and textual commentary. While the bulk of Boda's analysis is devoted primarily to the text of Zechariah, his introduction provides the reader with three central presuppositions that will influence how he will interpret the text. First, Boda explains the historical events and circumstances of the nations influencing the Israelites because he wants to focus his commentary on "the meaning of Zechariah to its original audience(s)" (7). According to Boda, "a grasp of the history of this period is helpful for understanding the experience of the audiences who received these prophetic words" (8). Thus, Boda argues that the impact of Babylonian rebellions during the reign of Darius "can be seen in the accent placed on the renewal of political structures within the book (Zechariah 3; 4; 6:9–15) and the role seen for the Jewish law code within the land (Zechariah 5)" (13).

Second, Boda argues that an awareness of the compositional history of Zechariah will allow modern readers to "hear the text in ways consonant with its ancient readers" (17). Boda agrees with the current consensus that Zechariah is divided into two main parts: chapters 1–8 and chapters 9–14. Though the two parts of Zechariah might have existed separately at one point, Boda sees them as having been "drawn together into a unified collection" (23). Ultimately, Boda concludes that the final form of Zechariah did not appear until around the fifth century B.C. As such, Boda argues that the book's purpose is to provide a "supplemental vision . . . to Nehemiah's infrastructural initiatives, reminding both priestly and political leaders of Yahweh's desire for a renewal that moves beyond physical restoration" (37).

Third, Boda finds the text of Zechariah to have been heavily influenced by the earlier prophetic tradition. Boda mentions the prophetic traditions of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. He also sees connections within the book of the Twelve (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Micah, and Habakkuk). Boda does not regard the Torah to have been as influential on Zechariah as the prophetic literature, but he does note a few instances.

All three of these presuppositions are seen throughout Boda's commentary. This fact is clearly seen within his general overviews of each section. Using Boda's analysis of Zechariah 3:1–10 as an example, within his overview of this section Boda seeks to point out some of the sociological struggles "in the early Persian period community in Yehud" (223), how Zechariah 3–4 fit within the framework of Zechariah 1–8 (225), and how earlier biblical traditions (such as Jeremiah 33 and Ezek 40–48) have influenced this section of the text (225–226). Thus, Boda precedes his analysis of Zechariah 3:1–10 with identifying and clarifying for the reader how all three presuppositions will influence Boda's commentary of the text.

Overall, Boda's commentary is a remarkable resource for the book of Zechariah. His commentary spends an average of two pages per verse. In light of this, Boda can cover every verse in almost exhaustive detail, in which there is a discussion of the views of others as well as his textual analysis. As such, even if one disagrees with Boda's final analysis, the commentary contains enough information about the views of others for readers to continue their own research. For example, in his commentary on Zechariah's second vision report, Boda explains how the report's introduction "is not typical of the earlier prophetic tradition" and concludes from this that Zechariah "is innovative" and influences "texts such as Dan 8:3; 10:5" (157). But the truth of this statement is only valid in the prophetic literature. In fact, Gen 31:10 describes Jacob as experiencing the same type of vision as Zechariah in Zech 2:1 [Eng., Zech 1:18]. Thus, is Zechariah being innovative or depending on the Pentateuch?

The only fault found within the book is its lack of engagement with the New Testament. In all, Boda only mentions about thirty-six New Testament texts, with fourteen of these references taking place within his introduction (44). Interestingly, Boda mentions Ugaritic tablets almost about as many times. Given the evangelical claim of the commentary series, this comparison is curious. Though nothing requires Boda to discuss the New Testament usage of Zechariah, his exclusion of such a discussion is noticeable given his discussion of this concept within his NIV commentary (see *Haggai, Zechariah*, 49–50). Thus, if one seeks to gain from Boda's extensive analysis of Zechariah, then obtaining a copy of both of his commentaries would be helpful. His NIV commentary will point the reader towards the value of Zechariah for the church, while his NICOT commentary will point the reader towards seeking to understand Zechariah in light of its ancient audience.

- Ron Lindo, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana

***Called by Triune Grace: Divine Rhetoric and the Effectual Call.* By Jonathan Hoglund. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016. 267 pages. Paperback, \$35.00.**

As a revision of his PhD dissertation from Wheaton College, Jonathan Hoglund (of Training Leaders International in Southeast Asia) provides a scholarly exploration of the Reformed notion of effectual calling in his book *Called by Triune Grace*. As a volume in the Studies in Christian Doctrine and Scripture Series by IVP Academic, Hoglund writes under the editorship of his doctoral supervisors Daniel J. Treier and Kevin J. Vanhoozer. In a fully integrated approach, Hoglund approaches the subject of effectual calling through biblical exegesis, historical method, and (as he prefers to call it) “dogmatic” analysis.

The premise of this study is that God works salvation by means of speech (or more specifically effectual calling). While such claims have been made before, Hoglund appreciates that there is still much left unresolved when exploring the notion of divine rhetoric. Issues such as the content of the call, the freedom of the hearer, and the efficacy of divine/human speech are all matters that require further development, which Hoglund here provides.

The study of effectual calling is essentially a study of the means of conversion, which Hoglund introduces in chapter 1. Hoglund’s breakdown of soteriological instrumentality is termed *converting change* and encompasses the Triune rhetoric of God the Father calling sinners to salvation by means of human presentations of the gospel that are empowered by the Holy Spirit and bear witness to Christ as saving Lord. Hoglund seeks to address the concerns of non-Reformed Protestants regarding the freedom of the will in salvation. The author affirms that calling (though efficacious) preserves human freedom in that it is a personalized summons that engages in legitimate dialogue. This is the brilliance of divine rhetoric, for Hoglund, in that it persuades sinners through use of argumentation, reason, and other considerations (all empowered by the Spirit) so that individuals will respond to the gospel. In chapter 2, Hoglund develops this notion further by exploring the relationship between effectual calling and regeneration. Utilizing a constructive approach between the views of Michael Horton and Kevin Vanhoozer, Hoglund claims that effectual calling is the means by which God regenerates sinners to salvation. However, he does not wish to make such a claim solely on theological grounds which is why chapter 3 is Hoglund’s biblical defense for such claims.

What is the content of the effectual call? Hoglund turns his attention to this question in chapter 4. In short, Hoglund states that the basic content of effectual calling is that “Jesus is your saving Lord.” After some historical considerations which provide the necessary contrast to his argument, Hoglund claims his definition of the content of the effectual call is superior in that it connects the divine call with the gospel call (or human presentation of the gospel). Coming in the form of a summons, Hoglund claims that when God says to a sinner, “Jesus is your saving Lord,” he is summoning the sinner to repentance and faith.

In chapters 5–6, the author examines descriptions of converting change through the metaphors of light and illumination utilizing biblical exegesis and dialogue with Reformed theologians. His primary point is that Christ, through the gospel call, is the light which penetrates human darkness whereby individuals may see God’s glory and respond in faith. The result of responding to such light is new birth and resurrection which is the content of chapters 7 and 8. Therein, Hoglund shows how individuals can live out the lives to which they were called.

Chapter 9 fleshes out the meaning and application of divine rhetoric. There, the author states that the Triune God speaks through persuasion to appropriate converting change in a way that is both progressive to the unique nature of humans while also an instantaneous act of regeneration. The book concludes with chapter 10 on God’s calling and the church. While including theological matters such as Hoglund’s *ordo salutis*, the author provides practical considerations of how the church participates with the Triune God in effectually calling sinners to repentance (the church presents the gospel and God provides converting change).

This book is a very welcomed contribution to the sometimes-neglected field of soteriology. Hoglund has an exceptional command of both biblical exegesis and the Reformed tradition (as expressed through his citation of historic and contemporary Reformed authors). His book will appeal to anyone interested in Reformed theology in general and soteriology in particular, especially those in evangelical circles.

Due to its narrow focus, this book can easily be categorized as an “in-house debate.” In other words, Hoglund is addressing a narrow subject limited to Reformed soteriology. He does not attempt to address various concerns from the non-Reformed traditions of Protestantism. However, Hoglund did include an issue of considerable importance to the non-Reformed party, namely the need for a genuine human response to the gospel. As stated above, Hoglund attempts to preserve the well-meant offer of the gospel (76) and the conditionality of effectual calling. However, he may not convince all readers of how the *effectual* call—which Hoglund states always accomplishes its goal (214)—can be conditional when sinners remain passive in regeneration and converting change (129). This merely points to the need for additional dialogue between the Reformed and non-Reformed traditions concerning the conclusions of this book.

Hoglund’s definitions of various aspects of salvation are in many ways novel yet not without adequate biblical and historical support. Of particular interest is Hoglund’s definition of the content of the effectual call: “Jesus is your saving Lord.” How such a statement is a summons to repentance and faith is not abundantly clear. Nevertheless, this book is a carefully-researched and well-articulated study of effectual calling that is informed by biblical exegesis and historical dialogue.

- Daniel Kirkpatrick, University of the Southwest, Hobbs, New Mexico

***Calling on the Name of the Lord: A Biblical Theology of Prayer.* By J. Gary Millar. New Studies in Biblical Theology 38. Edited by D. A. Carson. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2016. 264 pages. Paperback, \$24.00.**

J. Gary Millar has written books in the areas of biblical theology, preaching, and New Testament. He has been a minister in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland. Currently, he is principal of Queensland Theological College in Australia.

Calling on the Name of the Lord: A Biblical Theology of Prayer is exactly what the title indicates. Motivated by “a desire to pray more and more effectively,” Millar mentioned “a growing sense of disquiet at the marginalization of prayer in local churches across the English-speaking world” (15). The book is a biblical theology of prayer designed to address that marginalization. Beginning with the first explicit mention of prayer in Genesis 4, the thread is traced throughout the canon, ending in Revelation. Millar found the phrase “calling on the name of the Lord” used in Genesis 4 to be paradigmatic for the practice of prayer throughout the Bible. In the Old Testament, prayer is calling on God to keep his promises, especially in relationship to covenants. In the New Testament after the resurrection, prayer offered in the name of Jesus is a progression of calling on the name of the Lord in the Old Testament. Biblical prayer is shaped by covenant and gospel.

“The main trajectory” of the Bible’s treatment of prayer “is asking God to do what he has already committed himself to do” (27). Biblical lament, intercession, praise, or meditation are significant but should be understood as a part of this covenant or gospel-centered framework. Prayer in the Pentateuch is characterized by calling on the name of the Lord out of a covenantal relationship. The same is true in the Former Prophets, including material emphasizing the faithfulness of God in spite of the disobedience of his people. The Latter Prophets continue the same emphasis, even when dealing with the nature of prayers that would remain unanswered until after judgment on God’s people was completed. In the Writings the same foundational ideas are present. Millar treated the Psalms separately, but the ideas of covenantal relationship and God doing what he has promised still hold true.

Prayer in the Gospels is a continuation and further development of the Old Testament practice of prayer. Prayers are focused on key points in the unfolding plan of salvation including significant moments in the ministry of Jesus. Jesus’s use of “Abba” and the encouragement to pray in Jesus’s name are significant developments still in continuity with the Old Testament concept of “calling on the name of the Lord.” The same pattern is repeated in Acts as the book depicts the spread of the Christian message. In Paul’s letters, there is a new emphasis on intercessory prayer, but God’s purposes remain foundational, especially in applying the gospel to people’s lives. The covenantal and gospel-shaped nature of prayer continues until prayer ceases in Revelation. “The prayers of the saints are answered, and there is nothing left to ask for. All that remains is celebration” (228). An Afterword diagnoses the current climate of the western church regarding prayer and offers suggestions for application.

Writing a complete but relatively brief biblical theology of prayer is quite a task, and Millar has achieved it admirably. He deftly avoided becoming bogged down in exegetical debates by finding common ideas within different positions on which to base his argument and by summing up a discussion with a footnote that otherwise might have filled a dozen pages. He kept the focus of the book appropriately narrow amid many possible distractions. Millar maintained the concentration on biblical theology without crossing over into the categories used by systematic theology. Critics of biblical theology as an enterprise have to contend with Millar's presentation of somewhat distinct but entirely complementary perspectives on prayer in the canon. The cohesiveness of the biblical witness on prayer is obvious throughout the book.

Calling on the Name of the Lord is not light reading, but its weight is appropriate to its subject. The book is characterized by solid exegetical reasoning and an awareness of the history of scholarship. Millar was sensitive to the historical and literary contexts of the passages discussed and displayed an awareness of the metanarrative of the Bible. The tone is academic with a devotional heart. The author approached different portions of the canon differently in order to maintain the focus on prayer and because of the nature of the biblical documents themselves.

The most noticeable stylistic feature of the book is its extensive scriptural quotations. Given the subject matter and the way that the argument of the book develops, these quotations are entirely appropriate even though they dominate the reading. Time and time again, the author calls the reader's attention to neglected passages on prayer and to often-overlooked details of familiar passages. This is not the typical devotional book on prayer, but it does encourage the practice of prayer. Carefully reading this book as an act of devotion with the mind leads to more biblical prayers involving the mind, heart, soul, and strength.

As with any book of this nature, there are instances in which the author may have overstated his case. Given the number of passages covered, some readers may have a disagreement over one exegetical point or another. Even with potential minor differences, however, the author's case is a strong one. One particular limitation is the lack of reference to *The King Jesus Gospel* by Scot McKnight.¹ The explicit connection between the New Testament gospel-centered development and continuation of the Old Testament covenantal understanding of prayer would have been strengthened by its inclusion.

One of the challenges of leading a traditional church is the responsibility for leading the "prayer meeting." Pastors often are frustrated by the self-centered focus of many traditional prayer meetings and the nature of some prayer requests. People in vocational ministry may

¹Scot McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel: The Original Good News Revisited* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011).

joke about requests to pray for “my next door neighbor’s mother-in-law’s big toe;” but the frustration is real. *Calling on the Name of the Lord* provides a framework that may be used by pastors to understand prayer better, and in turn to better equip their people in the practice of prayer. Investing time in this book will produce worthwhile returns in ministry.

– Roland L. McMillan, First Baptist Church, Richton, Mississippi

***The Christ-Centered Expositor: A Field Guide for Word-Driven Disciple Makers.* By Tony Merida. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2016. 300 pages. Paperback, \$29.99.**

Tony Merida is the pastor of Imago Dei Church in Raleigh, North Carolina and is associate professor of preaching at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminar in Wake Forest, North Carolina. Merida received his MDiv, ThM and PhD from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He is the author of numerous books, which include the following: *Faithful Preaching: Declaring Scripture with Responsibility, Passion, and Authenticity* (B&H Academic, 2009), *Ordinary: How to Turn the World Upside Down* (B&H, 2015), and numerous volumes in the Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary series, for which he is also a co-editor.

The goal of *The Christ-Centered Expositor* is to provide an updated form of Merida’s earlier book entitled *Faithful Preaching*. As such, Merida intends this version to be better organized so the newer sections help to clarify some of the concepts found within the previous book (xix). Both books are concerned with identifying expository preaching as the most effective and advantageous form of biblical preaching.

Merida has divided this book into four main sections. The first section sets the stage for everything else within the book by clarifying terms and explaining the form of expository preaching advocated by Merida. Though Merida states that he “cannot manufacture expositors,” he argues for “nine ingredients that contribute to the making of a great expositor” (2). From here, Merida moves to a brief biblical survey of preaching and teaching then provides the following definition for expository preaching (faithful preaching): “faithful preaching involves explaining what God has said in his Word, declaring what God has done in his Son, and applying this message to the hearts of the people” (9). In order to distinguish between biblical preaching and teaching, Merida clarifies that preaching involves exhortation, evangelism, and exultation. Merida argues that teaching might involve these three elements, but that preaching ought to contain them. This section then concludes with Merida distinguishing expository preaching from other forms of preaching: narrative, topical-felt-need, and dialogical preaching. Merida argues that only expository preaching leads to a faithful explanation of the biblical text.

The second section focuses on the lifestyle of the expositor, or preacher, which Merida directly connects to the one's ability to preach faithfully. As such, Merida begins this section by encouraging his readers to watch their life and doctrine. From here, Merida moves on to speak of other important parts of a preacher's lifestyle (such as loving the Scriptures, having a developed prayer life, and relying on the Spirit's guidance), but the idea of personal holiness is never forgotten. Merida explains that expositors need the Spirit's power but will not have this power without personal holiness. Therefore, one must pray for the Spirit's illumination (94–95). But one will not be illuminated if he is living in sin because "sin will keep you from prayer" (109). This will also keep one from seeing God's glory as revealed in Scripture because "sin clouds our vision of God and hinders intimacy with God" (112). In all, Merida affirms that "before and above being learned, a minister must be godly" (39). From Merida's perspective, if a minister lives in holiness and is guided by Scripture, then Christ-centered expository preaching will be any minister's first choice.

The third section goes through Merida's five-step method for developing an expository sermon. Merida provides the following steps: 1) study the text, 2) unify the redemptive theme, 3) outline the text, 4) develop the functional elements, and 5) add the introduction and conclusion. After listing these steps, Merida provides each step with a chapter of its own. Most of this section is spent on step four, the functional elements, which are the "meat to the outline" or sermon (175–76). The unifying theme of this section is Merida's emphasis that preaching must be something different from a lecture. For Merida, "preaching is preaching when it has the aroma of Christ present" (148). This is because the goal of "exposition is not merely to transfer information but to apply biblical truth to real people" (156) so that one can "persuade people to change" (222). Ultimately, Merida would argue that preaching must move people to respond to God's word.

The fourth section provides the reader with some extra information in the form of appendixes. This information includes topics such as a short history of preaching, advice on expositional preaching outside of the church setting, a sermon outline sheet, and a sermon evaluation form.

Overall, Merida's book helps to clarify the necessity for pastors to preach the word correctly "so that people put their faith in Christ, not in man's wisdom" (9). Merida provides convincing reasons and examples for why expository preaching is more appropriate and God-honoring than other forms of preaching. This fact alone causes the book to be highly recommended and valuable for the inexperienced expositor. The experienced expositor, however, will find nothing new within Merida's work. Though, as Merida argues, it is always good to review the basics (134), many parts of Merida's book are elementary and somewhat repetitive. The repetitive nature of this book will help the beginning pastor to solidify his resolve to be a Christ-Centered expositor while this same feature may cause the advance pastor to long for more. For example, Merida states that in preaching from an Old Testament text that does not speak directly of Christ, one should "interpret the text first in its historical

setting and then move to the New Testament to show the Christological features” (146). Though Merida provides the readers with some resources by which to perform such a “move,” he does not explain exactly how to do this within his work. As such, a beginner will be highly motivated to test out Merida’s method but will soon find himself in need of something slightly more substantial if he wishes to be a truly experienced expositor.

- Ron Lindo, *New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana*

***Christianity: The Biography: 2000 Years of Global History.* By Ian J. Shaw. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017. 288 pages. Hardcover, \$24.99.**

Church history is too important to leave as the exclusive domain of scholars, but finding a good introduction that is well-researched, readable, and brief is a difficult task. Ian Shaw’s recent volume, *Christianity: The Biography: 2000 Years of Global History*, helps to fill that void. This is the sort of volume that should have a place in the classroom as a survey textbook for college or seminary level classes. It also has the characteristics that will make it useful in local churches for general interest and edification of the body.

Shaw is Associate International Director of the Langham Scholars Program and Honorary Fellow at the School of Divinity, New College, University of Edinburgh. This is the fifth volume he has written on various aspects of church history, but his first attempt at an introductory survey of the subject.

Christianity declares itself a biography, which seems odd until the reader considers that the church is, in reality, the bride of Christ. Therefore, the image of being the story of a life seems quite appropriate. Shaw uses stages of human development as metaphors for titles of each chapter, a device that works more effectively at the beginning of the volume than at the end.

The book is divided into twenty chapters in addition to the introduction. Shaw moves through several millennia in fewer than three hundred pages. He begins by giving a backstory for the church by walking through the rise of the Greek empire and subsequent replacement by the Romans. He then skims the surface of the New Testament to present the history of the major players in Scripture. By chapter 3, Shaw moves into the post-biblical record of the early church, highlighting the impressive unity of theology but also discussing apparent diversity in some practices. He then covers the persecutions of the early church, then focusing on the early writings of the church fathers. Chapter 6 presents the Constantinian shift and the subsequent effects in the western portion of the Roman Empire. The next chapter relates the spread of Christianity beyond the boundaries of the empire, which is a subject too little discussed in many surveys of church history.

Chapter 8 highlights the monastic movement in the patristic era through the early medieval era. Then Shaw discusses the conflict surrounding Christendom, including the break between the East and West, and the Crusades. The next chapter deals with the intellectual tradition of the medieval church. Chapter 11 covers pre-Reformation splintering among Christians, including the distinctiveness of the Nubian and Ethiopian churches, the variations on Christianity in China, and the rise of Wycliffe and Hus. This is logically followed by a rapid trip through the European reformations in their various forms. The thirteenth chapter introduces the reader to the Roman Catholic attempts at counter Reformation.

Continuing the emphasis on church history beyond that of Western Europe, Shaw next discusses attempts to maintain or recover orthodoxy and piety in Christian settings like North American colonies and Russia, as well as on the British Isles. Chapter 15 illuminates the Enlightenment and its impacts on Christianity around the world. Then Shaw relates the historical events surrounding the revolutions in the United States and France along with the rise of the modern mission movement. The seventeenth chapter considers the rise of Liberalism and the challenges posed by attempts to revise the Christian tradition in the eighteenth century. Chapter 18 dashes through the various theological and social controversies of the first half of the twentieth century. The next chapter treats the most recent history of the church including Vatican II, the growing emphasis on social application of the gospel, and the rapid spread of Christianity around the globe. Chapter 20 concludes the volume by offering some current statistics and speculating on the future shape of the church.

As a work of history, *Christianity* is vulnerable to critiques about ignoring certain figures, not emphasizing particular movements, and making generalizations. All of these critiques would certainly be defensible, though uncharitable. Shaw's achievement in presenting a representative survey of several thousand years of history in a relatively brief volume should not be overlooked.

