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## *BOOK REVIEWS*

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*Nelson D. Kloosterman*

*Anarchy and Christianity*, by Jacques Ellul. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991. Pp. 109. $9.95.

Jacques Ellul is professor emeritus of law and the sociology and history of institutions at the University of Bordeaux, France.

Some of his more than forty books are increasingly finding their way into the English language. In the previous edition of this journal, Ellul's book, *Jesus and Marx: From Gospel to Ideology*, was reviewed. Originally written in 1979, it was first translated by Joyce Hanks and published in 1988.

Ellul continues to write in his retirement. The volume under review further develops the theme of anarchy as it relates to Christianity and was already given a separate chapter in the earlier volume. The present volume, translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, is a refinement and elaboration of Ellul's earlier thesis about anarchy in relation to Christianity.

Briefly stated, the thesis is that although *an-arche*, which in the Greek means no authority