This is an outstanding resource for the church. Shaw manages to avoid getting bogged down in lists of names and dates. This is a very readable book, suitable for informed laity as well as students of religious studies. The volume avoids the rabbit trails of controversies about traditional interpretations of events in the history of the church and stays true to its main task. It remains above the fray of scholarly debate but shows evidence of awareness of the ebb and flow of contemporary scholarship. Shaw shows where doctrinal debates occurred but tends to present the facts rather than argue polemically. This volume adds to the literature of the field by providing an accessible survey that looks beyond the confines of Western European history to see Christianity as a global religion.

Christianity: The Biography belongs on the shelves of pastors to provide sermon illustrations. It belongs in the seminary and college classroom as an introductory text. It

warrants space in church libraries, and it has a place in homeschool curricula for a high schooler to be introduced to the Christian tradition. This is a book that will be useful for the church in many ways for years to come.

- Andrew J. Spencer, Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, Oklahoma

***The Day the Revolution Began: Reconsidering the Meaning of Jesus's Crucifixion.* By N. T. Wright. New York: HarperOne, 2016. 420 pages. Hardcover, \$28.99.**

N. T. Wright (PhD, Oxford) serves as research professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at St. Mary's College in the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. He served as the Bishop of Durham in 2003–2010. He is a prolific author, having written many books on a wide array of topics in New Testament Theology.¹

In the monograph at hand, N. T. Wright reconsiders the meaning of Jesus's death on the cross. The book is divided into four parts. In the first part, Wright discusses some general introductory matters. In the second part, he addresses the role of the Messiah in Israel's Scriptures. In part three, he explains the meaning of Jesus's crucifixion. In part four, he deals with the meaning of the cross for the Christian life.

Wright begins in part one by discussing the historical context of crucifixion in the Greco-Roman world. He notes how the majority of persons who suffered crucifixion during that time were those seen as a threat to Roman rule. He notes multiple examples of mass crucifixions carried out by the Romans after they had halted rebellions, such as one of the early Jewish rebellions around the time of Jesus's birth. Crucifixion, Wright comments, was the most shameful and degrading way to die in that world; however, the crucifixion of Jesus was immediately proclaimed as an event that had changed the world (65).

Before discussing the meaning of Jesus's crucifixion, Wright suggests that Jesus was crucified for the sins of the world "according to the Bible" (73). What did the earliest Christians mean when they made this claim? Wright answers with the concept of *covenant vocation*. When God created the cosmos, he created a cosmic temple for himself, one in which he would dwell with his creation. The garden of Eden, according to Wright, symbolized a micro-cosmos, a micro-place where God would dwell with his creation. When God created Adam, he created him to lord over the creation as God would have ruled it. By eating the fruit of the forbidden tree, Adam forwent his covenant vocation and succumbed to idolatry. As a result, God later calls Abraham and establishes a covenant with him to create a nation that would be God's covenant people. God would, in turn, bless the rest

¹For more on his background and writings, see my review in this issue of *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*.

of the world through this people. This blessing would be a restoration of creation to its intended design in the garden. This was Israel's covenant vocation (86). Israel, however, failed at her vocation. Just as Adam in the garden, Israel likewise capitulated itself into idolatry. God then, through prophets, foretold of a day that he would send a Messiah to fulfill this covenant vocation as the true Israel and that this Messiah would accomplish this through suffering. Wright emphasizes that this Messiah takes on the identity of Israel as well as the covenant vocation of Israel (142).

Wright takes up the meaning of the crucifixion by analyzing the necessary material in the Gospel accounts. As many do, he notes the ransom language used in the Gospels, but he gives his primary attention to the Passover language used in reference to Jesus's death. Jesus's crucifixion, according to the Gospels, is primarily concerned with being a new Passover event (178). This is most clearly seen in the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his disciples, which was a Passover meal (185). The Passover meal retold the story of God delivering Israel from Egypt. Through his institution of the Lord's Supper, Jesus tells the story of a new Passover, one that will be accomplished by his death. His death will free the community of God from the true enemy, sin. Wright notes that sin is primarily idolatry. When Israel capitulated into idolatry, she became enslaved to her idols. The death of Jesus is one that will free her from her captors, and it would do this by removing sin. Wright states, "Echoing the combination of themes that Jesus himself drew together, the evangelists in their different ways saw the great victory over the powers of evil being won by means of taking away sin" (209). He also refers to Jesus's death as "representative substitution" (211). He notes throughout the book that the New Testament weaves together the themes of the defeat of the powers of evil, the removal of sin, and Jesus as the new Adam. These three themes hold each other together; if one focuses on one theme more than the others, then she runs the risk of misunderstanding the cross.

Wright next turns his attention to Paul's teaching on the crucifixion of Jesus. He divides this portion into three chapters: one chapter discussing the crucifixion in Paul's letters outside of Romans and two chapters on crucifixion in the book of Romans. The two chapters on Romans focus on different themes that Paul uses to discuss the crucifixion, the new exodus and Passover. Paul follows the tradition recorded in the Gospels, namely that Jesus's death accomplished a new Passover through the removal of sin via his substitutionary death. The cross does not seek to appease some angry God that has come to hate humanity because of her sin. The cross, rather, reveals a God of love who sees that the sin of idolatry of his people has enslaved said people, and who aims to deal with this sin problem ergo freeing them from said sin. Wright does use the language of "propitiation" used by Paul. However, he rightly points out that "the wrath of God" for Paul is still to come as seen in Romans 5 (273). Wright interprets the Greek *hilasterion* as "mercy seat," echoing back to the Torah narratives where God would dwell and meet with his people (327-34).

The final two chapters of the book discuss the implications of the cross for Christian living, a topic that is usually neglected in most books on the work of Christ. In these chapters, Wright refers to the church as “Passover people” and discusses the triumph of the power of love over the powers of the world. He notes that there are still three primary idols that the global West serves rather than the true God: mammon, sex, and power. He provides substantial discussions showing how the cross of Jesus frees the church from these idols and empowers them to live out their covenant vocation, the same vocation given to both Adam in the garden and Israel in the desert.

The Day the Revolution Began is a phenomenal monograph written by one of the world’s leading New Testament scholars. In this work, Wright clarifies his position on the crucifixion of Jesus, a position that some scholars and educated laypersons have questioned. Some scholars have alleged that Wright rejects the penal-substitutionary theory of atonement (PSA) and opts for a *Christus Victor* theory (CV) in its stead. Although Wright *does* reject a version of PSA, he does not reject it altogether. What he rejects is the following understanding of PSA: God creates humanity, humanity capitulates into sin, namely idolatry, God becomes angry with humanity and wants to destroy them, but Jesus decides to jump in the way of his father’s wrath to divert humanity’s destruction. Wright rejects this idea that God was so angry towards humanity that he only desired to destroy it. Wright often refers to this view of the cross as “the Pagan view.” Such a view would neglect the New Testament concept that the cross was a result of God’s love rather than his hatred. Wright affirms that the cross is a symbol of God’s love and that Jesus dies as a substitute and deals with the sin problem of humanity in humanity’s stead. Since the wages, the due compensation, of sin is death, Jesus dies this death to sin, freeing humanity from sin’s power. Wright notes that the language of the New Testament describes Jesus’s death as both substitutionary and penal, though not in the way many have misunderstood those terms.

Wright’s view of the atonement is an interweaving of three different theories that are often pitted against one another: *Christus Victor*, penal substitution, and recapitulation. These theories should not be seen as theories opposed to one another but as themes complementing one another, though he does not use these names for the theories. New Testament writers constantly use all three of these themes when addressing the work of Christ. Wright correctly notes that when one overemphasizes one of these themes, then she risks misunderstanding the cross of Jesus. I summarize Wright’s view of the atonement in the following statement: Jesus, being the recapitulated true Adam and Israel, overcomes the powers of sin by dying to sin as a representative substitute for all those who have faith in him. Wright’s view correctly takes all three of these themes into consideration.

Wright reminds his readers that the gospel is not that Jesus died to appease an angry God so that one’s soul can escape to heaven when she dies. This completely neglects the portions of Scripture that affirm the goodness of creation and the future hope of bodily

resurrection. The gospel, rather, is best understood as New Creation. Wright points out that the crucifixion of Jesus, followed by his resurrection, inaugurates God's new creation. As Wright comments throughout the book, the world was a different place by the night of Jesus's death. Through his death, Jesus defeated the powers of evil and launched a new creation. All things are being made new through the cross.

There are some weaknesses in the book. Wright's description of PSA often verges on the straw man fallacy, if it is not indeed guilty of it. Though he claims that few, if any, scholars hold the view that he seeks to refute, he mentions it frequently as if it were the predominant view of PSA. Though some laypersons in the church might understand the atonement in this sense, one would be hard pressed to find New Testament scholars who claim that the New Testament contains such a view. Although this book was written for a popular audience rather than only the scholarly audience, Wright could have strengthened it by reminding his reader that he is not rejecting all PSA theories but only the "pagan" one. Another weakness is Wright's use of repetition. He often repeats the same point throughout the entire book.

Overall, *The Day the Revolution Began* is an impressive contribution to the field of atonement studies. Wright provides a holistic approach to understanding the cross of Jesus, and he develops an understanding that takes into account the diverse language of the New Testament authors. I would recommend this book to scholars, pastors, and interested laypersons.

- Andrew Hollingsworth, *New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana*

***Destroyer of the gods: Early Christian Distinctiveness in the Roman World.* By Larry W. Hurtado. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016. 290 pages. Hardcover, \$29.95.**

Larry W. Hurtado is emeritus Professor of New Testament Language, Literature & Theology of the University of Edinburgh. Hurtado's area of expertise is focused on the first three centuries of Christianity. As such, Hurtado established the Center for the Study of Christian Origins at the University of Edinburgh. Also, Hurtado's major publications are all related to the beginnings of Christianity. These publications cover topics concerned with the theology and transmission of early Christian manuscripts (*Text-Critical Methodology and the Pre-Caesarean Text: Codex W in the Gospel of Mark* [Eerdmans, 1981]; *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* [Eerdmans, 2006]), the worship practices of early Christians (*At the Origins of Christian Worship: The Context and Character of Earliest Christian Devotion* [Eerdmans, 1999]), and even a commentary on the book of Mark (*Mark: New International Biblical Commentary* [Hendricksen, 1989]). Thus, Hurtado is definitively an expert in the field of Christian Origins.

Given his expertise and his publication entitled *Why on Earth Did Anyone Become a Christian in the First Three Centuries?* (Marquette University Press, 2016), one might argue that few other scholars are as qualified as Hurtado to speak conclusively about the uniqueness of early Christian faith. Within the introduction of *Destroyer of the gods*, Hurtado states that he wants to “highlight some major features of early Christianity that made it distinctive, noteworthy, and even peculiar in the ancient Greek and Roman setting” (6). Hurtado notes two main reasons for the necessity of writing such a work. First, Hurtado’s work indicates that the features of early Christianity that made it distinctive in “the ancient Roman setting subsequently became familiar features of all the cultures in which Christianity was influential” (13). As one example of this, Hurtado notes that early Christians were considered atheists because they did not believe in a plurality of “gods” (38, 184), whereas in modern times one is only considered an atheist when they reject the idea of a God altogether (37). This change in definition is due primarily to the dominance of Christianity in modern culture. Second, within the current field of research, many scholars are emphasizing how Christianity is related to other religions, not how it is different. In Hurtado’s words, “we scholars and the wider public may have emphasized similarities” between Christianity and Roman-era religions “at the expense of, or may have neglected, early Christian distinctives” (9). Thus, Hurtado’s work seeks to argue for a scholarly and public discussion of how Christianity was distinctive in its beginnings so that “we who are conscious of our own time will perceive better the importance and influence” of the Christian movement (189).

Hurtado has divided his work into five main chapters. Each chapter is dedicated to a general category of which early Christianity was distinctive. Chapter 1 emphasizes how non-Christians viewed Christians as a distinctive faith group. Hurtado notes that certain Jewish groups (exemplified in Saul of Tarsus) and Pagans (such as Pliny) found disagreement with early Christian beliefs. Though these Jewish groups and Pagans did not disregard Christianity for all of the same reasons, collectively they saw Jesus’s divinity as “highly objectionable” (20) and as “superstition” (21–22).

Chapter 2 underscores the nature of how Christianity represented a new and “different kind of religion” (38). Hurtado explains that one cultural norm during the beginnings of Christianity was the assumption that every god was worthy of reverence. This would include the god of one’s homeland, household, or city. In other words, “people did not select this or that deity as their personal god to the exclusion of others. But they did typically approach or invoke or appeal to various deities, as was appropriate to the occasion” (48). Thus, the Christian belief in an exclusive and personal God as well as the belief that all other gods were idols, set Christians apart from not only Pagans (62) but certain Jewish groups as well (72–75).

Chapter 3 accentuates that early Christianity found its religious identity in one’s faith in Jesus, not in one’s “family, civic, or ethnic connection” (104). Such a religious identification

was unique in the ancient Roman-era when many participated in various forms of imperial cults (80–81), and even the Jews were allowed to worship one God only because of their ethnicity (90). Overall, the idea of voluntarily choosing one's religion, as Christians did, was almost entirely foreign to the Roman-era culture (82–87).

In chapter 4, Hurtado highlights the “bookish” nature of the early Christians. In fact, Hurtado argues that the early Christian preference for the codex (an ancient book) over against the scroll “drove their efforts to develop codex technology” (137). Here, Hurtado's expertise and accessibility to ancient manuscripts are of great importance. Hurtado has observed that many of the ancient manuscripts have certain features (such as the practice of *nomina sacra*) which suggest that the early Christians were very engaged in the biblical text for the sake of its textuality. In other words, though many early Christian devotees had the biblical text read to them, those in charge of copying, distributing, and preserving the text sought to develop a text-oriented movement. Hurtado concludes, “In short, ‘textuality’ was central, and, from the outset, early Christianity was, indeed, ‘a bookish religion’” (141).

Lastly, in chapter 5, Hurtado underlines how the Christian movement “was unusual in its emphasis on social and behavioral practices as central in the religious commitment required of adherents” (143). Whereas the surrounding culture approved of discarding unwanted babies (known as “infant exposure”), Christians were the main proponents against such a cultural norm. As another example, whereas attending gladiatorial contests were socially acceptable experiences, such contests “were treated as objectionable by Christians” (150). Thus, though Christians were not the only ones seeking to disengage from some of the societal norms and behaviors of the Roman-era, they were the most demanding. Early Christians “were called . . . from the point of initiation onward, to live up to the behavioral demands of their faith” (181).

Hurtado's work provides an excellent and accessible overview of early distinctive features of Christianity's beginnings. As such, *Destroyer of the gods* is highly recommended for use in local churches and undergraduate courses. Though the work contains a few deficiencies, such as its understanding of Christianity as a “mutation” of Judaism (68–69), these shortcomings do not significantly affect the work's overall goal. Instead, Hurtado's work leads one to question how modern Christianity might learn from its ancient predecessors.

- Ron Lindo, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana

***Dictionary of Christianity and Science*. Edited by Paul Copan, Tremper Longman III, Christopher L. Reese, and Michael G. Strauss. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017. 704 pages. Hardcover, \$59.99.**

Zondervan's *Dictionary of Christianity and Science* (DCS) boasts four general editors and more than 140 contributors. It is a massive work that spans denominations, professions, and theological traditions. The general editors are household names in apologetics circles. Paul Copan teaches at Palm Beach Atlantic University, Tremper Longman teaches at Westmont College, and Michael Strauss teaches at the University of Oklahoma. Add the work of Christopher Reese, co-founder of the Christian Apologetics Alliance, and their collective writings total more than thirty books and hundreds of articles. The amount of knowledge contained in this volume is at once impressive and intimidating.

The articles in DCS are arranged alphabetically, and each short essay concludes with a list of further readings for the interested.¹ Its format will be familiar to anyone who has worked with these sorts of resources before, such as the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* edited by Walter Elwell or the *Popular Encyclopedia of Apologetics* edited by Ergun Caner. Each entry in DCS is littered with words in bold to show when a topic overlaps with another entry found in the resource, and these cross references are easy to examine.

What is distinct about the format of this work is the different kinds of articles. The most common type is the introduction, written in a simple, brief form which deals with non-controversial topics. Many of the biographies, like that of Giordano Bruno (75), or general topics, such as the concept of a Habitable Zone (339), fit into this shorter form. Slightly longer than the aforementioned, essays elaborate on a given topic a bit more and sometimes include diagrams, such as the entry on Geology (328–29), or they include extensive quotes, like the Neo-Darwinian Synthesis essay (477–80). These kinds of entries contain a specialized view, seeking to shed light on an area not typically accessible to the general reader. Both the introductions and the essays are intended to be the standard entry for a dictionary of this nature—straightforward, unbiased, and informative.

The third kind of entry is where this volume's unique approach is evident. These multiple-view discussions are marked in the text with a leaf to indicate when the following article will break from the dispassionate position and put forward an argument for a particular understanding of the concept at hand. The aim here is not to sink into name-calling or insults but to present differing views that fall within orthodox Christian belief. Both sides provide biblical and scientific evidence for their view, dealing some with the arguments of the other side, and providing a healthy outlet for disagreement. Essays regarding Science and Theology (610–17) or Adam and Eve (19–27) will not answer all of the reader's questions, but it will start the individual down the right path for future study.

¹Disappointingly, there are no entries for the letter Z. What about Zygote? Or at least Zoology?

It is through the multiple-view discussions that DCS truly shines as a resource. Consider as an example the multiple-view discussions on the age of the earth (28–36). Michael G. Strauss presents the “billions-of-years view” while Todd S. Beall argues for the “thousands-of-years view.” On a topic that often divides Christians, DCS does not offer to solve the problem but gives a voice to the primary arguments in a respectful manner. Remembering the complexities of these debates, Strauss and Beall present a succinct analysis of their respective position, blending biblical support and scientific data. Both articles discuss Radiometric Dating, for instance, but their disagreement never degenerates into personal attacks or accusations of heresy (29, 35). This approach may not help those who are still undecided regarding a particular issue, such as the age of the earth, but it does represent the kind of dialogues that Christians need when faith and science seem to conflict. By modeling the way forward, through interdisciplinary research and genteel discussion, DCS becomes more than a repository of knowledge by setting the example on how to disagree well.

Given the contentious nature surrounding the division of science and faith, it is significant that the editors do not deviate from orthodox views. For instance, for the entries relating to Abortion (19) and the Resurrection of Jesus (573–74), the views presented fall within the scope of historic Christian teaching. Although these topics might be controversial in ethical or historical conversations, they are presented simply without sacrificing either the essential scientific or biblical claims. It is a shame, then, that there are some topics that this dictionary avoids. Issues related to homosexuality and genetics, transgender identity, or even gender fluidity make no substantial appearances within the text.² The amount of research that has been spent by the homosexual movement to prove a genetic link to sexuality is worth mentioning in a book on Christianity and science, even if their research has not confirmed their aims.³ DCS deals with many topics that generate controversy, so the exclusion of this one appears to be a significant oversight.

Even with this omission, however, DCS earns its place on the bookshelf of Christians everywhere. Its size might seem cumbersome, but the brevity and value of each entry, as well as the erudite prose, justify the weight of the volume.

- Sean C. Hadley, *Faulkner University, Montgomery, Alabama*

²There is a brief comment rejecting sexual theories derived from Freud in the article on Psychoanalysis (538) which covers each of the issues I have mentioned. Given the current cultural trends, however, material addressing the genetic argument would have been helpful.

³For a treatment of these scientific experiments, cf. “Biotechnology, Genetics, and Human Cloning,” in Scott B. Rae, *Moral Choices: An Introduction to Ethics*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009).

***Encountering God Through Expository Preaching: Connecting God's People to God's Presence Through God's Word.* By Jim Scott Orrick, Brian Payne, and Ryan Fullerton. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2017. 224 pages. Paperback, \$19.99.**

The authors of this work (Jim Orrick, Brian Payne, and Ryan Fullerton) are all directly or indirectly associated with Boyce College in Louisville, Kentucky. Orrick is a professor of literature at Boyce, Payne is a professor of Christian theology and expository preaching at Boyce as well as the senior pastor at First Baptist Church of Fisherville, and Fullerton is the lead pastor at Immanuel Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky. Thus, all three of the authors are involved in the lives of numerous students and church members who are near and influenced by the ministries taking place at Boyce. As such, the combination of these three authors' input into the book makes for an interesting assessment of the current state of expository preaching.

The goal of the work is to defend the following definition of preaching: "Preaching occurs when a holy man of God opens the Word of God and says to the people of God, 'Come and experience God with me in this text'" (xv). In the forward to the work, R. Albert Mohler Jr. briefly provides warrant for why such a defense is necessary. After swiftly explaining Nehemiah 8, Mohler states that "this text is a sobering indictment of much contemporary Christianity. According to the text, a demand for biblical preaching erupted within the hearts of the people. . . . Where is this desire evident among today's evangelical?" (xiv). Though such a lack of desire within evangelical churches surely involves numerous issues, the authors of this work have sought to provide instruction on correcting only one of these issues: preaching within the life of the local church.

The book is divided into three main sections, each with the goal of providing a defense for a part of the authors' definition of preaching. The first nine chapters (part 1 of the book) seek to explain that the man of God is just as important as how the Scriptures are preached before the congregation. As the authors explain, "God desires the ministry of preaching and teaching to be done by men who are holy, qualified, and progressing" (3). To explain this statement, the authors provide the reader with an exposition of Titus 1:6–9, along with a few other similar New Testament passages. Their exposition of these texts helps to set the stage for their defense of expository preaching.

Because the authors are convinced that "when the Word of God is preached, God himself is active" (21) and that "the Lord has *invested* himself in his words" (italics original, 26), they conclude that a preacher's method of delivery is interconnected to his faith in the Scriptures. Thus, to encourage their readers to have great faith in the Scriptures and to desire to preach expositional sermons, the authors spend chapters 3–9 helping their readers to see how they might correctly examine the Scriptures. As the authors explain, expository preaching involves correctly examining the context of Scripture (chapters 3–4), primarily preaching through books with some topical sermons (chapters 5–6), and being reliant on and expectant of the Spirit of God (chapters 7–9).

Part two of the book (chapters 10–14) is concerned with explaining to the reader how they should lead the people of God to experience God. In all, this section of the book is governed by the authors' view of the preacher's job. According to the authors, the job of the preachers "is not to say everything that *might* be said from a particular text," but the preacher's job "is to say what *needs* to be said" (*italics original*, 38). In other words, preaching is not about covering everything found within a text, but about covering what is necessary for the congregation to know from the text at any particular moment. As such, the authors argue that a preacher should pray over how he delivers his message (chapter 10), should read the Scriptures as if they are indeed the words of God (chapter 11), and should prayerfully analyze the text and decide what to emphasize and what to leave out (chapters 12–14). Most of this section is governed by the following four questions that the authors believe should be asked of every text before it is preached: How does it fit? What does it say? How is it built? Why does it stay?

The third and last part of the book (chapters 15–17) is mostly a discussion of what materials a preacher should take into the pulpit. There are three main options: a full sermon manuscript, an outline of the sermon, or to preach without any notes at all. Ultimately the authors recommend that a beginning pastor might start with a manuscript then move to preaching with notes or an outline and finally arrive at preaching without notes. The authors advocate for a preacher to preach without notes for two main reasons, the preacher can spend more time on other aspects of preparation and this method requires the preacher to be more dependent on the Holy Spirit.

In all, this book is very compelling and encouraging. Though the book does not discuss many of the details of each topic mentioned, it does cover these numerous topics sufficiently well. This makes the book suitable for the undergraduate student or new believer seeking to become a pastor. Also, this book provides a biblical corrective on how to preach while being expectant on the Holy Spirit. After quoting from C. H. Spurgeon on the importance of spiritual expectancy, the authors argue that "one of the primary reasons we do not see anything close to the effectiveness of the preaching in the book of Acts in our day is because we do not expect it" (89). From here, the authors explain how such a spiritual expectancy is biblical despite how such an idea has been abused by some preachers. Lastly, this work is strongly emphatic, from its beginning to end, that a godly man, who knows his congregation and is constantly praying, is necessary for true preaching to occur. Thus, this book comes highly recommended in hopes that all preachers will "lift up their voice like a trumpet, and say with either fiber of their being, 'Come! Encounter God with me in this text'" (211).

- Ron Lindo, *New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana*

***Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament: Ephesians.* By Benjamin L. Merkle. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2016. 246 pages. Paperback, \$24.99.**

Benjamin L. Merkle is associate professor of New Testament at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina, where he has served on faculty since 2008. He previously served as professor of New Testament at Malaysia Baptist Theological Seminary (2002–08), instructor of New Testament at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (1999–2000), and lecturer in New Testament Greek at Cathedral Bible College (1995–97). Merkle received a BRE from Kuyper College, an MDiv from Westminster Theological Seminary, and a PhD from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has authored and edited several books and articles, including *Understanding Prophecy: A Biblical-Theological Approach* (Kregel Academic, 2015) and *Going Deeper with New Testament Greek: An Intermediate Study of the Grammar and Syntax of the New Testament* (B&H Academic, 2016).

The goal of the Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament (EGGNT) series is “to close the gap between the Greek text and the available tools” (xiv). The intended audience is those who desire to preach authoritatively and accurately, but who find themselves hard-pressed for time. The series is meant to service a variety of readers—from those who have no experience reading the Greek text to advanced students who may desire further study on the topics presented.

A thorough list of abbreviations is provided, which is especially helpful for words related to syntax and grammar. The commentary begins with a six-page introduction that reviews the major issues of authorship, date, destination, occasion, and purpose. The author provides a quick overview of the major debates related to these issues and clearly affirms the traditional viewpoints. The introduction concludes with a brief outline of Ephesians and a valuable list of recommended commentaries with brief descriptions.

The syntactical section of the commentary adheres strictly to the outline. Each major section begins with a structural analysis of that section followed by a diagram of the Greek text.¹ The Greek text (UBS⁵) is then presented verse by verse and is further divided into logical phrases. The Greek text is followed by a discussion of the syntax for each word in a given phrase. The syntactical options are provided along with a basic translation, commentary, and evaluation. Modern English versions (EVV) are mentioned in the commentary, especially when they differ according to the various syntactical choices of any given word or phrase. Each section of text is concluded with a topical bibliography for further study and a basic homiletical outline. The entire commentary concludes with a detailed exegetical outline based on the original outline found in the commentary introduction. The exegetical outline is then followed by a grammar index and a Scripture index.

¹The general introduction to the EGGNT series provides a helpful overview of the diagramming method.

Merkle's syntactical analysis has much to offer. The diagramming and emphasis on the Greek text and syntax will be especially beneficial for those who have already studied Greek syntax and are familiar with the categories. Merkle's "most commentators" and "most EVV" provide the reader with an awareness of the scholarly consensus regarding syntactical options of certain words and phrases. He informs the reader of the *hapax legomena* found in Ephesians and often discusses how many times a certain word occurs in the Pauline Corpus or the entire New Testament (NT). One will also appreciate his references to textual variants. Merkle usually follows the standard Greek text and frequently cites Metzger's textual commentary.²

One great benefit of the commentary is Merkle's presentation of highly debated issues of syntax related to the text of Ephesians. He lists all the major options, provides an English translation that is followed by a brief discussion, mentions advocates (EVV and commentators) of the various options, and notes which option he prefers while providing the reason for his choice. On less important syntactical matters, Merkle varies in his commentary. Many times, with or without further elaboration, he employs "more likely" to indicate his favorite option. Other times, he simply presents the options with no indication of which one he favors.

Someone who does not have experience with Greek grammar or syntax may be easily overwhelmed by this commentary as it is highly technical in its use of Greek syntactical jargon. The micro syntax analysis is undoubtedly superb, but the broader commentary on each passage is found wanting. This lack of commentary may be disappointing to some readers, though it is completely understandable and is noted in the general introduction to the EGGNT series. However, if the series is trying to reach those who have no experience with the Greek text, one suggestion would be to provide the author's translation alongside the Greek text as it is presented. Otherwise, the basic reader may only benefit from the homiletical outlines of each passage and the resources for further study.

This commentary brought me back to my days as a Greek student at seminary, where I first learned to diagram the Greek text and where I first began to appreciate the benefit of Greek syntax for NT exegesis. As a teacher of Greek grammar and syntax, I thoroughly enjoyed reading this commentary and can say that I have learned much about the text of Ephesians. Merkle's syntactical analysis is of great value, especially to those who have more advanced training in NT Greek.

- David Champagne, Mississippi College, Clinton, Mississippi

²Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994).

***Exploring Intertextuality: Diverse Strategies for New Testament Interpretation of Texts.* Edited by B. J. Oropeza and Steve Moyise. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2016. xix + 325 pages. Paperback, \$40.00.**

Over the past 30 years, the field of intertextuality has seen a significant rise in interest, dialogue, and publications. Arguably, it is one of the fastest-growing fields in biblical studies. *Exploring Intertextuality* is concerned solely with intertextual method and seeks both to catalog and describe established and newer approaches to the field. The stated aim of the book is to provide advanced students and scholars an introduction to New Testament intertextual interpretation (xiii). Nineteen scholars (including the editors) form the cast of writers who contribute to the chapters in the book. Both editors have extensive experience in the field and in publication on intertextuality. B. J. Oropeza is professor of biblical and religious studies at Azusa Pacific University in Azusa, California; Steve Moyise is visiting professor at Newman University in Birmingham, United Kingdom.

A field with so much interest also exhibits a high degree of diversity, especially in how terms are defined. For this reason, the editors set forth their definition of “intertextuality” in the introduction as “the study of how a given text is connected with other texts (broadly understood) outside of itself and how those texts affect the interpretation of the given text” (xiii). With this definition the editors propose they are moving beyond the common and perhaps too simplistic phrase “the use of the Old Testament in the New.” Each chapter reflects this emphasis on the interconnectedness of texts and the process of determining how texts convey meaning or how meaning is created.

Since an in-depth summary of each of the book’s seventeen chapters would more than exhaust the allotted space for review, I will begin by summarizing briefly the two parts of the book and then move to an assessment of the book’s strengths and weaknesses, supplying specifics from the chapters as appropriate. In Part I: Established Strategies, nine chapters detail the following methods: dialogical intertextuality; hypertextuality; metalepsis; rhetoric of quotations; midrash; shadows and realities; mimesis; poststructural intertextuality; and intertextuality based on categorical semiotics. Many of the concepts and methods from this section of the book come as no surprise to one familiar with intertextual studies. Influential works by Mikhail Bakhtin, Julia Kristeva, Richard Hays, and Gérard Genette form the backbone of these methodological approaches.

Part II: Eclectic and Novel Strategies contains eight chapters which examine the following methods: sociorhetorical intertexture; narrative transformation; orality and intertextuality; enunciation, personification, and intertextuality; relevance theory and intertextuality; multidimensional intertextuality; reference-text-oriented allusions; and probability of intertextual borrowing. Most of the chapters in this part of the book were originally papers presented at the “Intertextuality and the New Testament” section of the Society of Biblical Literature from 2008 to 2013. Many of the approaches outlined

here exhibit dependence on some of the established methods (e.g., dialogical, rhetorical, metalepsis), while a few provide new directions for intertextual research (e.g., narrative, enunciation, relevance theory, probability).

The primary critique I have of this book is how the editors decided which intertextual methods are considered “established” and which ones are “novel.” Criteria for determining the classification of methods are not provided. Uninformed students or newcomers to the field will walk away with a subjective, unsubstantiated classification of the methods. For instance, can one really argue that categorical semiotics is an *established* method of intertextual interpretation? Semiotics is still a relatively new realm of research compared to dialogical and metalepsis. While Julia Kristeva’s approach is founded on an understanding of semiotics, categorical semiotics is a later construction and, more accurately, an amalgamation of the work of various semioticians. So does “established” refer to the fact that a method has been around for a certain period of time or does it refer to the fact that it is a widely-practiced method? The reader is supplied with no explanation. Moreover, the reader is not instructed as to which of the methods discussed in Part II are eclectic or novel (or both). On both of these terminological and structural issues, the reader never encounters a rationale for the decision-making process.

A glaring reality regarding intertextual methods is that no one method seems to account for every possible way a biblical author utilizes a text. So it comes as no surprise that some of the approaches in this book concede the point. The authors of the chapter on midrash acknowledge this difficulty: “To be sure, midrash may not be able to explain sufficiently every Pauline reference to earlier texts, but it surely helps explain *some*” (79). Many chapters acknowledge their dependence on theories and/or methods from other chapters in the book. The often-cited intertextual quip “No *text* is an island” also applies to intertextual methods: “No *method* is an island.” Each is indebted to another while at the same time newer approaches add a fresh perspective to the established ones.

Three chapters stand out to me as those that add this fresh perspective. The book’s final chapter, “Probability of Intertextual Borrowing,” is unique in that Elizabeth Myers presents a method for determining intertextual links that are strictly quantitative in nature. Myers pioneers new ground by applying a stylometric method (where analysis is based on observable, measurable text features) to determine literary dependence of texts and their direction of borrowing, specifically through the use of probability theory. As she notes, such an approach is “capable of generating consistent and reliable results” (255). Peter Perry’s application of relevance theory to intertextuality opens up a new and promising pathway for examining texts based on principles of cognition. Like probability theory, relevance theory functions as a more technical and concrete approach for analyzing textual data. Finally, James McGrath’s discussion of orality and intertextuality is an important reminder of the benefit of orality studies and the “need for deeper connections to be forged between intertextuality and orality as approaches to the NT” (177).

Certainly, there is no shortage of theories and methods when it comes to intertextuality. What may be needed is a comprehensive approach based on many of the theories espoused in *Exploring Intertextuality*. As the book demonstrates, studying one text's use of another requires much more than simply determining the source text. If intertextuality at its most basic form is an act of intimate communication, then this discipline mandates a comprehensive knowledge of the setting of this communication (society, culture, rhetoric, literature, literacy, stories, etc.). Even though this book only surveys the current landscape of methodology, it still holds promise for moving forward in our appropriation of theories to methods, and possibly a comprehensive method that could lead to a consensus. For the student or scholar looking to stay abreast of the current trends in intertextual study, this book is a must-have.

- Justin Langford, Louisiana College, Pineville, Louisiana

***The Extent of the Atonement: A Historical and Critical Review.* By David L. Allen. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2016. 820 + xxviii pages. Hardcover, \$59.99.**

David L. Allen currently serves as dean of the School of Preaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He also holds posts as the George W. Truett Chair of Preaching, Director of the Center for Biblical Preaching, and is distinguished professor of preaching. Prior to his current position, Allen served as dean of the School of Theology at Southwestern (603 and back cover of the book). His years of study and research as both a theology and homiletics professor eminently qualifies him to write this "historical and critical review" of the extent of the atonement. His service as a pastor in local churches for more than two decades is reflected in the book, providing a moderating tone to an otherwise controversial and divisive subject.

The stated goal of the book is to provide "a survey of the lay of the land" to enable readers to study the extent of the atonement in more depth (ix). Allen calls for a calm, clear-headed approach to the discussion of the subject, but early notifies all readers, in the final analysis, he believes the doctrine of limited atonement to be lacking in textual support (x).

Allen begins his treatment of the extent of the atonement with an introductory chapter, which frames the discussion and provides helpful definitions for key terms and concepts in the subsequent pages of the book (xiii-xxviii). Terms and phrases include differentiation of the intent, extent, and application of the atonement. These labels are defined along with others such as limited atonement, unlimited atonement, intrinsic sufficiency, and extrinsic sufficiency, to name some examples.

Allen divides his book into three clearly demarcated parts, providing readers a logical approach to the subject but also allowing them to zero in on the area of their highest interest. Part one consists of four chapters, comprises approximately 58% of the book, and is devoted to the topic of the extent of the atonement throughout church history. This section provides a much needed historical perspective all too often lost or ignored by modern theologians pushing for one creed or another. The content of this section extends from the early days of Christian theology through the medieval and Reformation periods to the post-Reformation and modern eras. The four chapters in part one make a strong case for unlimited atonement. Many readers will be surprised to read that Reformation giants Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, and John Calvin believed in unlimited atonement concerning the extent issue.¹

Part two consists of three chapters, comprises approximately 25% of the book, and is devoted to the extent of the atonement within the Baptist tradition. Three chapters within this section allow the reader to focus on English General and Particular Baptists, North American Baptists, and Southern Baptists. In the case of English Baptists, Allen speaks of diversity within the traditions and the gradual move toward the unification of General and Particular Baptists on the important issue of missions (506–8, 514).

Similarly, North American Baptists, while currently experiencing growth in Calvinism and a narrower view of limited atonement, have not uniformly supported limited atonement. One example Allen gives is the lack of consistency when applying the extent of “the whole world” in 1 John 2:2 among Reformed theologians. Allen concludes that “there is no monolithic ‘Reformed’ understanding of ‘for the whole world’ in 1 John 2:2” (549).²

Regarding Southern Baptists, the historical record reflects a blending of both Calvinistic and Arminian doctrines.³ No group, neither Calvinist nor Arminian, can claim honestly that their approach to soteriology is the historical Southern Baptist position. This state of affairs begs the question, can any man-made systematic theology adequately encompass the truths of God’s Word?

In part three, Allen critiques the book *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her*, considered by some scholars to be the most significant work in support of limited atonement since

¹For Luther, see p. 36; for Zwingli, see p. 38; for Calvin, see pp. 96, 604 (note especially Allen’s summary of Calvin in the second full paragraph of p. 96).

²Allen concludes that a wide variety of views existed on the question of the extent of the atonement even within the Reformed camp (552).

³In the chapter on Southern Baptists, Allen is careful to note the theological persuasions of key leaders, placing Al Mohler (605) in the limited atonement group along with Mark Dever (606), but others like Steve Lemke (603) and Adam Harwood (610) in the unlimited atonement group. Allen concludes with Lemke that Baptist soteriology reflects various degrees of compromise between Calvinism and Arminianism (653).

John Owens's 1647 *The Death of the Death of Christ*.⁴ This section is comprised of two chapters and represents the remaining 17% of the content of the book. Throughout the book, the question "For whom did Christ die?" appears 27 times. Allen concludes chapter 8 by stating, contra John Piper and others, that no scriptural statement exists limiting Christ's atonement to the sins of the elect. He asserts that many biblical passages affirm that Christ died for the sins of all (762).

The book includes three indices covering subjects, names, and Scripture passages cited. These indices enable the reader to navigate swiftly the myriad of theologians Allen quotes, alludes to, or summarizes throughout the book. Even a quick reading of the 12-page name index provides a sense of the comprehensiveness of Allen's research in writing this book. The reviewer found the Scripture index helpful for studying God's word along with analyzing how various passages were utilized for the formation and presentation of theological positions on the extent of the atonement.

Allen's book has much to commend it to readers of all theological persuasions. First, he presents an extensive array of quotes or summaries from theologians throughout church history on the issue of the atonement's extent. Every student of the Bible and theology will benefit from exposure to this broad review of literature. The controversial debate of the extent of the atonement is well served for all concerned, even the Reformed and Calvinist theologians with whom Allen disagrees. Theological debate is always enriched by careful analysis of the evidence, both biblical texts and statements of historical development. Thus, Allen points out "the extent of the atonement cannot be studied as an isolated doctrine, divorced from historical considerations, theological method, and the various systems of theology" (xv). He advocates studying key theologians, like Calvin, in both a synchronic and diachronic method. *The Extent of the Atonement* encourages the non-Reformed, non-Calvinist theologian while at the same time giving advocates of limited atonement much to think about and to respond to in their own critiques.

Second, the author points out that theological counter-currents existed within both the Reformed and Arminian traditions to the extent that neither were or are monolithic (xiv).⁵ Allen cites Oliver Crisp's conclusion that the Reformed understanding of the atonement's extent "has never been monolithic" (276).⁶ Allen also asserts that the TULIP acrostic is inadequate as a descriptor for Calvinism (xiv). This fact alone should minimize dogmatism on all fronts. Allen argues convincingly that theological stances were more demonstrably

⁴David Gibson and Jonathan Gibson, ed., *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her: Definite Atonement in Historical, Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspective* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013).

⁵Using the digital version of *The Extent of the Atonement* on Kindle, the reviewer found eight instances of the use of "monolithic." In each case, these statements rebut the idea that Arminianism and Calvinism/Reformed theologies were ever monolithic, but rather that each exhibited an array of views on the extent of Christ's atonement.

⁶See also pp. 428, 549, 651, 653.

in favor of a universal extent than a limited atonement view. He asserts the great scholastic theologian Thomas Aquinas interpreted key texts like John 1:29, 1 Timothy 2:4–6, and 1 John 2:2, as supportive of the universal extent of God’s atonement (24). Theological counter-currents were evidenced within both Reformed and Arminian camps and were part and parcel of theological debate long before the sixteenth century.

Third, some 27 times throughout the book, the reader encounters the central question being addressed, “For whom did Christ die?”⁷ Allen answers the question with an affirming “for all sinners of all time” (791). All who repent and believe the gospel will be saved.

This book would be a challenge for undergraduate students but should be required reading at the graduate and doctoral levels of theological education. The historical scope, the comprehensive narrative, the theological concepts, and the candid analyses of all points of view make this book an excellent primer on how to do systematic theology.

- Wayne VanHorn, Mississippi College, Clinton, Mississippi

***God and Cosmology: William Lane Craig and Sean Carroll in Dialogue.* Edited by Robert B. Stewart. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2016. 262 pages. Hardcover, \$79.00.**

In 2005, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS) began hosting the Greer-Heard Point-Counterpoint Forum in Faith and Culture, a venue for respected scholars of differing opinions to converse on important subjects in religion and culture. The forum features a central dialogue followed by several paper presentations. Robert Stewart (professor of philosophy and theology, NOBTS) has been working to publish each annual forum’s dialogue and papers to bring its fruits to the attention of the larger academic and religious community. *God and Cosmology* is his seventh volume of the Greer-Heard forum series to be published.

God and Cosmology records the 2014 forum, the subject of which was the existence of God in light of contemporary cosmology. The primary question being debated was, “Does the evidence of contemporary cosmology render God’s existence more probable than it would have been without it?” (3). The book transcribes the featured debate (Stewart notes this year’s forum was more of a debate than a dialogue) between William Lane Craig (professor of philosophy, Talbot School of Theology and Houston Baptist University) and Sean Carroll (research professor of theoretical physics, California Institute of Technology). The book also provides the papers presented by Tim Maudlin (professor of philosophy, New York University), Robin Collins (distinguished professor of philosophy, Messiah College), Alex Rosenberg (R. Taylor Cole Professor of Philosophy, Duke University), and James D.

⁷Using the digital version of *The Extent of the Atonement* on Kindle, the reviewer found 27 instances of the use of “For whom did Christ die?” in the book.

Sinclair (Senior Warfare Analyst, U.S. Navy). *God and Cosmology* also includes, for the first time in this series, the responses and counter-responses to the papers presented.

It is difficult to evaluate a book that transcribes the proceedings of a forum without that evaluation somehow saying something about the forum itself. So, to restrict evaluation to the book as much as possible, I will focus on comments that Stewart makes in his preface and introductory essay as these are exclusive to book and reveal its merits. In his preface, Stewart notes that the book is unique in that “brings together the best minds from both science and philosophy in one volume and allows them to speak to each other, and respond to each other—in one place” (xiv–xv). Any book that does this is a valuable resource. But being a transcription, one might wonder if the book is preferable to an audio recording. I think so—and it seems that Stewart may as well, for he later alludes to the fact that rhetoric and mood can often trump reason in debates. There is a reduced risk of being distracted by the eloquence (or lack thereof) that accompanies speeches when reading their transcriptions instead of listening to a recording. Reading a transcription allows one to focus on the claims being made and not on the manner in which they were articulated. This is especially important for considering the existence of God in light of contemporary cosmology since the tendency of many on all sides of this issue is to marginalize those with whom they disagree.

Additionally, Stewart’s introductory essay is very helpful in preparing readers to navigate the disputations. In the debate, Craig repeatedly emphasized that the forum had a specific question that it was trying to answer and accused Carroll, Maudlin, and Rosenberg of presenting red herrings when they raised other issues. Nevertheless, secondary though these issues may be, they are related in important ways to the primary question of the debate, revealing that the subject of God and cosmology is rather complex. Stewart is to be commended for his willingness to devote some space introducing readers to these secondary (and sometimes preliminary) issues (6–14). This fits well with his intention for the book to serve as a starting point for those wishing to hear from the best scholars on the existence of God in relation to contemporary cosmology (xv).

Unfortunately, if the book is meant to be a starting point, then it faces one problem. Anyone approaching a new field of study faces a learning curve, so to say that a book is difficult does not *ipso facto* rule it out as a good starting point. But if Sean Carroll was correct in his opening speech at the forum when he said that the role of God in bringing about the universe is not an idea taken seriously by scientists at cosmological conferences (36–37), then this suggests that readers of *God and Cosmology* will most likely be theists. Theists might find the philosophical portions of *God and Cosmology* a bit challenging, but most, I think, will find these portions manageable. Stewart’s introductory essay provides some context and explanation that will help novices. Participants in the forum, however, reference scientific ideas like Boltzmann brains, the Borde-Guth-Vilenkin theorem, and de Sitter space, presupposing at least a general knowledge of contemporary physics.

Although there are undoubtedly theists who are scientifically trained or are familiar with contemporary physics, my experience has been that most theists—and most Christians—are woefully inept on these subjects. Given this, I am not sure if it is accurate to describe *God and Cosmology* as a starting point. Stewart informed me, via personal communication, that this is by far the most technical book of the Greer-Heard forum series. In that case, it would have been prudent to include a section in his introductory essay outlining at least a general picture of contemporary physics and perhaps some brief explanations of some of the more complex scientific theories brought up in the debate. This would help the book serve better as a starting point. As it stands, I suspect that many theists will at the very least need to brush up on their physics before they approach this debate—and, I would add, if they are to give the arguments of Carroll, Maudlin, and Rosenberg a fair hearing.

One other problem with the book has to do with the format. The book includes several figures illustrating the presenters' points. Having not attended the forum in person, I can only assume that these are reproductions of various PowerPoint slides the presenters used in their arguments. Most of these reproductions are of poor quality and distract from the sharpness of the main text. This is most likely a fault of the publisher—and one that I find puzzling. One would expect Fortress Press to include high-quality illustrations for a book with a hefty price tag.

Overall, even if readers need to brush up on their knowledge of philosophy or contemporary physics, *God and Cosmology* is rewarding. Most of the participants in the forum presented strong arguments for their positions and thoughtful rebuttals of opposing arguments, which is desirable if a forum like this is to succeed. In transcribing the forum, the book (as Craig noted in his concluding comments) revives the valuable medieval tradition of publishing debates as a way of inciting commentary and criticism (252). I hope that Stewart continues this tradition of making the Greer-Heard Point-Counterpoint Forum in Faith and Culture available to the reading public.

- Stephen D. Mizell, Scarborough College, Fort Worth, Texas

***God Has Spoken in His Son: A Biblical Theology of Hebrews.* By Peter T. O'Brien. New Studies in Biblical Theology 39. Edited by D. A. Carson. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2016. 256 pages. Paperback, \$25.00.**

Peter T. O'Brien is professor emeritus and former vice principal and senior research fellow in New Testament at Moore College in Sydney, Australia. He has authored and edited more than a dozen books and numerous articles, and he is perhaps best known for his major commentaries on Hebrews and Ephesians in the Pillar New Testament Commentary (PNTC) series, Philippians in the New International Greek Testament Commentary, and

Colossians and Philemon for Word Biblical Commentary. He also co-authored *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A Biblical Theology of Mission* with Andreas J. Köstenberger, which was a previous installment in the New Studies in Biblical Theology (NTSB) series.¹

This work began as part of the introduction to O'Brien's commentary on Hebrews for the PNTC series. D. A. Carson, who acts as editor for both PNTC and NTSB, suggested that O'Brien scale down the lengthy "theology" section for the commentary, and then expand it even more into a monograph for the NTSB series. Contributions to the NTSB series are designed to "help thinking Christians understand their Bibles better" (7). The contributors attempt to both instruct and edify the readers by interacting with relevant current literature but leaving the technical jargon and exhaustive footnotes to a minimum.

Other than the introduction and conclusion, the book is divided into five main chapters of unequal lengths addressing related but distinct topics, followed by a lengthy appendix.² The introduction summarizes or assumes most of the standard positions regarding the critical issues surrounding the letter with special attention paid to the more recent scholarly agreements that the letter was really a sermon in written form and that the primary goal was exhortation rather than exposition (15–18).

Following the emphasis upon the oral medium of the writing, the first chapter articulates the oral character of the content. In Hebrews, the same God who spoke (not wrote) through the prophets of old now speaks through the Son. In fact, the way the epistle was constructed and the manner in which the author cited Old Testament (OT) texts effectively blurred the distinction between past and present. The words God spoke to previous generations continue to reverberate in the present, as the words are personal, living, trustworthy, oral, and anticipatory (42–43).

Chapter two is the longest in the book, as it addresses one of the most substantive themes—O'Brien would say *the* central theme—namely, Christology. O'Brien's two-step plan for the chapter was to survey the various titles and images used to describe Jesus and then to provide an exegesis of the author's presentation of both the person and work of

¹All three of O'Brien's commentaries for PNTC (Philippians, Ephesians, and Hebrews) were investigated for allegations of plagiarism by their publisher, Eerdmans. The Hebrews volume was determined to contain the most grievous errors, but all three volumes were deemed unacceptable and taken out of print. The official statement by Eerdmans can be seen here: <http://www.eerdmans.com/Pages/Item/59043/Commentary-Statement.aspx?platform=hootsuite>. Subsequently, InterVarsity Press, the publisher of the NTSB series, conducted a similar investigation of O'Brien's two contributions to the series and found the same issues. Those two volumes were removed from sale and placed out of print also. The official statement by IVP can be seen here: <http://www.ivpbooks.com/2016/09/26/update-nsbt-volumes-peter-obrien/>. By the time this review was edited for publication, this title had also been discontinued by its publisher.

²The appendix consists of a review of David Moffitt's recent work on the resurrection in Hebrews, which seems out of place for O'Brien's book. David M. Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of the Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, NovTSup 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

Jesus (46). He followed the main divisions of the letter (1:1–4:16; 5:1–7:28; 8:1–10:18; 10:19–13:25), with corresponding Christological categories for his major subheadings: Son of God, High Priest, Sacrifice, Pioneer, and Perfecter.

If chapter two describes the person and work of Christ, then chapter three examines the effect of Jesus's life and work. What are the "benefits" for Jesus's followers (105)? O'Brien outlines these benefits under the broad heading of "salvation" and positions them against the "backdrop of the disastrous human predicament" (126). O'Brien surveys a number of the different metaphors used to describe the soteriological reality (e.g., atonement, victory, redemption, inheritance) and concludes that the main issue was the "great gulf between a holy God and an unholy humanity caused by sin and guilt" (105).

In chapter four, O'Brien examines the recipients of the great salvation won by Jesus. He asks a series of questions about the nature and makeup of the intended audience for the letter. O'Brien sketches a number of the terms and phrases used to describe the audience (e.g., children of God and Abraham, new covenant people, sharers in Christ) before detailing the kind of worship expected of God's people. He concludes that the most important characteristic was that no distinction existed in God's people, either caused by their historical position (OT v. NT) or by any ethnic or social boundaries.

In the final chapter, O'Brien enters into the age-old debate about the warnings in the letter. He attempts to reconcile the tension between the mixture of strong assurances and dire warnings. O'Brien divides his synthetic analysis of the five warning passages into three primary categories: the identity of the audience, the nature of the sin addressed, and the consequences of committing that sin. Regarding the audience, O'Brien follows the position of Buist Fanning and the more recent work of his student C. Adrian Thomas to argue for a mixed audience of believers and unbelievers. He distinguishes between an initial act of grace made available to all but that only produces genuine faith in those who persevere. O'Brien rejects all proposals that describe the nature of the sin as anything less than outright apostasy, which he construes—though does not explain—as a reversion to Judaism (185). The result of such willful apostasy could be none other than eternal damnation (192).

The fact that this book began as the introduction to a commentary is evident throughout the work, which results in both positives and negatives. On the positive end, the book benefits from the meticulous research and depth of study one would expect from a scholarly commentary. Such interaction with the text and the breadth of secondary literature on the subject also allows for a greater degree of synthesis in the analysis as a whole.

On the negative end, much of the book reads like the distillation of a commentary, which it is. The prose is dense and replete with scriptural references, which would be of little benefit unless one was already intimately acquainted with Hebrews and the scholarly debates surrounding it. Those readers already well-read on the scholarship of Hebrews

would find few insights that could not be found elsewhere, particularly in O'Brien's own commentary, which is cited or assumed frequently. The book functions primarily as a summary of some of the main themes in Hebrews, albeit a very dense summary. Aside from the discussion of the warnings in chapter five, O'Brien's work does not really break any new ground or advance a particular thesis. This is not a criticism of the work itself, as the NTSB series is not thesis-driven, but a question of the intended audience. If a reader were seeking a general introduction and summary of the content and theology of Hebrews, then more appropriate options could be located. If a reader desired a more critical examination of the text as a whole, then any number of recent commentaries would better fit the bill. If a reader desired a summary of the particular topics covered by O'Brien and already had a basic familiarity with the literature involved, then this book might be a suitable option to go deeper, although for several of the topics addressed (e.g., the warning passages), better options are likely available. Especially in light of the recent charges of plagiarism, this book should be left alone by most readers.

- Jesse B. Coyne, *New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana*

***He Will Reign Forever: A Biblical Theology of the Kingdom of God.* By Michael J. Vlach. Silverton, OR: Lampion, 2017. 638 pages. Hardcover, \$39.95.**

Michael Vlach's compelling and excellent contribution explores the nature and timing of the kingdom of God. Vlach serves as professor of theology at The Master's Seminary in Sun Valley, California. He has written five other books, three of which relate to the kingdom of God: *Has the Church Replaced Israel? A Theological Evaluation* (B&H Academic, 2010); *The Church as a Replacement of Israel: An Analysis of Supersessionism* (Peter Lang, 2009); and *Dispensationalism: Essential Beliefs and Common Myths* (Theological Studies, 2008).

The book's thirty-nine chapters are grouped into four main parts: "Introduction to the Kingdom Program" (part 1), "The Kingdom Program in the Old Testament" (part 2), "The Kingdom Program in the New Testament" (part 3), and "Theological Issues and the Kingdom Program" (part 4). The end matter includes a twenty-one page bibliography and a set of indexes.

In the author's own words, "The goal of this book is to present a comprehensive biblical theology of the kingdom of God from a new creationist perspective" (11). The new creationist perspective stresses: a) "the importance of the material realm in God's purposes:" b) "that physical promises in the Bible will be fulfilled just as the Bible writers expected:" c) that "the coming new earth will be this present earth purged and restored:" d) "the importance of individuals, Israel, and nations in God's plans:" e) "the importance of particular and universal entities:" and f) that "God's kingdom will involve social, political, geographical, agricultural, architectural, artistic, technological, and animal elements" (14-15). This model coheres with revised and progressive dispensationalism (13).

As a biblical theology, the book traces the theme of kingdom through the canon, book by book or section by section. Vlach contends that “The kingdom of God is the great and grand theme of Scripture” (582). Given the vast scope of the topic, the analysis faces unavoidable limitations. For instance, while the author relates Ezek 38–39 to the messianic kingdom, he does not seek to identify Gog and Magog (202). Similarly, he expounds the Olivet Discourse, but he does not delve into the details of each verse (381). Regarding the Minor Prophets, Vlach chooses to bypass a treatment of the book of Obadiah (cf. 228). And he allocates only two sentences to the book of Habakkuk (233).

Concerning the timing and nature of the kingdom, Vlach advocates the “not yet” perspective rather than the “already” or “already/not yet” perspectives (269–71). In order for the kingdom to come, Israel as a nation must first repent of its sins. Vlach summarizes the progression as follows: “Israel’s repentance → Israel’s forgiveness → Return of Christ and kingdom of God” (418). As he reiterates throughout the book, the issue of contingency plays a pivotal role in the inauguration of the kingdom (51, 379). Jesus’s switch to teaching in parables (Matt 13) signaled a delay of the kingdom (326). Vlach encourages readers who hold the “already/not yet” position to distinguish clearly the “already” from the “not yet” aspects of the kingdom: “It is one thing to say that the kingdom is already and not yet and quite another to explain specifically what is already and what is not yet” (570, cf. 304). He views the miracles of the first coming as samples of the future kingdom (296).

According to Vlach, the Olivet Discourse awaits a distant eschatological fulfillment, with the exception of Luke 21:12–24a, which anticipates the circumstances surrounding the demise of Jerusalem in AD 70 (381n1). This suggestion raises two questions. First, why assign a near fulfillment to Luke’s account but a distant fulfillment to Matthew’s account, given that the accounts replicate one another verbatim? Namely, Matthew and Luke both state that “those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains” and “woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days” (Matt 24:16, 19; Luke 21:21, 23). Second, in Luke 21:12, does the preposition *pro* (“before”) function as a “chronological indicator” (387) or as an indicator of something else, such as rank or priority? In a helpful manner, Vlach’s treatment prompts the reader to consider these issues.

The author believes that some Old Testament predictions transpire during the church age, which began on the day of Pentecost. For example, he indicates that the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in Dan 9:26 occurred when the Romans invaded the city in AD 70 (217–18, 333). As another option, the destruction pertains to the tribulation of the temple and city. According to Vlach, Deut 30:1 predicts the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles, as well as the failed Jewish Revolts of AD 70 and AD 135 (103–4). For him, the “many days” of Hos 3:4 spans from AD 70 to the present (223). In addition, Joel 2:28–32 was fulfilled when the church began (408). And the fourth worldly empire of Dan 2 foresees the ancient Roman dynasty, which extends into the church age (209–11).

The subject index proves difficult to use at times because the headings with numerous locators (page numbers) sometimes lack subentries and sub-subentries. For instance, the heading “Heaven” lists a staggering 113 locators, but it lacks subentries. If the reader is seeking a discussion of some aspect of heaven, he must thumb through 113 pages, and he still might not find his subject. Normally, headings with seven or more locators ought to have subentries in order to spare researchers from futile searches.

Vlach’s volume stands out as one of the best books available on the topic of the kingdom of God. The volume updates and even replaces Alva J. McClain’s *The Greatness of the Kingdom: An Inductive Study of the Kingdom of God* (BMH Books, 1959). Vlach majors on the kingdom, making his focus narrower than Elliot Johnson’s *A Dispensational Biblical Theology* (Bold Grace, 2016). The presentation is clear and methodical. Bible students and theologians of all persuasions can use Vlach’s treatise as a basis for discussion and critique. I highly recommend this edifying and stimulating synthesis of the kingdom of God.

- Mark A. Hassler, Virginia Beach Theological Seminary, Virginia Beach, Virginia

***Jonathan Edwards among the Theologians.* By Oliver D. Crisp. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015. 218 pages. Paperback, \$25.00.**

Over the past decade, Oliver Crisp (professor of systematic theology, Fuller Theological Seminary) has emerged as one of the leading analytic theologians engaging with the theology of Jonathan Edwards. This volume revises and brings together much of Crisp’s previous work on Edwards to reveal a consistent theme. The various facets of Edwards’s theology, Crisp argues, reveal that Edwards was a constructive theologian who, while working within the Reformed tradition, in many ways re-envisioned the Christian faith in light of the intellectual challenges the Enlightenment introduced. As a result, Edwards pushed the very limits of that tradition—and in some cases the bounds of classical orthodoxy (xix).

Because the present volume is a collection of his previous work on Edwards, Crisp admits that readers can approach each of the chapters as discrete studies, which suggests that there is no logical ordering to their arrangement. With that in mind, perhaps it is best to group the book’s chapters in terms of specific goals and to think of these goals as contributing to its overall purpose. Chapter 1 looks at Edwards’s place in the Reformed theological tradition. Crisp points out that Edwards’s constructive theology fits within the tradition’s emphasis on the Reformed church always being reformed by the word of God. Edwards’s philosophical eclecticism may have led him to make significant adjustments to the

Reformed tradition but, as Crisp points out, Edwards was not acting outside that tradition. Chapters 2, 4, 5, and 7 compare Edwards to other theologians on various theological issues. Crisp considers the distinction between creator and creature in Anselm and Edwards (ch. 2), the doctrine of creation in Jacob Arminius and Edwards (ch. 4), the subject of free will in John Girardeau and Edwards (ch. 5), and the doctrine of the atonement according to Joseph Bellamy, one of Edwards's protégés (ch. 7). In these chapters, Crisp explains how Edwards's theology commits him to occasionalism, panentheism, and theological determinism. Chapters 3 and 6 focus respectively on Edwards's modifications to the Augustinian mutual love model of the Trinity and his explanation for how original sin is transmitted to Adam's progeny. Chapter 8 looks at Edwards's view of preaching. Crisp specifically highlights Edwards's belief that the doctrinal sermon was to be an exercise in "affective doctrine" and how several of Edwards's major works began as sermons. Finally, chapter 9 asks whether or not Edwards's theology is orthodox. Crisp identifies a theologically dangerous dilemma in Edwardsianism that can only be avoided by embracing a modified view of divine simplicity and rejecting occasionalism.

As expected, Crisp has produced a superb, well-researched, and engaging work. Overall, his arguments are lucid and carefully reasoned and make a significant contribution to the growing field of Edwardsian studies. But Crisp does more than simply present various facets of Edwards's theology; he brings Edwards into conversation with contemporary theology—and it is here that some of the specific strengths of Crisp's book can be seen. For instance, in chapter 3, where he presents Edwards's view of the Trinity, Crisp tries to show how Edwards advances the Augustinian mutual love model in a way that does not deny a divine essence by utilizing the doctrine of perichoresis, but that does not end up being a version of social Trinitarianism. In the end, Crisp admits that Edwards's view faces serious problems—though Crisp admits those problems may not be insurmountable. Also, in chapter 9, Crisp deals with the theological dilemma Edwards's views face. Without going into detail, Crisp points out that if Edwards holds to divine simplicity, panentheism (due to his Neoplatonic understanding of God's relationship with creation), and occasionalism (i.e., that God creates the world anew at each moment in time, segueing these moments together), then the conjunction of these three doctrines either yields pantheism or requires one to claim that God is the only moral agent and, thus, is responsible for evil. Crisp works through this dilemma, showing that if one wishes to be an Edwardsian, then to avoid the dilemma one must adopt a weak view of divine simplicity and reject occasionalism. Edwards may have something to contribute to contemporary theology, but as Crisp shows here, not without modification. Finally, in chapter 4, Crisp presents a compelling case for Arminius's doctrine of creation being much more within the parameters of the Reformed tradition and classical orthodoxy than Edwards's. Given that some popular works enthusiastically advocate Edwards as a paragon of the Reformed tradition and theological orthodoxy, one benefit of Crisp's argument is that it suggests the need to look at a wider spectrum of the Christian tradition (and not simply a particular portion of that tradition) before elevating one thinker over all others. Given what Crisp says about Edwards elsewhere (e.g., 3–5), it seems that Edwards himself would concur.

There are only two minor shortcomings of Crisp's book. The first has to do with what was already mentioned above—namely, Crisp's attempt to work through the dilemma Edwards faces. Crisp argues that Edwards must reject occasionalism to avoid ascribing evil to God. But it seems that jettisoning occasionalism would affect some of Edwards's other views. For instance, Crisp points out that one of the difficulties with Edwards's understanding how original sin is transmitted from Adam to his progeny is that Edwards's emphasis on the organic unity between Adam and the rest of the humanity clashes with his suggestion that the transmission of original sin is directly and immediately dependent on divine ordination. The latter seems to be tied up with Edwards's occasionalism. If occasionalism, however, is removed to avoid ascribing evil to God, then does that entail that the transmission of original sin is not directly and immediately dependent on divine ordination? If so, this would allow Edwards's view of organic unity between Adam and his progeny (strange though it may be) to do all the explanatory work for the transmission of original sin. But then without divine ordination grounding Edwards's specific understanding of organic unity, do other, less exotic (and, more importantly, less morally problematic) views of organic unity become available to explain the transmission of original sin? Such questions seem to need answers.

The other shortcoming has to do with Crisp's misidentification of Arminius as a proponent of Molinism. Kirk MacGregor's excellent book on Molina specifically points out how Arminius's view *denies* the central tenet of Molinism (*viz.*, that middle knowledge is pre-volitional, not post-volitional). Arminius's view is more in line with that of Domingo Báñez, one of Molina's chief opponents. To be fair, both MacGregor and Crisp published their respective books the same year, so Crisp might not have been aware of MacGregor's research. Nevertheless, those who read Crisp's book will want to know that the association of Arminius with Molinism is, at the very least, now questioned.

These are trivial concerns over an otherwise excellent study. Edwardsian scholars will want to read Crisp's volume. But one should not assume that Crisp's contributions are accessible only to specialists. Its general purpose, along with Crisp's stylistic clarity and grasp of the subject, also makes this a good read for anyone interested in Edwards's theology. Expert and novice alike will benefit from this work.

- Stephen D. Mizell, Scarborough College, Fort Worth, Texas

***The Latin New Testament: A Guide to its Early History, Text, and Manuscripts.* By H. A. G. Houghton. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. 304 pages. Hardcover, \$39.95.**

H. A. G. Houghton (PhD, University of Birmingham) is the reader in New Testament textual scholarship and deputy director of the Institute for Textual Scholarship and Electronic Editing at the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom. Houghton is an accomplished textual critic who has written or edited several books, including *Commentaries, Catenae and Biblical Tradition* (Gorgias, 2016), *Early Readers, Scholars and Editors of the New Testament* (Gorgias, 2014) and *Augustine's Text of John: Patristic Citations and Latin Gospel Manuscripts* (Oxford University Press, 2008).

The purpose of *The Latin New Testament: A Guide to its Early History, Text, and Manuscripts* is to “offer an orientation to the early history” of the Latin New Testament tradition, “a guide to resources available for further study of the Latin New Testament, and an account of its significance for the biblical text” (vii). Houghton divides the book into three major parts. In part one, he provides an overview of the history of the Latin New Testament. Houghton begins his historical overview with the early centuries of Christianity and ends with the completion of the *Textus Receptus* by Erasmus. In part two, the author discusses the text of the Latin New Testament. He addresses the various editions of the Latin text, the available witnesses, and the early Latin text. In part three, Houghton addresses the manuscripts of the Latin New Testament. He provides an in depth overview of the various characteristics and features of Latin manuscripts as well as a catalogue of Latin manuscripts. The author also includes appendices, indices, and a bibliography that will be useful for those seeking to study further the Latin New Testament.

The book is well written and thorough. Any students or scholars seeking to study the Latin text of the New Testament will find that Houghton's book is a valuable starting point, even if they do not know Latin. The book does not provide any new or groundbreaking insights into the Latin text, but it is still significant as a concise yet thorough introduction to the topic. Houghton's ability to include large quantities of information in a short space is impressive. He provides readers with enough information to prepare them for the study of the Latin New Testament without including an excess of unnecessary material. Additionally, he structures the book in a way that is logical and helpful. Houghton begins by introducing the reader to the long history of the Latin versions of the New Testament and then providing the information and tools necessary to begin studying the Latin text for themselves. Thus, he takes his audience on a journey of discovery in which they begin with little or no knowledge of the field and end with the basic knowledge and skills they need to study the Latin New Testament.

Houghton also includes several features in the book that make the work accessible and useful. He provides high quality black and white pictures of Latin manuscripts. The pictures are helpful because they aid the reader in visualizing the development of Latin

manuscripts over time. He also includes a catalogue of Latin manuscripts, in which he lists and describes important manuscripts. In addition to the catalogue, Houghton also provides lists of Latin manuscripts in Appendix B and C. The manuscript lists are important because readers who choose to study the Latin New Testament further can use them as reference tools.

The primary deficiency of the book is that Houghton falls short of demonstrating the significance of Latin manuscripts for the study of the New Testament text. He successfully describes the history and characteristics of the Latin New Testament but fails to present a compelling case for why a person should study them. In chapter 7, Houghton addresses the value of Latin manuscripts for clarifying the Greek text, but his warning about the dangers of using Latin versions for reaching the earliest attainable text is not sufficiently balanced with reasons for why a person should study the Latin versions. He notes that early Latin versions tend to make loose translations or paraphrases and tend to simplify texts by cutting out superfluous information. He explains that Greek and Latin have linguistic differences that make determining the Greek text through the Latin text a difficult task. Furthermore, he points out that Latin versions have their own textual development and that some variant readings could be a result of developments which were unique to the Latin tradition and not translated from the Greek. In short, Houghton's own words call into question the need to embark on the study of the Latin New Testament. The Latin versions provide some benefit for studying the New Testament text, and they are especially helpful for studying social history and scribal practices. However, Houghton fails to explicitly argue for the need to study the Latin New Testament.

Houghton accomplished most of his stated goals. He provides "an orientation to the early history" of the Latin New Testament tradition and "a guide to resources available for further study," but he fails to present a convincing "account of its significance for the biblical text" (vii). Nevertheless, Houghton has succeeded in writing a book that prepares and equips students and scholars to study the Latin New Testament. Readers who have a familiarity with the textual criticism and Latin will find the book to be accessible and easy to understand, but even those with no knowledge in these areas will benefit from reading this book. Thus, Houghton has made a significant contribution to the field of textual criticism, and his book should be used by anyone seeking an introduction or guide to the Latin New Testament.

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***The Message of the Twelve: Hearing the Voice of the Minor Prophets.* By Richard Alan Fuhr, Jr. and Gary E. Yates. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2016. 360 pages. Paperback, \$34.99.**

Richard Alan Fuhr, Jr. and Gary E. Yates are both professors at the Liberty University School of Divinity in Lynchburg, Virginia. Fuhr is a professor of Biblical Studies while Yates is a professor of Old Testament and the director of the Masters of Theology program. Yates has published numerous articles on the prophets with an emphasis on Jeremiah and is also the co-author of *The Essence of the Old Testament: A Survey* (2012). Fuhr is also the co-author of *Inductive Bible Study: Observation, Interpretation, and Application through the Lenses of History, Literature, and Theology* (2016).

The authors clearly state that their work's goal is to show how "especially relevant" the Minor Prophets (book of the Twelve) are for the church (xiii). With this goal in mind, *The Message of the Twelve* was written to reach the student, pastor, and anyone new to studying the Bible (xiv). Because every aspect of the book of the Twelve could not be discussed, especially in one volume, the authors decided to overview the main content of each book as well as provide general background information helpful for exegesis. In all, the authors hope to remind readers that the book of the Twelve provides a challenge to live ethically, information about how God acts, and spiritual comfort in light of the coming of God's glorious kingdom (321–25).

The Message of the Twelve is divided into two main sections. Section one explains some background information important for exegesis, while section two provides a summary of each book's message. Within the first section, the authors devote four chapters to deal with the historical context surrounding the book of the Twelve, the theological context surrounding the Twelve, the literary features found within prophetic literature, and the literary composition of the Twelve as a whole.

The authors explain the importance of the first chapter by stating that the prophets mentioned within the Twelve spoke more "about their own times than they did the last" (2). In other words, the authors believe that the reader will miss the referent of the prophets' words if they are not aware of their historical circumstances. Within the second chapter, the authors explain how the prophets' primary role was to convince God's people to return to the covenant. According to the authors, this involved a combination of the Mosaic conditional covenant as well as God's unconditional covenants with Abraham and David (20–21). Thus, the prophets were not only "forth-tellers" reminding the people to return to God's covenants, but they were also "foretellers" revealing God's decision to judge or bless his people in the future.

The second chapter ends by emphasizing that the written text, edited or not, is what God inspired by his Holy Spirit. This emphasis sets the stage for chapter three, which

explains the literary genres and rhetorical devices found within the Twelve. The authors argue that even if “editorial activity” was “responsible for the literary craftsmanship of the written text . . . it is the written text that is inspired within the canon” (26). Thus every chiasm, inclusio, parallel verse, or literary wordplay helps to structure each prophetic text while providing the reader with the text’s meaning.

Next, the authors attempt to explain how the book of the Twelve is not ordered according to a general chronology as well as according to “common themes and connecting catchwords” (44). The authors conclude that the book of the Twelve is a united corpus that seeks to explain how God interacted with his people in the past as well as how God will carry out his purposes in the future (58). This background material sets the stage for an analysis of each prophetic book within the Twelve, a section which takes up the majority of the book and is divided evenly. For example, the authors spend about twenty-eight pages on Hosea’s fourteen chapters while they commit about twelve pages to Obadiah’s one chapter. Each of these chapters also follows the same basic pattern: background information, a proposed structure for the book, an exposition of the book’s contents, and a theological conclusion that seeks to apply the book’s message to contemporary issues.

An evaluation of *The Message of the Twelve* results in many points of praise. The book is written in a way that it is accessible to both the beginner as well as the advanced learner. First, the book’s far-reaching effects are found within a pattern that provides the reader with a list of terms that are then explained at length. For example, when defining the words metaphor and hyperbole, the authors state that these words are part of the category of figurative language then spend the next two pages defining these words and providing examples from the Twelve as well as from English literature (35–36). Thus, the authors have taken nothing for granted in terms of defining their usage of words and categories.

Second, the authors engage in critical scholarship—such as the work of James Nogalski— and utilize academic terms, such as hypocatastasis. But as stated above, the authors’ use of academic terms and critical scholarship does not single out any implied readers. One of the best examples of this is the authors’ definition of the word terse, which they explain as being “short on words yet long in power” (36).

Third, the authors have successfully built a bridge between how the message of the Twelve would have affected its original readers and how this message ought to affect the church today. An example of this is found in the authors’ application of the book of Amos. The authors form a connection between the current “pay day loan operations” and the “social injustice” of Amos’ time. This leads the authors to question what a “modern-day Amos” would “preach to the churches of America?” (145).

Fourth, the authors engage numerous English translations throughout the book and encourage their readers to do the same. In attempting to explain the “exegetical challenges” in translating Hosea 13:9, the authors provide a footnote explaining the importance of “comparing translations for English Bible readers” (81). Thus, the authors provide their readers with a model for the proper way to evaluate modern English translation issues.

In all, the authors’ have accomplished their task of explaining the importance of the book of the Twelve for the modern church. Though there is not full agreement on some of the authors’ exegetical conclusions and some sections leave one with a desire for further explanation, *The Message of the Twelve* will be useful for the church and is highly recommended.

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***Paul and the Faithfulness of God.* By N. T. Wright. Christian Origins and the Question of God. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2013. 1,658 pages. Paperback, \$89.00.**

N. T. Wright (PhD, Oxford) serves as research professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at St. Mary’s College in the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. He served as the Bishop of Durham in 2003–2010. He is a prolific author, having written many books on a wide array of topics in New Testament Theology. His works are written for a variety of audiences, ranging from laypersons to scholars. The work at hand is the fourth installment in his large series titled *Christian Origins and the Question of God*. His other works include *The New Testament and the People of God* (Fortress, 1992), *The Climax of the Covenant* (Fortress, 1993), *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Fortress, 1997), *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Fortress, 2003), *The Challenge of Jesus* (IVP, 2015), *The Day the Revolution Began* (HarperOne, 2016), *How God Became King* (HarperOne, 2016), and *Simply Good News* (HarperOne, 2017).

The work at hand is a culmination of the Pauline scholarship of New Testament scholar N. T. Wright. After a long career and long list of publications on the apostle, Wright has provided perhaps the most thorough treatment to date on Paul. It is worth noting that this installment was also published with a collection of essays on Pauline studies, also by Wright, *Pauline Perspectives: Essays on Paul, 1978–2013*. The work under review is divided into two volumes, each containing two “parts”: Part I-Paul and His World; Part II-The Mindset of the Apostle; Part III-Paul’s Theology; Part IV-Paul in History.

Wright discusses the historical context of Paul in Part I, dividing it into five chapters. He looks at Paul’s letter of Philemon in chapter 1 as an introduction to the rest of the work. He claims, “If . . . Philemon was the only document we had from early Christianity, we

would still know that something very different was happening, different from the way the rest of the world behaved" (23). He goes on to show how it was Paul's reworked worldview and "theology" that resulted in his peculiar treatment of Onesimus. Paul has come to understand the reconciliation of the world having taken place in the Messiah, Jesus. As such, his ministry has become one of reconciliation, and this we see in his brief letter to Philemon.

In the next chapter, "Like Birds Hovering Overhead," Wright discusses Paul's Pharisaic context. He rehashes some of what he has already said before in *The New Testament and the People of God* concerning Second Temple Judaism. He also claims that it is Paul's Second Temple Pharisaic context that provides the primary frame of reference for understanding him. Of particular interest in this section, Wright notes the two schools of Pharisaism in the first century, Hillel and Shammai. These schools sought out different answers to the question of "how to be a loyal Jew under an alien regime" such as Rome (85). Hillel took more of a "live and let live" approach, while Shammai saw revolt, even violent revolt, as the proper response (85). Wright points out that Paul (Saul) studied under the guidance of Gamaliel, who seems to have fallen in the Hillel school. However, Saul's zeal for Torah and Jewish identity reveals that he would have fallen in with Shammai's camp. Wright spends the rest of the chapter discussing the worldview markers of Second Temple Judaism (metanarrative, symbols, questions, and praxis) and how they would have influenced the thinking of the apostle. In chapters 3–5, Wright discusses the contexts of Greek philosophy, religion in the Greco-Roman world, and politics and religion of the Roman Empire. He notes that, growing up in Tarsus, Saul would have been well acquainted with the competing philosophies of his day, such as Stoicism and Epicureanism. Wright notes the legends of Paul and Seneca meeting, namely the alleged correspondence between them as mentioned around Jerome's time, and concludes that "such speculations are based on thin air, and the correspondence is now universally regarded as inauthentic" (220). He notes the impact these philosophies would have had on Paul, but concludes that they would have been utilized more so for the translation of Paul's theology. Wright also notes that Christianity, according to Paul, would have resembled a school of philosophy more than it would have resembled a religion.

In Part II, Wright discusses Paul's worldview. He begins by discussing the "symbolic praxis of Paul's world" (351), beginning with the symbols and praxis of the Greek world and Roman Empire, and concluding with these in Paul's Christianity. More specifically, he discusses the symbols that would have proclaimed "we are the one people of the one God" and "we are the one people of the Messiah" (387, 404). Though the cross, Christian mission, and the Messiah himself were all very important symbols of Paul's worldview, Wright holds that the central symbol of said worldview was the *ekklesia*, or the one family of YHWH (387). He shows that the majority of Paul's letters deal with issues surrounding the identity of the *ekklesia*. This is seen especially in his letters to the Galatians and the Romans. According to Wright, Paul's theology would have provided the content that provided answers to his

four worldview questions (who are we, where are we, what's wrong and what's the solution, and what time is it?), as well as it would have provided the content for his worldview's metanarrative.

Part III begins volume two and discusses Paul's theology. Wright divides Paul's theology into three large topics: monotheism, election, and eschatology. He holds that Paul reworked all three of these Jewish theological categories around Jesus the Messiah and the spirit¹ (612). First, he sets out to show how Paul reworked his monotheism around Jesus the Messiah and the spirit. He notes the contributions of scholars such as Richard Bauckham and Chris Tilling on this topic. While noting their positive contributions, Wright does not think that they have gone quite far enough. Following Bauckham, he holds that Paul would have understood the divinity of Jesus in light of what he, Bauckham, refers to as the "divine identity" (651). Wright notes that Paul utilizes the language that the Old Testament uses to discuss the return of YHWH to Zion in order to discuss Jesus as the Messiah, specifically the language of the Exodus and Wisdom. Contrary to other scholars, he shows how Jesus's Messiahship was one of the central nodes of Paul's Christology. Wright also shows that one of the primary ways that Paul understood the divinity of the spirit is grasped through his use of Shekinah language when discussing the way it indwells the *ekklesia*.

Wright then discusses how Paul reworked his doctrine of election in the following chapter. Here he discusses his understanding of the Pauline theme justification, an understanding that has garnered much debate in recent years. Wright first discusses the purpose of the calling of Israel, which was to be a recapitulation of Adam in the garden. After Adam's fall in the garden, YHWH calls Abraham and his descendants to be a recapitulation of the garden as a way of righting Adam's failure. Jesus, as Israel's Messiah, is a recapitulation of Israel, and therefore Adam, in his ministry. More specifically, Jesus is Israel's *incorporative* Messiah. The elect, or people of YHWH, for Paul, are those who have been *incorporated* into the Messiah through faith. This, according to Wright, is what Paul means by "justification."

Next, Wright discusses Paul's eschatology, which is what unifies his reworking of monotheism and election. He shows how Paul has realized and redefined his hope for the future around Jesus and the spirit, which is what determines his ethics and Christian praxis. According to Wright, it is Paul's understanding of this "now and not yet" eschatology that informs his understanding of how Christians ought to live under the rule of Rome in this world. He also discusses the "eschatological challenge of redefined election" (1128) in this chapter. Wright provides his rigorous exegesis of Romans 9–11 here.

After discussing Paul's context in part I, Paul's worldview in part II, and Paul's theology in part III, Wright *places* Paul back in his context in part IV. He begins by placing Paul's

¹Because "Spirit" is not capitalized in the work at hand, I maintain the lowercase "s" in this review.

worldview and theology in the context of the Roman Empire. More specifically, he discusses the implications of what it meant for Paul, and other Christians, to claim that Jesus was *Kyrios* and that Caesar was not. He then discusses Paul's Christianity in the Greco-Roman world of religion, specifically focusing on the early practices of baptism, the Lord's Supper, and prayer. He then puts Paul in the context of Greek philosophy, focusing on issues surrounding physics (metaphysics), epistemology, logic, and ethics. In chapter 15, Wright places the Christian Paul in his Second Temple Jewish context, showing how and why Paul came into the conflict he did with other Jews. Of special significance in this chapter is his discussion concerning Paul's hermeneutics and Israel's Scriptures. Chapter 16 discusses the "signs of New Creation" and provides a type of conclusion to this extensive treatment of the apostle.

There are many points of appreciation concerning Wright's work, the majority of these concerning part III on Paul's theology. First, Wright correctly shows the interconnectedness of Paul's monotheism, election, and eschatology. One will quickly notice in his discussion of each of these that Wright *necessarily* has to talk about the other two. When discussing Paul's reworked monotheism, he will also discuss issues concerning Paul's reworked doctrines of election and eschatology. When discussing Paul's reworked understanding of election, he will inevitably discuss his reworked eschatology and monotheism. And when discussing Paul's reworked eschatology, Wright will necessarily discuss his reworked understandings of monotheism and election. This serves as a reminder to the reader that doctrines do not exist in a vacuum and that one cannot isolate doctrines from one another without doing them damage. The way Wright treats Paul's monotheism, election, and eschatology serves as a great model for how one ought to discuss theology.

Also, Wright does a phenomenal job in showing the connections between Paul's worldview and theology. Theology, for Paul, is not an academic discipline of abstract thinking that is separated from everyday life. For Paul, theology provides the answers to the four major questions that exist in every worldview: who are we, where are we, what's wrong and what's the solution, and what time is it? Who are we: we are the one family of YHWH who have been incorporated into Jesus the Messiah and declared in the right because of our faith. Where are we: we are in God's good creation that has been corrupted by the powers of sin and death and that eagerly awaits the return of her creator to restore all things. What is wrong and what is the solution: sin has corrupted YHWH's good creation and the solution is that YHWH has returned in Jesus the Messiah and has begun the ministry of reconciling and restoring the entirety of creation through his crucifixion and resurrection. What time is it: we are currently in an overlap of the present evil age and the age to come, awaiting the return of Jesus who will complete the ministry of reconciliation and restoration that began on the cross and through his resurrection. All of these answers are derived from Paul's theology and not only answer Paul's worldview questions, but they also inform his understanding of symbol and praxis, as well do they inform his metanarrative. Wright correctly shows that, for Paul, theology is directly related to Christian praxis and worldview and is not to be abstracted from everyday life.

Wright provides a fine treatment on the issue of justification. As noted above, his position on justification has become a point of contention and debate in recent years, specifically that he does not hold that justification entails the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to the believer. His treatment of the topic in the work at hand is his most recent contribution to the discussion. According to Wright, justification does not merely pertain to the theological category of soteriology. Justification has as much to do with ecclesiology, or election for Wright, as it does soteriology. Not only is justification as much ecclesiological as it is soteriological, but it is also as much *eschatological* as it is soteriological. Again, the way Wright shows the connections among the doctrines is especially helpful. What does Paul mean when he claims that Christians have been justified through faith? First, one should note that Wright understands “the righteousness of God” to mean “YHWH’s covenant faithfulness” (799). According to Wright, justification is a forensic metaphor that denotes the act of “declaring righteous,” or “declaring in the right” (945). As this pertains to *dikaios* (righteous), he states, “Though this word can also . . . denote the person’s character or behavior.” Also, “the meaning of *dikaios* within the law court setting is not ‘righteous’ in the sense of this person is well-behaved and so deserves to win the case,’ but rather ‘this person has received the court’s favourable verdict.’ The declaration, in other words, is not a ‘recognition’ of ‘what is already the case’ . . . but rather the *creation of a new status*” (945). Wright then briefly utilizes tools from the contemporary philosophy of language Speech Act theory to show how this is the case. The result of this being declared righteous is the incorporation of the believer into the Messiah (or the Messiah’s righteousness according to Vanhoozer).² Rather than the righteousness of the Messiah being imputed to the believer, the believer participates in the Messiah’s righteousness through being incorporated into him. This participationist/incorporationist model of understanding justification seems to be a better alternative to the understanding of imputation held by many since the time of Martin Luther. This fits better with Paul’s understanding of the relationship of the Messiah to the *ekklesia*. More specifically, this makes better sense of what Paul means when he says that those who are the *ekklesia* are “in the Messiah.”

This last point leads to the next point of discussion concerning Wright’s treatment of Paul’s theology: the *pistis Christou*. Should one understand this phrase as an objective genitive (“faith in the Messiah”) or should she understand it is a subjective genitive (“the faithfulness of the Messiah”)? Wright argues persuasively for the latter. More specifically, he argues that this is how one should understand the construction as it appears in Romans 3:21–25 (he notes that it is not so easily determined in its use in Galatians 2:15–18). Wright notes that to this point in Romans, Paul has not been concerned with where people have been putting their faith; rather, he has been concerned with their lack of covenant faithfulness and “the righteous one” in Romans 1:16–17. Wright understands “the righteous one” to be Jesus the Messiah. He ties this to the narrative substructure that permeates the entire letter

²Kevin J. Vanhoozer, “Wrighting the Wrongs of the Reformation?” in *Jesus, Paul, and the People of God* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010), 251–52.

to the Roman church. The first three chapters concern the fall of Adam and Israel resulting in the fallenness of all. As the Messiah, Jesus recapitulates the plot of Adam and the subplot of Abraham and Israel as their true representative. But how does this work? In the same way that the king of Israel was Israel's true representative before YHWH (namely that YHWH's judgment on the king was his judgment on the whole people), Jesus is the true representative of the true Israel (those who have been incorporated into him through faith) as her Messiah King. In this way, the *pistis Christou* is the grounds for the justification of the *ekklesia*. Jesus the Messiah is declared to be the righteous one in light of his faithfulness as Israel's Messiah. Those who have faith in him are incorporated into him and participate in his faithfulness and righteousness. Wright's understanding of *pistis Christou* as a subjective genitive coheres with the rest of Paul's theology rather than understanding it as an objective genitive. Not only does it highlight the *ekklesia's* participation in the faithfulness and righteousness of the Messiah, but it also better accounts for why it is important for Paul to understand Jesus as the second Adam in Romans 5. Wright correctly understands *pistis Christou* as a subjective genitive.

These above issues highlight the final praiseworthy aspect of Wright's book that space allows me to deal with: his exegetical rigor. Throughout the book, Wright engages in rigorous exegesis to discern the meaning of Paul's Letters. Not only can this be seen in the above issues concerning justification and *pistis Christou*, but it can also be seen in his treatment of Romans 9–11 (1156–1258) and Galatians 2:15–4:11 (966–76). What aids his exegesis is his placement of Paul within his Second Temple Jewish context. Wright's thorough knowledge of the intertestamental literature, namely the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and Dead Sea Scrolls, allows him to have a more thorough understanding of the language that Paul used rather than someone who *only* interprets Paul in light of the Old Testament and other New Testament literature. This is not to say that the Old Testament and other New Testament literature are not useful for establishing Paul's context; Wright correctly shows how the Old Testament provides the primary horizon of understanding of Saul's theology and how it becomes the reworked theology of Paul. However, if one wants to have a more thorough understanding of Paul, then one must situate him in his historical context, which is Second Temple Judaism. One does this through gaining an intimate knowledge of the Second Temple Jewish literature, as Wright has done.

A couple of areas of improvement will be suggested for Wright's book. These areas are connected to one another and concern the book's length and repetition. At 1,519 pages of content, one cannot help but wonder if Wright might have drawn the book out too much. Perhaps the book's length could have been slimmed down had Wright not repeated himself. No doubt, Wright repeats himself in order to help the reader follow his train of thought and keep up with his arguments. He does, however, overdo it a bit. There were many places where I found myself saying, "Stop repeating yourself and get to the point!" Wright's repetitive and long-winded writing make the work a difficult book to read, especially if one desires to read it in its entirety. Granted, Paul was a complex person and his letters resemble just that.

Though one would expect a thorough treatment of Paul to be substantially lengthy, Wright could have slimmed down his work.

Overall, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* is a phenomenal treatment of the apostle, perhaps one of the best to date. No doubt, future Pauline scholars will have to interact with this work as they seek to attain better understandings of his person and letters. Wright is a great writer and the work at hand is very readable. I would recommend this book to serious scholars, seminary students, and educated laypersons. I would not recommend this book to the typical layperson due to its length. A book of this length can be exhausting to someone who is not used to reading works of similar length. Overall, Wright's *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* is a monumental treatment of the apostle to the Gentiles.

- Andrew Hollingsworth, *New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana*

***Paul Behaving Badly: Was the Apostle a Racist, Chauvinist Jerk?* By E. Randolph Richards and Brandon J. O'Brien. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2016. 224 pages. Paperback, \$16.00.**

In their cleverly-titled book, *Paul Behaving Badly: Was the Apostle Paul a Racist, Chauvinist Jerk?*, E. Randolph Richards and Brandon J. O'Brien provide a well-written and engaging discussion of common criticisms of the Apostle Paul. Richards is provost and professor of biblical studies at the School of Ministry at Palm Beach Atlantic University in Palm Beach, Florida. He has written several books, including two books related to Pauline Studies: *Rediscovering Paul* (IVP Academic, 2011), and *Paul and First-Century Letter Writing* (IVP Academic, 2004). O'Brien is assistant professor of Christian theology at Ouachita Baptist University and the director of OBU at New Life Church in Conway, Arkansas. Richards and O'Brien have also co-authored *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes* (IVP, 2012).

The purpose of the book is to "put Paul on trial" (15). Richards and O'Brien attempt to present the common evidence against Paul and then to address the validity of that evidence through a reasonable examination of the historical and cultural context within which Paul wrote and lived. They seek to avoid a simplistic refutation or dismissal of the arguments against Paul, in favor of a balanced and logical assessment of the Apostle in light of his setting. The authors also have a secondary goal "to humanize Paul" (21). They stress to their readers "that Paul is *not* the Son of God" and that Christians should avoid the tendency of view him as if he were perfect (21). In short, the authors present a portrait of Paul that avoids the two extremes. Paul was neither a "superhuman" Christian nor "a jerk or a hypocrite" (193, 195).

Richards and O'Brien begin the book with an introduction in which they discuss the difficulties associated with the study of Paul and their general goals for the book. Following the introduction, they divide the book into eight chapters, with each chapter addressing

a different accusation against Paul. The authors discuss the claims that Paul was a jerk, killjoy, racist, slavery supporter, chauvinist, homophobe, hypocrite, and manipulator of scripture. Although some variation between chapters is present, Richards and O'Brien structure each chapter with the same general pattern. The authors begin the chapters with a brief discussion about the relevance of the issue in question, present the arguments against Paul, and then provide an alternate portrayal of Paul by examining him in his historical and social context. They do not adopt a simple point-counterpoint format, in which one refutes each claim of the opponent. Rather, the authors are careful to acknowledge the strength of the opposing view, while suggesting that if Paul were viewed within his context, then a more complex and positive picture would arise. Richards and O'Brien end the book with a conclusion in which they argue that Paul was an imperfect but dedicated follower of Christ who should be imitated by Christians. The authors also include endnotes and indices at the end of the book.

Paul Behaving Badly has several commendable qualities. First, the authors provide readers with an accessible and engaging introduction to important scholarly discussions about Pauline studies, ethics, and hermeneutics. For example, they summarize and apply William Webb's "trajectory hermeneutic" (105). To learn about such issues, non-specialist readers would usually be forced to read technical or scholarly books, which might be difficult to understand. However, Richards and O'Brien present complex ideas understandably and interestingly without sacrificing quality. Some readers may find that they disagree with the ideas presented by the authors, but the book is still valuable because it provides those ideas that would have been inaccessible otherwise. Second, the authors' emphasis on the humanity and imperfection of Paul was a helpful corrective to the tendency of some Christians to idealize the Apostle Paul and to ignore his faults. Many readers from a Christian background which idealize Paul will find that this book challenges them to view Paul in a new light. He was an imperfect person who was used by God and not a semi-divine figure. Third, the authors do a good job of placing Paul's statements and attitudes within their historical and cultural context. Throughout the book, Richards and O'Brien remind readers of the need to view Paul within his context. They emphasize the situational nature of Paul's Letters and make it clear that Paul acted contrary to the cultural norms of the ancient world as well as today. Thus, many readers will find that this book challenges them to study the Bible in its original context.

In spite of the qualities mentioned above, the book has two weaknesses that significantly limit its usefulness. First, the authors' critique of Paul may be too negative to resonate with many Christian readers while also being too weak to convince those skeptical of Christianity. Richards and O'Brien appear to have been very concerned with presenting the arguments against Paul without showing favoritism, while also responding to those arguments in a non-combative way. As a result, the authors often use a negative tone when attacking Paul, but then switch to a softer tone when defending Paul. Furthermore, in the authors' defenses of Paul, they do not directly refute the claims against him, but instead,

present an alternate portrayal of Paul which was informed by his context. The Christian reader may find the authors' attitude toward Paul to be excessively negative and the skeptic may find that the book articulates their objections against Paul more systematically without providing adequate rebuttals. Therefore, the book would probably not be helpful as an apologetic tool to be given to the skeptic. Second, the authors did not include either a bibliography or a reading list. The book could be a useful introduction for pastors, lay people and students, but without a bibliography or a reading list many readers will find that the book gives them a desire to learn more, but then fails to provide resources for further study.

Paul Behaving Badly is not useful as an apologetic tool or as a reference tool. The authors do not directly refute specific arguments against Paul, and the book is not structured in a way that allows the reader to find the response to an objection quickly. However, the book is ideal as an introduction for students, ministers, and lay people who need an overview of the issues related to the Apostle Paul. Although the authors provide the reader with the tools necessary for studying Paul in his context and for avoiding the tendency to view Paul through the lens of today's culture, they do not provide the reader with the tools to win an argument or convince a highly skeptical friend. This book is for Christians who want to grow in their ability to understand complex issues in the Bible, and that group will find it to be a useful addition to their library.

- Benjamin Browning, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana

***Progressive Covenantalism: Charting a Course between Dispensational and Covenant Theologies.* Edited by Stephen J. Wellum and Brent E. Parker. Nashville, TN: B&H, 2016. 300 pages. \$32.99.**

Strategies for successfully navigating the relationship between the Old and New Testaments, the various covenants, and Israel and the church have been a perilous process ranging from ancient heresies that abandoned the Old Testament and even parts of the New Testament to modern positions within evangelicalism ranging from theonomy to classic dispensationalism. As the full title of the book indicates, progressive covenantalism is a mediating position between covenant theology and dispensationalism. As such, it has some traits that are more consistent with covenantalism and others that are more consistent with dispensationalism. The proponents of this view see their perspective as correcting the flaws of the alternative positions and bringing theology in line with Scripture.

Many Baptists who have been drawn to covenantal theology but have been wary of its use to support infant baptism may find this system appealing, as it keeps many of the traits of covenantal theology but does so from a distinctively Baptist perspective. In contrast to traditional covenantal theology, progressive covenantalism views the covenantal

community as composed of believers only. This different view of the nature of the church has led to a reassessment of the relationship between Israel and the church.

While a more systematic approach can be found in Peter J. Gentry's and Stephen J. Wellum's *Kingdom Through Covenant* (Crossway, 2012), the editors see *Progressive Covenantalism* as a continuation of this work. In *Progressive Covenantalism*, they hope to elaborate on some of the earlier material and hope to clarify some of the issues others have raised. *Progressive Covenantalism* is a collection of ten articles that address the unique perspective of this interpretive framework. Written from an irenic spirit, the authors hope to promote dialogue with the proponents of other views. The first four chapters deal with basic and global issues of the position, explaining how it grows from a correct understanding of the biblical text.

1. Jason S. DeRouchie, "Father of a Multitude of Nations: New Covenant Ecclesiology in OT Perspective"
2. Brent E. Parker, "The Israel-Christ-Church Relationship"
3. Jason C. Meyer, "The Mosaic Law, Theological Systems, and the Glory of Christ"
4. Ardel B. Caneday, "Covenantal Life with God from Eden to Holy City"

Proposing a mediating position, the authors distinguish their view from covenant theology and dispensationalism. The following four chapters therefore contrast the progressive covenantal approach with traditional covenant theology.

5. John D. Meade, "Circumcision of Flesh to Circumcision of Heart: The Typology of the Sign of the Abrahamic Covenant"
6. Thomas R. Schreiner, "Good-bye and Hello: The Sabbath Command for New Covenant Believers"
7. Christopher W. Cowan, "The Warning Passages of Hebrews and the New Covenant Community"
8. Stephen J. Wellum, "Progressive Covenantalism and the Doing of Ethics"

The last two chapters interact with dispensationalism.

9. Richard J. Lucas, "The Dispensational Appeal to Romans 11 and the Nature of Israel's Future Salvation"
10. Oren R. Martin, "The Land Promise Biblically and Theologically Understood"

Because the book is a compilation of articles written by different authors, I will examine three articles, one from each main section, to provide an idea of the nature of progressive covenantalism and the nature of the book.

One of the most helpful articles for understanding the progressive covenantal approach is “The Israel-Christ-Church Relationship” written by Brent E. Parker. Whereas covenantal theology views the church as the new Israel and as fulfilling and inheriting the promises to Israel, and dispensationalism views Israel and the church as distinct entities, progressive covenantalism views Christ as the fulfillment of all the Old Testament covenants and promises. Since all believers are united to Christ, they all become heirs of the promises through their union with him. Instead of Israel-church, the Christocentric pattern becomes Israel-Christ-church.

Christ as the “true Israel” fulfills all that was promised to Israel and accomplishes all that Israel was commanded to do but never did. Where national Israel failed, Christ succeeded. Parker concedes that Jesus is never referred to as the “true Israel,” but the term does capture the intent of the New Testament which identifies Jesus with many of the same titles that were given to Israel such as “servant,” “firstborn Son,” “Son of God,” etc. The claim that Jesus is the “true Israel” also finds support from the numerous roles that Israel played in God’s redemptive plan and from how Christ fulfills God’s purposes and plans for Israel. Parker then presents Jesus as the true Israel through a survey of roles and titles given to both Israel and Jesus; for example, Jesus is the son that God brought out of Egypt, the true servant beloved by God, the son who obeyed in the wilderness, and the true vine that bore fruit.

Because Jesus fulfilled the covenants and promises to Israel, there are implications for those who are united to him—both Jew and Gentile will receive the promises and blessings. Unlike covenant theology, which sees a direct link, progressive covenantalism finds that the relationship between Israel and the church is indirect via union with Christ, which is described as “mediated continuity” (46).

The Christocentric approach of progressive covenantalism finds that the church only fulfills the role of Israel in union with Christ and thus avoids the error of traditional covenantalism, reducing Israel to the Church and the error of traditional dispensationalism, dividing Israel and the church so that God has two peoples. All believers, both Jew and gentile, receive the promises through Christ’s death and resurrection and, therefore, become inward Jews, the true circumcision, and Abraham’s seed (64).

To help distinguish progressive covenantalism from traditional covenantalism, especially that version held by paedobaptists, John D. Meade wrote the article “Circumcision of Flesh to Circumcision of Heart: The Typology of the Sign of the Abrahamic Covenant.” Here he shows the relationship of circumcision to baptism. In the Old Testament, circumcision of the flesh was supposed to be an outward symbol of circumcision of the heart—a symbol that was often incongruous to reality. In the New Testament, baptism becomes a symbol of a circumcised heart that should invariably be consistent.

Many will find this article of interest as Meade relates the historical significance of circumcision. Although the Old Testament never explicitly indicates the meaning of circumcision, an examination of the background of the rite in Egypt reveals that it was used as an initiation into the priesthood for those who would serve in Pharaoh's court. So, whereas circumcision in Egypt marked those from the royal class who were becoming priests, in Israel, circumcision marked every male among God's people, indicating that all Israel was to be a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exod 19:6).

This sign of devotion to God was applied to all of Abraham's male descendants—although many would never live up to its meaning. God, however, wanted people who were devoted in heart to him. When the people failed, God called them to circumcise their hearts (Deut 10:16). Outward circumcision became a type for heart circumcision. What God wanted from his people was covenant faithfulness—living up to what they had signified in their flesh. Both the prophets and the New Testament authors pick up this idea of heart circumcision.

As in the Old Testament, the New Testament depicts circumcision of the flesh as pointing to inward circumcision. Meade notes the dissonance in Romans 2 of those who are Jews outwardly but not inwardly—circumcised in the flesh but not in the heart. What the Old Testament anticipated in shadow has now become a reality by the work of Christ. With Christ and the New Covenant, the type is no longer necessary since the antitype of heart circumcision has arrived in Christ. Because the antitype of circumcision has always been heart circumcision, baptism is not an antitype or a replacement of circumcision. Baptism is a sign of heart circumcision. Because it is a sign of what has happened inwardly, it should only be applied to those who have experienced the inward reality.

Oren R. Martin's article "The Land Promise Biblically and Theologically Understood" will be of interest to many readers who want to understand how progressive covenantalism deals with the issue of the land. While dispensationalists may point out the unconditional nature of God's promises to Abraham as a reason that the land promises must be fulfilled by Israel, Martin sees the land promises as having always included the necessity of obedience and a global dimension that surpasses the regional promise of Canaan.

God's plan for the earth was to reestablish that which was lost at the fall. The land promises are a step on the path to restoration and serve as a type of the greater fulfillment that Christ will achieve. The world lost in Eden through disobedience is typologically restored in part by God promising the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants and is partially realized under Joshua and the kings. Ultimately, the land promise is brought to its antitypical fulfillment by the obedience of Christ as he brings his kingdom (the already component) and will find its consummation in a worldwide rule with all God's people—Jew and Gentile (the not-yet component). Underlying this argument is the Israel-Christ-church pattern. The promises made to Israel find their fulfillment in Jesus, the true Israel

and obedient son who then confers the blessings on all those in union with him—both Jew and gentile.

Aware that dispensationalists will level the charge of spiritualizing the promises, Martin points out that the promises themselves hint at a greater worldwide fulfillment of Abraham becoming the father of many nations, which is an idea developed in other parts of the Old Testament and further established by the New Testament. As a result, Abraham becomes the father of an obedient international community that inherits the earth, not just a small parcel of land.

One chapter that seems out of place in this book is “The Warning Passage of Hebrews and the New Covenant Community” by Christopher W. Cowan. The editors say there is room for a multiplicity of views on issues like eschatology; for example, they see the position as consistent with amillennialism or historic premillennialism (4). While the book refrains from taking a position on the millennium, it does take a position on how to interpret the warning passages of Hebrews, which would suggest that progressive covenantalism takes a specific view of how to interpret a much-debated group of passages. However, is this the only possible way of interpreting these passages within the framework of progressive covenantalism?

While Baptists view the church as composed of only believers, some covenant theologians think that these passages indicate that the covenant community contains non-elect individuals who can apostatize. Cowan wants to show that the covenant community is composed solely of the elect who can never fall away. Because of these beliefs and his view that the warning passages in Hebrews are describing true believers, he takes the position that the warnings are God’s means of ensuring that believers persist in faith. While Cowan is correct in describing the effect that these warnings have in the lives of believers, another option may be possible for those holding to progressive covenantalism.

The church as the true body of Christ is composed only of believers, but a local church as a body of individuals that meets together often has many individuals who profess faith and sincerely think they are believers but are not. A minister, like the author of Hebrews, will address these individuals as well as those who are truly members of the body of Christ. So, if one views Hebrews as sermon material and concedes that most sermons have a dual audience—elect and non-elect, and if one interprets the passage as referring to these non-elect who are associated with the church and who have reaped the blessings of this association, then one preserves the concern for the church’s composition of consisting only in the elect and the belief that the elect will persist in faith.

As a whole, the book is interesting and thought-provoking, and would be an excellent resource for those who are interested in the relationship of the Old and New Testaments but who have found traditional covenantal theology and dispensationalism lacking. This

book should help chart a course to a more biblical perspective. Baptists coming at the text from a covenantal perspective will especially find this book helpful when articulating the relationship of their Baptist beliefs concerning the nature of the church and their view of how God's redemptive plan has unfolded throughout history.

- Samuel R. Pelletier, Truett-McConnell University, Cleveland, Georgia

***Reading Romans in Context: Paul and Second Temple Judaism.* Edited by Ben C. Blackwell, John K. Goodrich, and Jason Maston. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015. 192 pages. Paperback, \$19.99.**

Ben Blackwell and Jason Maston both serve as assistant professors of Christianity at Houston Baptist University, while Maston adds the title of chair of the department of theology. John Goodrich is assistant professor of Bible at Moody Bible Institute. All three received doctoral degrees at Durham University, and they have collaborated on several projects that involve locating the Pauline writings in their wider socio-cultural setting. This book, *Reading Romans in Context: Paul and Second Temple Judaism*, accomplishes a similar task in a very accessible manner. Noting in the preface that this volume arose from their shared time as doctoral students, the editors assembled a team of nineteen emerging New Testament scholars to author short essays that span the length of Paul's epistle to the Romans. Each of their contributions are both well-written and evidence solid critical scholarship, as all of the authors have advanced academic degrees and have published elsewhere in the area of New Testament studies.

Broadly speaking, a great deal of New Testament scholarship has seen substantial connections between Paul's writings and the Old Testament (e.g., E. P. Sanders, N. T. Wright). In fact, much ink has been spilled concerning Paul's Jewish background and its impact on his thinking. In some ways, this book extends from those interests, seeing Second Temple Judaism (516 BC–AD 70) as part of the historical and cultural link between the Jewish life and thought of the Old Testament and that of Paul's world.

After a brief introduction that explains the aims of the book and gives background for Paul's letter and a succinct overview of the Second Temple period and its literature, each of the twenty chapters has the same structure. A section of Romans is paired with a text (or, in one case, a set of inscriptions) from the Second Temple period of Judaism. For example, Romans 2:6–29 is placed in conversation with the book of *Jubilees* (chapter 3), and Romans 8:14–39 is compared to the *Greek Life of Adam and Eve* (chapter 12). The texts in focus include Old Testament deuterocanonical books (such as Tobit, Sirach, the Wisdom of Solomon, and 1 Maccabees), pseudepigraphical texts (such as the *Epistle of Enoch* and the *Psalms of Solomon*), and extrabiblical sources such as the Dead Sea Scrolls, Philo, and Josephus. With the textual comparison set up, each chapter then proceeds according to a

similar pattern. First, an overview of the Romans passage is given, followed by a discussion of the Second Temple literature under consideration. Finally, insights from that text are brought to bear on the Romans passage, offering commentary on the ways in which Paul's writings interact with this text and its context.

At the outset, the editors make it clear that the goal of this volume is to provide readers of Pauline literature a better understanding of the context of the apostle's works. This does not mean that only similarities matter, though some are observed. They state that, with regard to Second Temple literature, "students of Paul . . . must engage it with frequency, precision, and a willingness to acknowledge theological continuity and discontinuity" (21). Consequently, Paul's divergences from conventional Second Temple thought are as significant as cases where he follows such lines of thinking. Moreover, the connections between the Second Temple period and Paul's writings should not be viewed as an indication of a genetic relationship between the two, as though a certain Second Temple text directly influenced Paul's thought. This may be the case, but as the authors point out, these texts are representative of the Judaism of Paul's day. At best, the authors ask readers to see family resemblances between Second Temple writers and Paul, such as in Romans 11:1–36, where Paul might be arguing about Israel's salvation in a similar manner to Tobit. Not surprisingly, more advanced students of Paul's letters may wish for more detail and discussion, and perhaps even broader engagement between Romans and the Second Temple text in focus. However, these questions and concerns are beyond the scope of this book's attention, requiring more discussion than this brief volume or its intended audience could bear.

Overall, the majority of the essays offer helpful insights. Both the similarities and differences between Paul's thought and that of the Second Temple Period are sure to deepen readers' appreciation for the canonical epistle and its surrounding Jewish context. At the same time, several essays are perhaps less helpful by making comparisons that either seem forced or extraneous to the Romans passage. Similarly, the use of a one-to-one textual comparison (i.e., one Second Temple text and one passage from Romans), while helpful for the book's overall introductory aims, perhaps restricts the number and types of interactions that can be observed between Romans (and Paul's whole epistolary corpus) and the world of Second Temple Judaism. That is, some readers may wonder whether different insights would arise if the Romans-Second Temple pairings were changed.

This book could certainly benefit a university or seminary classroom since the authors bring exceptional scholarship to each contribution. However, as it is aimed at accessibility for a wider audience, the volume is most helpful in introducing laypeople and ministers to the broader Jewish context of Pauline literature in general and of Romans in particular. Along these lines, the book's suggested resources for additional study (critical editions of ancient texts, English translations, and secondary literature) amplify its usefulness without increasing its heft.

Reading Romans in Context, when considered in light of its intended audience, is a book that serves the church well, offering resources for a better reading of Scripture. As Francis Watson states in the book's preface, "Paul's texts will be diminished if we read them in a vacuum" (14). Indeed, this book helps readers grasp the setting of Pauline literature, and it can do this work even if only a few essays are read. Any pastor or early seminary student will find the book very stimulating and worthy of their attention.

- Derek C. Hatch, Howard Payne University, Brownwood, Texas

***Removing the Stain of Racism From the Southern Baptist Convention.* Edited by Jarvis J. Williams and Kevin M. Jones Sr. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2017. 179 pages. Paperback, \$17.00.**

Jarvis J. Williams serves as associate professor of New Testament Interpretation at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. In addition to serving on the faculty at Southern Seminary, he is the book review editor for *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology*. Williams has authored numerous academic and theological works, such as *For Whom Did Christ Die? The Extent of the Atonement in Paul's Theology* (Wipf & Stock, 2012) and *Christ Died for Our Sins: Representation and Substitution in Romans and Their Jewish Martyrological Background* (Pickwick, 2015). Kevin M. Jones Sr. serves as assistant professor of teacher education at Boyce College, also in Louisville, Kentucky. Before assuming his position at Boyce College, Jones worked in the Kentucky public school system. He is both an academician and a practitioner, having served in numerous ministerial roles.

Since its inception, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has carried with it a history laced with racism. One need only thumb through history books in order to find multiple instances in which race has been a topic at numerous denominational meetings. In addressing the topic of racism within the SBC, Williams and Jones begin by looking within the convention and letting history speak for itself. During the years 1845–2007, the authors list twenty-one different resolutions that have been offered at annual convention meetings regarding the topics of race and people of color. Their decision to include these resolutions strengthens the notion that race has always been a topic of conversation within the SBC.

Jarvis and Williams depend predominantly on African-American contributors in the work, yet they also use three Anglo writers, R. Albert Mohler Jr., Matthew J. Hall, and Danny Akin. Chapters one and two, written by Mohler and Hall, describe the biblical and historical causes of racism within the SBC. While Mohler focuses on the conventions birth and the reality of sin at its root from a biblical standpoint, Hall devotes his time to drawing attention to the historical figures involved in the rise of the convention at its inauguration and early years. While these two contributors are deeply entrenched within the SBC and the flagship

academic institution, they do not shy away from the sin that is found at its beginning. Being able to point out the sin of racism within the birth of the SBC is a necessary step in order to remove the stain.

Chapters three and four offer biblical and theological steps toward removing the stain of racism from the SBC. Jarvis J. Williams and Walter R. Strickland II provide helpful insights from unique viewpoints as two leading African-Americans within both the SBC and Southern Baptist seminaries. These perspectives are vital to the content and subject of the work. The gospel is at the heart of these two chapters. Racism, at its root, is a gospel issue. With this being the case, Williams and Strickland appeal to the church to stand on the front lines of addressing the issue at its core.

Chapters five and six consider ministerial roles in removing the stain of racism with contributions by Craig Mitchell and Kevin L. Smith. Mitchell considers the role of ethics in combatting racism within the convention and highlights three individuals who have provided leadership regarding Christian ethics: Thomas Buford, Richard Land, and Foy Valentine. The issues of racism are an issue of Christian ethics, and Mitchell provides practical steps in maintaining a healthy Christian ethic within the SBC. Smith focuses his attention on the role of the pastor and the preaching ministry of the pastor. As the first African-American president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention as well as a long-time practitioner, Smith brings a vast array of expertise in his appeal to the importance of the pastor in overcoming the stain of racism. Not only must it begin with the pulpit, but also the pastor must exemplify racial harmony in the relationships that he shares with those of other ethnicities.

Chapters seven, eight, and nine address the SBC on a higher level, and the steps of restoration that the convention can take from a convention leadership platform. Mark A. Croston Sr. remarks that more diversity must be seen from an administrative position to continually move forward in removing the stain of racism. Kevin M. Jones Sr. appeals to the seminary institutions in being more diverse in their hiring of individuals of various ethnicities. He contends for being proactive in teaching the African-American culture both in Baptist history and the overall history of Christianity in the classroom. For Toby Jennings, the stain can be proactively removed through publishing. Jennings advocates for more diversity in the books and material that are being put in front of SBC readers. From his standpoint, one practical step in reconciliation is seeking to be more diverse in the selection of authors for material that will be put before congregations.

Curtis A. Woods closes the primary content of the book by asking the question, "Are we there yet?" He concludes that the SBC has not removed the stain of racism yet, but the hope of the SBC rests in the gospel of Jesus Christ and through this hope, it is an ever-present reality. In addition to the concluding chapter, the book contains two epilogues and a post-script of helpful content that brings the work to a close. Another helpful portion

of the book involves the two appendices. The first lists books for further reading that will assist the reader in further developing their ideas about racial diversity that may assist in removing the stain. The second is a sample syllabus for those who might teach an African-American history course. These two appendices are a nice touch to conclude a powerful book on a powerful topic.

The conversation in the work under review is one that is necessary and ongoing. Racism has been a foundational reality within the SBC, and sadly still exists to some degree. The greatest strength of the book lies with the majority of African-American contributors and the expertise they bring to the conversation. The thoughts and ideas they provide offer an element to the work that can prove helpful in removing the stain. From a personal standpoint, in a predominantly-Anglo convention of predominantly-Anglo churches, giving further practical advice on how to lead one's Anglo congregation through this conversation and seeking to be more diverse is of great value. The work may have been strengthened further by offering more practical advice on how to address this topic more fully in SBC congregations. Regardless, this work is timely and necessary for the SBC to moving forward in seeking to remove the stain of racism.

- Andy Baker, *First Baptist Church Oloh, Sumrall, Mississippi*

***Salvation by Allegiance Alone: Rethinking Faith, Works, and the Gospel of Jesus the King.* By Matthew W. Bates. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017. 234 + xvi pages. Paperback, \$24.99.**

Matthew W. Bates received his PhD in Theology from the University of Notre Dame in 2010. He is currently assistant professor of theology at Quincy University in Quincy, Illinois. Bates specializes in the study of early Christianity—in particular, the early church's views regarding the Old Testament, Jesus, and the Trinity. Bates is a Protestant but is equally comfortable in Catholic circles (6). He hopes his book will help heal the rift between Catholics and Protestants (6, 9).

The basic thesis of *Allegiance Alone* is threefold. First, the gospel is the story of how Jesus became the king (47). Second, a person is saved by giving allegiance to Jesus the king (213). "Allegiance" here has three essential components: affirmation of the gospel, profession of fealty, and actual obedience (92). Third, salvation is embodied resurrection and transformation into the image of Jesus the king (165).

The introduction and chapter 1 prepare the reader to receive the second part of the thesis by showing that the English word *faith* is inadequate for describing the means of salvation. Chapters 2 and 3 advance the first part of the thesis by outlining the gospel

according to Paul and Jesus. Chapters 4 and 5 advance the second part of the thesis by discussing the arguments for and against translating *pistis* as “allegiance.” Chapters 6 and 7 advance the third part of the thesis by examining Revelation 22 and the idea of holy idolatry. The question of how a person is justified is addressed in Chapter 8. Chapter 9 provides a summary of the thesis and several points of application.

Bates makes a number of important contributions to the study of NT soteriology in his book. His overview of the gospel is quite helpful and is, for the most part, biblically sound. (He discusses Witherington’s “V” pattern as well as eight key events in the story of Jesus.) Bates is right to point out the ambiguity present in the English word “faith” and his proposed translation of *pistis* as “allegiance” has some potential. (Consider, for example, the stories at the beginning and end of Luke 7.) He is right to consider the role of works in the final judgment (see Matt 12:36–37, 16:27; Rom 2:5–16; 2 Cor 5:10). In general, his depiction of final salvation is also helpful and biblical. Though Bates is a Protestant, he is respectful of Catholic theology and makes great strides toward reconciling these two branches of the church. At the highest level, then, Bates has accomplished what he set out to do: he has introduced to the church an important and insightful corrective to the popular idea that “if you have faith then you will go to heaven when you die.”

With that said, the thesis of *Allegiance Alone* has some serious problems (two of which will be discussed in this review). First, Bates caricatures the gospel. He overemphasizes the kingship of Jesus and underemphasizes Christ’s death and resurrection. He also insists that the gospel is *strictly* about Jesus (how Jesus became king) and is *not* about us or our salvation. The gospel, for Bates, simply serves to inform people that Jesus is now the king and to provide some back-story about how Jesus came to be the king—nothing more, nothing less. Gospel presentations must *not* include discussions about us, our fallen condition, what Christ did for us, the hope that we have in Christ, how we can become a part of Christ, or any other teachings about *our* salvation. Those who hear the gospel will have to learn about salvation—and why the gospel is *good news* for them—some other way.

Since Jesus is the “king,” Bates assumes that Jesus must relate to his people as a master to his labor-bound subordinates. (The front cover depicts Emperor Leo VI groveling at the feet of a comfortably enthroned Jesus.) The problem is, the *biblical* model of kingship is a far cry from the picture painted in *Allegiance Alone*. Bates creates too sharp a distinction between the king and the people; he does not sufficiently account for the intimate connection between Christ and Christians—between the experiences of Christ and the experiences of Christians. He misses the *purpose* behind Christ’s experiences of death, resurrection, and enthronement, the *logic* behind the call to live out the gospel, and the reason why the gospel is truly “good news” to fallen man. When presenting the gospel, the church would do well to stick with the traditional emphasis on Christ’s death and resurrection (which is shorthand for the entire Christ narrative) and should continue to stress the personal import of Christ’s story.

Second, Bates attempts to correct the “faith alone” gospel by rolling works into *pistis*. He stresses throughout the book that actual obedience is an essential component of *pistis*—at least in passages about salvation—except where Abraham is in view. Thus, a person is saved by gospel-affirming, vocal, *obedience* alone. Before the reader cries “Heresy!” some clarification is called for. When Bates says *salvation* he almost always means *final* salvation. Bates acknowledges that personal salvation begins with a mere *declaration* of allegiance (127, 189), he gives the glory to God for the good works Christians perform as they walk by the Spirit (120), and he recognizes that no one can earn salvation (102) or live up to God’s standard of moral perfection (122); he simply wants to account for the biblical data regarding the rest of the post-baptismal salvation process (e.g., Heb 12:14). The problem is that *pistis* cannot bear the lexical weight Bates places upon the word; redefining the term to include works—even *works of faith*—makes nonsense of some of the most important soteriological statements about *pistis* in the NT (e.g., Jas 2:14–26; Heb 10:35–11:2; Gal 3:6–9; Rom 3:27–5:2). The exegetical evidence Bates brings forth in support of his redefinition is poorly researched and largely unconvincing (4–5, 79–80).

With that said, Bates does seem to be pulling the Protestant pendulum in the right direction. Even if *pistis* cannot be defined as allegiance, perhaps the meaning of *pistis* does lean *closer* to allegiance than to faith in *some* passages. More work is required here. For example, perhaps research into suzerain-vassal and/or patron-client relations can shed further light on the meaning of *pistis* in relational passages.

Allegiance Alone is a must-read for theologians who work in the area of NT soteriology. However, the writing is peppered with outrageous statements, caricatures, logical leaps, confusing language, theological imprecisions, and deficient scholarship, making the book unsuitable for a general audience. Seminary professors will find *Allegiance Alone* to be the perfect catalyst for generating lively classroom debate. The book could be used as an additional reading in courses on soteriology, Pauline theology, or evangelism. The end-of-chapter questions are outstanding and (if assigned) will cause students to think deeply about “faith, works, and the gospel of Jesus the king.”

- Anthony Daw, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana

***Theology and the Mirror of Scripture: A Mere Evangelical Account.* By Kevin J. Vanhoozer and Daniel Treier. Studies in Christian Doctrine and Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015. 301 pages. Paperback, \$26.00.**

Kevin J. Vanhoozer and Daniel J. Treier are professors of theology. Vanhoozer is research professor of systematic theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. Beyond theology, Vanhoozer's interests include contemporary philosophical hermeneutics and ecumenism. Among his books are *The Drama of Doctrine* (Westminster John Knox, 2005) and *Remythologizing Theology* (Cambridge University Press, 2012). Treier is Blanchard Professor of Theology at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois. Having an eclectic church background, Treier is interested in cultural engagement. His books include *Proverbs and Ecclesiastes* (Brazos, 2011), and *Virtue and the Voice of God* (Eerdmans, 2006).

The authors seek to present a case in favor of evangelical theology led by the analogy that this enterprise should mirror Scripture. The writers also seek to present evangelical theology as the pursuit of wisdom via the insights of theological interpretation of scripture (hereafter, TIS). The work is divided into two sections. The first part, "The Agenda," describes the material and formal principles of evangelical theology; the second part, "The Analysis," focuses on its practice. In the introduction, the authors tell of the state of the enterprise and attempt to make sense of some recent developments in the field.

In chapter 1, the discussion centers on the reality behind the mirror of Scripture, that is, God. Here the authors describe the gospel and the God of the gospel. In chapter 2, the writers treat the authority of Scripture. In chapter 3, they encourage the theological enterprise to be a search for wisdom. In chapter 4, the writers propose the need of theological exegesis based on TIS and respond to concerns about TIS. They affirm, "TIS fosters wisdom by attending not only to the Bible's conceptual content but also to its redemptive-historical form" (158). In chapter 5, Vanhoozer and Treier propose to read Scripture with the saints, "spanning all the times and places where there has been a local church" (52). In chapter 6, they propose that evangelical theology should be done in pursuit of scholarly excellence with application in mind by the church. The work concludes with thoughts on the church as a city of light and endorsing its ministry for the sake of the gospel of Christ.

Many features are commendable in this work. First, the authors provide a helpful outline of what it means to be an evangelical (47). This is highly desirable. Defining evangelicalism is a difficult task, as seen in the current literature on the subject.

The work's overall intent is to draw evangelicals to dialogue. The authors believe evangelicals might discuss certain topics, but they do so quickly and retreat to their trenches. In contrast, the writers desire that dialogue among evangelicals would be elongated; if so, the unity of the church of God would be strengthened. The authors also encourage a firm stance on orthodoxy and excellence in scholarship for the benefit of the church.

Some other commendable points include how the authors define evangelical theology in terms of faithfulness to Scripture. Faithfulness to Scripture ought to be a tenet of the enterprise. As TIS exponents, the authors stress the necessity of preserving the theological tradition traced back to the Reformation and before that time to early church creeds. The endorsement of tradition is helpful for the writers' case in favor of ecumenical conversation. The ideas favoring ecumenism are mostly positive, as the authors have a missional aim. The authors are wise in not disapproving others' theology, but in seeking to engage and win others for the gospel of Christ (194). This shows the authors' humility in accepting how no theologians of any denomination have all the answers. Despite these commendable features, the ecumenical agenda in the work might lead to adverse reactions from Southern Baptists, who are known for a staunch stance against ecumenism. As the writers say, "Evangelicals have an ecumenical bent toward unity" (46); they exclude the majority of Southern Baptists, who in recent years have declared to be against such an "ecumenical bent toward unity" (194).

Regardless of one's level of agreement with the authors' stance on interpreting Scripture and doing theology with the saints, their ecumenical agenda is not pluralistic. They call for the unity of evangelicals who believe that God has given grace to the world in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ and say that those who believe in this Christ are saved. The authors understand that what does not divide should make us more catholic (207–20). Nonetheless, Vanhoozer and Treier understand that division is sometimes unavoidable. Indeed, division hurts the universal church, but they are unwilling to embrace many controversial issues in theology and ethics. For example, they oppose a loose sexual ethic, for the "promotion of immorality contradicts Christ's lordship, affecting the integrity of the gospel witness" (213).

Because Jesus is the "divine self-revelation," he provides "Scripture as his ongoing form of self-testimony" (189). In this sense, the authors encourage both the study of the word of God and vitality for those involved in the theological enterprise. Theology is about a living God who reveals himself to people. In order to understand this revelation and stay within the parameters of evangelicalism, the authors encourage believers to seek wisdom in the performance of theology. In fact, the writers present a model of theology as wisdom by means of theological exegesis (192). This is a driving effort for the theological quest in this work. The argument is convincing since "wisdom has the cognitive component of judgment aspiring to correspond with truth, while the understanding and communication of judgments have their meaning affected by contexts of practice" (225). Countless readers will probably appreciate this discourse on aiming at wisdom for their engagement with Scripture.

However, the authors' stance against the theological enterprise from strict biblicist terms might be problematic for some readers. The writers claim that if theology's "forms focus only on similarity to the Bible, approaching exact sameness, then theology is actually

at much greater risk of supplanting Scripture” (229). Vanhoozer and Treier encourage a refined theological enterprise, which sees Scripture as “evangelically sufficient but not epistemologically exhaustive. Scripture is accordingly the final arbiter but not the only source to which dogmatics may appeal . . .” (239). The typical, conservative church member might have a different view of authority than the authors, finding problematic the idea that theology’s aim is not to approach sameness with the Bible. Nevertheless, this might be the result of lack of training and understanding theology’s aims.

In the last pages of the work, the authors claim that they have answered three important questions: “Is there an evangelical doctrine of God?”; “Is there an evangelical theological method?”; and “Is there an evangelical doctrine of the church?” (259). Their responses are satisfying, for they provide convincing facts.

Again, the book’s intent is sincere. Because it contains many commendable charges to theologians and the church, one can understand the increasing interest in TIS and its many benefits. The authors claim that humility in being a theologian and that the study of theology at a high level can help the church. The church, the church, and again the church ought to be the focus of theology.

This work is challenging material, but it is accessible to readers of various levels. The authors seek to produce paradigm shifts in the minds of evangelical theologians and other readers. When treating such a complex subject as how evangelical theology ought to be pursued, certain topics will remain unclear for readers with little formal theological training. However, readers who are proactive and engage in research can overcome any hindrances to understanding the authors in places in which the nature of the subject does not allow for the most clarity. For those interested in TIS, this work should be part of their personal library. The material is a ground-breaking proposal to approach the theological enterprise with a *good heart*. This might not be innovative to some lay readers who are exposed to filtered materials (by their church culture) from orthodox publishers and writers. Nonetheless, the theological world is not saturated with contributors that seek excellence and also believe that the word of God is living and powerful to transform hearts. This reviewer is glad that shifts in theological method are taking place as a result of works as this, both for the benefit of seminaries and the academic world, as well as the church of God.

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***The Transmission of Sin: Augustine and the Pre-Augustinian Sources.* By Pier Franco Beatrice. Translated by Adam Kamesar. AAR Religions in Translation. Edited by Anne Monius. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. 320 pages. Hardcover, \$82.00.**

The Transmission of Sin is a 2013 update and English translation of a PhD dissertation originally written in 1978 in Italian by Pier Franco Beatrice, a professor of classics and religious studies at the University of Padua in Italy. Adam Kamesar, professor of Judaeo-Hellenistic Literature at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio, translated the work into English. Beatrice attempts in the study to identify the sources behind Augustine's later view of the transmission of sin, specifically that all humans are born sinful and under condemnation due to their being in Adam as well as because of concupiscence due to physical conception and a defect in human sperm.

Following an introduction, which locates this research among historical studies of the previous century on Augustine's view of original sin, Beatrice organizes his work into fourteen chapters and a conclusion. The first four chapters, which comprise part one, establish Augustine's doctrine of original sin. The next five chapters, part two, provide the rationale for Augustine's view by documenting his citations of biblical texts and church fathers and the ways he appealed to them for support. The five chapters in part three provide evidence among pre-Augustinian writings of arguments and biblical interpretations consistent with Augustine's later views, including two early texts which might have been sources for his later explanation of the transmission of sin.

Beatrice interacts with an impressive number of primary and secondary sources concerning the doctrine of original sin. The majority of the secondary scholarship was published in German, French, Italian, and other modern languages other than English. Examples include his interaction with writings by Freundorfer, Gaudel, Gross, Jugie, Liébaert, Refoulé, Rondet, Testa, Tixeront, and Turmel. He also interacts with the few major studies in English on the subject, such as those written by N. P. Williams and Gerald Bonner. The benefit for readers in the United States is that most of the scholars who hold a PhD in theological or historical studies are monolingual. Although many of them studied one or more modern languages during the course of their doctoral studies, anecdotal evidence suggests the majority of evangelical scholars in the US fail to either gain or maintain the proficiency in these languages that would be required to interact meaningfully with such material. For that reason, Beatrice's research opens up academic insights that have remained hidden from most evangelical scholars in the US, thus have been inaccessible to their readers.

In addition to the interaction with secondary sources, Beatrice's study benefits from citations from patristic sources from the Greek or Latin. Only some of the citations include direct quotations, but the locations in the best critical texts are provided for readers to check. Only some of the patristic quotations are provided in English, and at least one of

those texts has never before been translated and published in English—such as *Fragments in Matthew* by Athanasius (a lengthy quotation is provided in English on pp. 197–98).

Not surprisingly, Beatrice's scholarship betrays a thorough knowledge of Augustinian scholarship on the doctrine of original sin.¹ In addition to familiarity with the relevant primary and secondary sources, his work proceeds with an irenic and dispassionate tone.

One strength of the study was its careful presentation of the history of the Pelagian disputes, such as those between Caelestius and Paulinus of Milan as well as Augustine's arguments with Pelagius and Julian of Eclanum. Beatrice provides the theological and historical precision necessary to trace out the arguments. He rightly notes, for example, that the Pelagians' primary objection concerned not the *sinfulness* of humanity but the *transmission* of sin (36). Also, Beatrice explores the connections between the doctrine of original sin and views of the origin of the soul (ch. 3) as well as the practice of infant baptism in the early church (ch. 4).

Beatrice documents in Augustine's writings the evolution of his views on the sexual relations of the first couple in the garden, the nature of the first couple's bodies, the nature of sexual relations, and the spiritual condition of infants (ch. 3). Later in the book, Beatrice points his readers to apparent similarities between Augustine's views and third-century Encratism (a Jewish Christian ascetic sect). Beatrice's thesis stands if two documents he cites, Clement of Alexandria's *Stromateis* Book 3 and a pseudo-Cyprianic sermon titled *De centesima, sexagesima, tricesima*, are consistent with Augustine's later view of the transmission of sin (chs. 11–13). Beatrice's thesis is plausible.

Augustine's dependence on a misinterpretation of a Latin translation of Rom 5:12 to argue for seminal presence in Adam is well-known. What is not widely noted but documented in detail by Beatrice is the other key biblical texts used to support the late-Augustinian view of the transmission of sin and of humans as born under God's condemnation. Beatrice details key biblical texts, such as Job 14:4, Ps 51:5, and Eph 2:3, as well as their interpretation by various early church leaders. Particularly intriguing is that the key line from Job 14:4 ("Who shall be pure of filth? No one, not even if his life on earth is one day!"), which is included among the earliest explanations of the transmission of sin as well as by Augustine, appears only in the Greek translation of the text but not in the Hebrew. Beatrice's conclusion regarding Augustine's version of original sin as inherited guilt is both clear and controversial: "Scripture may be excluded as the source of Augustine's thinking, since it

¹Allan Fitzgerald concluded his review of the book with a different judgment. "When first published, this book stimulated the conversation about the transmission of original sin in a good way. But it would have been very helpful to see how the conversation about the transmission of original sin and infant baptism has developed in the thirty-five intervening years—a task to which this book has unfortunately not contributed." Allan Fitzgerald, (Review of) "*The Transmission of Sin: Augustine and the Pre-Augustinian Sources*," *Catholic Historical Review* 100.1 (Winter 2014): 106.

has been ascertained in actual fact that Augustine attempted to read his own doctrine into the biblical text” (127).

Beatrice presents a compelling case that Augustine argued for a view of the transmission of sin that differed from his mentors, Ambrose and Cyprian, and was opposed by the entire eastern church as well as many in the western church (chs. 7–10 and conclusion). If Beatrice is correct that the similarities between the views of the encratite Julius Cassian and Augustine on hereditary guilt, physical conception as the vehicle for transmitting sin, and the use of Job 14:4 LXX and Ps 51:5 for biblical justification, then he might be correct that encratite views were a historical root of Augustine’s later doctrine of hereditary sin (192–94).

Beatrice’s book makes a significant contribution to the study of original sin. Any serious student of Augustine or the doctrines of humanity or sin should consult this work.

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***Visual Theology: Seeing and Understanding the Truth about God.* By Tim Challies and Josh Byers. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016. 160 pages. Paperback, \$17.99.**

Tim Challies is pastor of Grace Fellowship Church in Toronto, Ontario. He is also an author, speaker, blogger, co-founder of Cruciform Press, and editor of the Christian book review site Discerning Reader.¹ He has authored five books, including *The Discipline of Spiritual Discernment* (Crossway, 2007) and *Sexual Detox* (Cruciform, 2010). Josh Byers is communications pastor at Willow Creek Baptist Church in West Des Moines, Iowa. He previously owned a creative firm and has experience in communications, design, and the visual arts. His work has been utilized on a range of platforms from The Gospel Coalition to the Tonight Show.²

As the title suggests, *Visual Theology* is a work of theology with visual aids known as infographics, which the authors describe as a “tool for your eyes and brain to perceive what lies beyond their natural reach” (15). The goal was for the words and pictures to mutually illuminate one another to present a fresh approach to the task of theological education. At the same time, the authors did not intend simply to engage the reader’s cognitive processes but to exhort their audience to grow in godliness (12). The authors addressed

¹Challies has a large online presence and following. His website and blog is available here: <https://www.challies.com/>. The book review site is here: <http://discerningreader.com/>. The publishing company is here: <https://cruciformpress.com/>.

²For biographical information, see <https://visualtheology.church/pages/about-us>, <http://www.joshbyers.com/about/>, and <http://www.creekchurch.com/about-us/#about-us/our-team>.

topics commonly found in a work of systematic theology, but they designed the work as a whole around four spiritual disciplines: grow close to Christ, understand the work of Christ, become like Christ, and live for Christ.

Each of the four sections was sub-divided into two or three chapters, with topics moving from belief to practice. In the first section, growing close to Christ, the authors treated the topics of gospel, identity, and relationships. Chapter one explains the gospel and how that message is proclaimed through preaching, evangelism, worship, and the ordinances of baptism and communion. The authors designed the second chapter to illustrate the new identity one receives by being in Christ, justified, adopted, secure, free, and yet unfinished. The third chapter describes how one maintains and deepens their relationship with God through prayer and reading the Bible. For those disciplines, the authors attempt to explain the nature of each discipline (what it is) as well as how it is effective in one's life (what it does).

In section two, the authors express the work of Christ through the two categories of drama and doctrine. Chapter four portrays the biblical story as a drama unfolding through the four acts of creation, fall, redemption, and new creation. Chapter five offers six reasons why doctrine is important for Christian growth. The third section outlines how one becomes like Christ by the dual procedures of putting off old, sinful habits and putting on new, godly ones. The two chapters in the third section illustrate how one stops sinning and starts acting like Christ.

The fourth and final section treat a seemingly random selection of practical topics on vocations, relationships, and stewardship. In the chapter on vocations, the authors argue that all vocations should achieve the same result, namely "to do good to others and bring glory to God" (122). In chapter nine, the authors summarize how the Bible is a book about relationships. They argue that God "created patterns of leading and following" that everyone exemplifies at one time or another, including governments and citizens, bosses and employees, pastors and congregations, husbands and wives, parents and children, and friends. The final chapter of the book is devoted to stewardship and how Christians are called to honor God with their money and possessions, their bodies, their sexuality, the environment, and the gospel. There is no concluding chapter to the work as a whole.

In some ways, *Visual Theology* was exactly what I expected but in other ways it was something quite different. In terms of the content of the book, anyone familiar with Challies's work would not be surprised to find the theology presented to be thoroughly reformed. Even in this short introduction to theology and Christian living, issues of predestination (30) and covenant theology (ch. 4) still manage to emerge from the pages. At the same time, the book is well written; the writing is clear and concise, and the material is well-organized and formatted. Challies's remark at the beginning of the book that if he could not communicate something simply then he probably did not understand it serves as a fitting

representation for the book (18). Each section is introduced with some sort of illustration or practical application, which grounds the discussions of faith and practice in everyday life. Each of the chapters is divided into a handful of short points or expressions which are summarized in the infographics so that the information would be easy to remember or locate for quick reference.

The visual aspect was not quite what I was expecting and I was somewhat disappointed with the graphics. That is not to say that the artwork is visually unattractive; many of graphics are aesthetically pleasing and easy to comprehend. However, the infographics are more of a visual way of summarizing material rather than a different lens by which to view the material. The art does not lead one to think about the theological subjects in a new way or in “ways words cannot express” (15). The graphics often just summarize the text with a slightly different visual format. In fact, I found many of the graphics on the website that were not included in the book to be more fruitful interpretive pieces.³ The balance between text and graphics, which heavily favored the former, was not quite what I was anticipating either.

Regarding the theological content, Challies’s lack of formal training surfaced on several occasions. In the section on stewardship, Challies mistakenly applied 1 Cor. 6:19–20 to the individual physical body rather than the plural metaphor for the church that Paul intended (146, 150). He referred to Christian scribes copying books into scrolls rather than codices, which was distinctive of Christians in the first few centuries after Christ (152). He inflated the number of manuscripts available to reconstruct the “original” text of the New Testament to tens of thousands (152). He referred to the “traditional” worship service as following a pattern of confession of sin, pardon, and thanksgiving, which ignores large segments of the Church’s history. In places, he was prone to go beyond the texts on which he was commenting. He referred to the religious authorities in John 9:13–34 as hating Jesus and being “driven mad with envy,” while the text is silent on the motivation for their anger (18). Most of these issues are minor and do not detract greatly from the value of the book. However, the description of the Old Testament as “a long and grueling journey through the depravity of man as God’s people turn away from him again and again, all the while finding new and creative ways to express their disgust toward him” is less than flattering (73).

The authors did not include a target audience in their introduction and pinpointing a particular demographic is difficult to do. People who are committed to a reformed outlook but have not grappled with introductory theological issues would seem to be the greatest beneficiaries of the work. The book is a short, easy-to-read, and visually-appealing introduction to Christian belief and practice from a particular theological position.

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³Those graphics can be found here: <https://www.challies.com/resources/visual-theology>

***The Voice of God in the Text of Scripture*. Edited by Oliver D. Crisp and Fred Sanders. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016. 208 pages. Paperback, \$29.99.**

Oliver Crisp and Fred Sanders edited the proceedings of the 2016 Los Angeles Theology Conference. The two also initiated the Los Angeles Theological Conferences. Oliver Crisp is a British theologian currently serving as professor of systematic theology at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California. Fred Sanders is professor of theology in the Torrey Honors Institute at Biola University in LaMirada, California. Both editors are well-published in systematic theology.

The fourth Los Angeles Theology Conference focused on the doctrine of Scripture in light of the written text and the voice of God as necessary factors in the doctrine. The conference and the subsequent volume combined the approaches of both theologians and biblical scholars to describe the doctrine of Scripture from their area of expertise in dialogue with other perspectives. *The Voice of God in the Text of Scripture* (hereafter, TVGTS) is organized into ten essays, each from a different contributor (in the case of one co-authored essay, two contributors).

The first two chapters, written by theologians, address large-scale methodological issues and overview the field. Daniel Treier proposes three fundamental aspects of the Bible's hermeneutical self-presentation. The first is a theological dynamic of "freedom and fixity" between the final authority of Scripture and the freedom of the Holy Spirit and liberty as a Christian (28). The second human response to Scripture in "remembrance and renewal" which can be seen in the use of Old Testament Scriptures in Hebrews (29). The third is the self-communication dynamic of the person of Jesus and the Holy Spirit who illuminate the reader to knowing Jesus. Therefore, Treier proposes that the evangelical should approach the text as the word of God heard today for the next steps of Christian life (40). Stephen Fowl applies the large methodology to the text of Hebrews as an example of how the reader must "hear the voice of God in the text of scripture" (49) as wise and discerning interpreters in the current contexts (57).

Chapters 3–10 each address a particular method or issue in approaching Scripture as God's word. John Goldingay advocates for a "theological historical reading" which develops the theology of the text (66–67). Therefore, his reading takes into account the historical message but also the work of the Holy Spirit in a Christian to interpret the text (69–77). Amy Plantinga Pauw begins with the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament as the example for hearing God's voice in the Scriptures as a Christian seeks the wisdom of God (78–93). Myk Habets proposes that Scripture should be approached as the spoken word of God in interaction with the Spirit speaking today. His model is based on the use of the Old Testament in Hebrews (95–111). Erin Hiem's essay proposes God as the maker of biblical metaphor. God discloses himself by the lens of the metaphors that "convey relational knowledge of God" (126). Jason McMartin and Timothy Pickavance develop a philosophical

approach to the tension of theological interpretation and historical criticism based on the philosophy of disagreement (127–44). William Abraham overviews the contemporary issues of postmodern thought and the approaches to Scripture. He also proposes that in light of the current culture, the field of biblical studies may need to be reworked to better serve theology (146–63). Daniel Lee notes the implications of Barth for reading the Bible as God's word connected to the living person of Jesus. He calls Christians to come to the text with presuppositions but also with a willingness to be changed by the word of God (164–80). Ryan Peterson uses Augustine's journey analogy as a basis for Scripture as the journey toward knowledge and love of God. The journey is understood in light of the relationship between God and humanity (181–96).

TVGTS accomplishes the goal of dialogue on the doctrine of Scripture among the current perspectives. Within the variety of perspectives, the majority call for continued acknowledgement of the historical impact upon the text but at the same time advocate for interaction with the living God in his word. Therefore, the tension between theological interpretation of scripture and the historical-grammatical approach is displayed in the work.

William Abraham's chapter on postmodern historiography provides the least-challenging chapter of the work. Abraham gives an overview of the current situation of postmodern thought in relation to the text of scripture but lacks bringing a solid proposal other than a new look at the role and function of biblical studies. The chapter has a place in the book, but it was not as challenging and helpful as the other chapters.

The value of TVGTS is found in the importance and relevance of the topic for Christian scholars and ministers. The task of hearing God in the text of Scripture is essential to the roles of pastor and theologian. The essays are readable for the scholar but could cause slight difficulty for a minister who is not familiar with some of the theological and philosophical terms. Even so, TVGTS is accessible to those seeking to enhance and refine their understanding of the doctrine of Scripture.

- Ben Hutchison, *New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana*

***What Christians Ought to Believe: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine Through The Apostles' Creed.* By Michael F. Bird. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016. 239 pages. Hardcover, \$24.99.**

Michael Bird was not a Christian while growing up in Brisbane, Australia. As a member of the Army, he served as a paratrooper, an intelligence operator, and a chaplain's assistant. While in the Army, he became a Christian and then felt the call to ministry. Bird is an Anglican priest and holds a PhD from the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia.

Bird presently serves as lecturer in Theology at Ridley College in Melbourne, Australia, and as visiting research professor at Houston Baptist University. His teaching areas include the Synoptic Gospels, Paul's letters, and systematic theology. In addition to his teaching areas, Bird is interested in research related to Christian origins.

Michael Bird is co-editor of the *New Covenant Commentary Series* (Cascade) and is an associate editor of *The Story of God Bible Commentary* (Zondervan). Bird's book, *Evangelical Theology: A Biblical and Systematic Introduction* (Zondervan, 2013), is "an attempt to develop a truly gospel-based theology."¹ He has edited and written more twenty books and is currently working with N. T. Wright as the co-author of an introduction to the New Testament.

In the preface, Bird reveals several reasons for writing *What Christians Ought to Believe*. The first purpose is that he wants to "present the case why Christians who are not by habit 'creedal' in their devotion and discipleship should change their attitude toward the creeds and make use of Christian creeds as part of their statement of belief, worship, preaching, and teaching" (13). The second purpose is to "set forth a summary of the basic elements of the Christian faith as outlined in the Apostles' Creed with a view to the theological formation of undergraduate students and keen Christian disciples" (14).

In the first two chapters, Bird presents his case for why non-creedal Christians should rethink their attitude and incorporate the creeds into their worship, teaching, and statements of belief. Because of the differences in interpreting the Bible among Christian groups, he does not believe that the claim of the Bible as the only creed is sufficient. He points out that the creeds are biblical because "the creeds are great summaries of biblical teaching," and they also carry on biblical traditions (36). Therefore, "a creedal faith is crucial for a biblical faith and vice versa!" (23). According to Bird, "The creeds propel us to open our Bibles and to read and reflect upon them in greater depth, so that we might know God better and be equipped to walk the path he has marked out for us" (42). Knowledge of the creeds also enables contemporary believers to understand and gain appreciation for the boundaries of faith that were established by the early church.

Both the establishment of the New Testament canon and the development and adoption of the creeds are associated with the church's response to the heretical and doctrinal controversies of the second century. As a result of this process, the creeds "conveniently sum up the main truths of the Christian faith and put them into a concise narrative that is meaningful and memorable" (37).

¹"Mike Bird |Lecturer in Theology | Ridley College," available at <https://www.ridley.edu.au/about-ridley/ridley-people/faculty/mike-bird/>. Addition information for the biographical sketch was obtained from "Michael Bird-Euangelion," available at <http://www.Pathos.com/blogs/euangleion/Michael-birds-cv/>.

The creeds are not only ancient statements of Christian faith. Instead, they can be used to invigorate the faith of contemporary believers. Bird believes that the use of creeds in worship is obvious. He also believes that creeds promote unity and fellowship among believers because they encourage Christians to hold “to the one holy, catholic, and apostolic faith which Christians of all ages have confessed” (39). Also, the creeds remind believers that they are included in “God’s plan to gather his people around himself and to bring all his children into his new creation” (40). The Christian’s devotional life should include the recitation of the creeds because “to say ‘I believe,’ is to speak from the heart, to reveal who one is by confessing one’s essential belief, the faith that makes life worth living” (40).

Although Bird makes a case for the use of ecumenical creeds, he is clear that the “focus in this volume will be the Apostles’ Creed” because of the “pure simplicity and . . . concise coverage of the major topics of Christian teaching” that is provided in the Apostles’ Creed (26). Therefore, in the remaining chapters (chapters 3–14), Bird addresses the second purpose of the book by devoting a chapter to each phrase of the creed. As Bird works through the creed phrase by phrase, he discusses the meaning of each phrase, provides biblical support for each phrase, and explains why the doctrine the phrase summarizes is essential for a contemporary faith that is consistent with the faith that was passed on by the apostles. Bird makes the case in each chapter why Christians should believe the doctrine summarized in the part of the creed being discussed. He also discusses why this belief is a necessary element of Christian discipleship. He concludes the book with a summary of the Christian faith modeled after the Apostles’ Creed, which he says “is the Christian story, the church’s story, the story we live by, the story which gets our ‘amen’” (220).

Bird includes several pages of charts at the end of the book to demonstrate the historical development of the Apostles’ Creed from its origin to its current form. A Scripture index, the longest of the three indices, is provided as well as an author index and a subject index.

Bird accomplishes his purposes for writing the book. He provides a sound argument why all Christians, regardless of their denominational affiliation, should embrace and use the creeds. He demonstrates that affirming the creeds does not diminish the importance of the Bible as the authority for Christian faith because the creeds provide a summary of the biblical teaching. His position that the creeds connect us to the early church should be embraced, especially by non-creedal groups such as Baptists who often sometimes speak as if the Christian faith began with Jesus then jumped to the period of the Reformation.

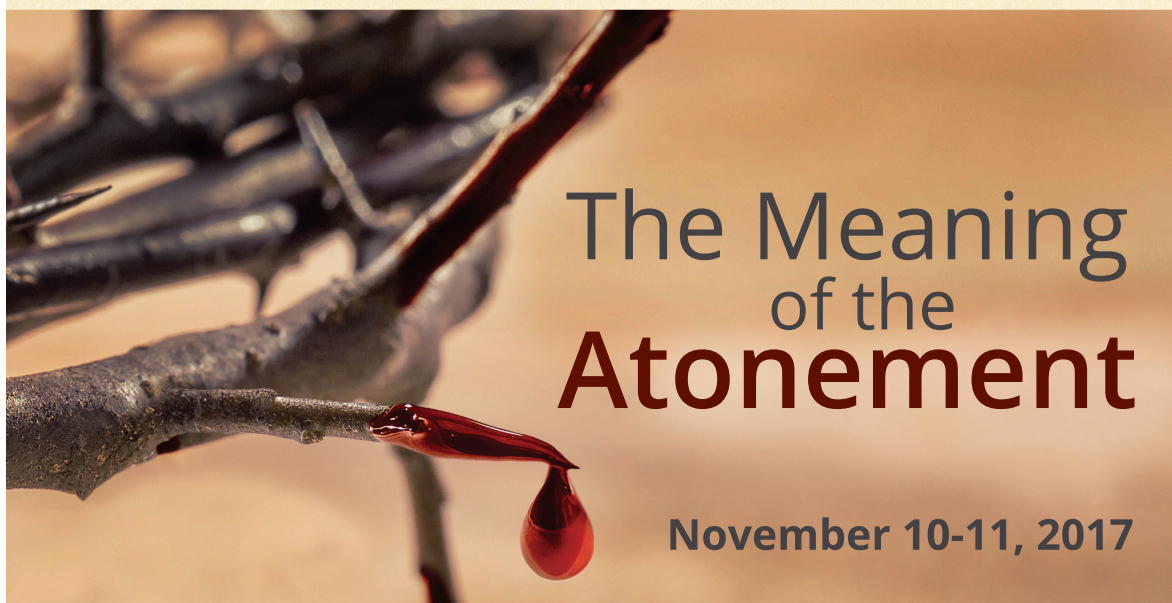
Bird covers the major topics of systematic theology, providing an adequate biblical basis for each point. In the process, he demonstrates that one can unite biblical studies and systematic theology. Although he is an Anglican priest, his theological method will be welcome by Baptists and other Evangelicals.

Christians should believe and live every part of the Apostles' Creed as explained in this book. Because its writing is straightforward and easy to comprehend, this book can serve as a resource for teaching new Christians, current church members, and undergraduates in Christian doctrines courses. Also, the book would any Christian who desires to read for personal growth and development.

- Gary E. Blackwell, *William Carey University-Tradition, Biloxi, Mississippi*

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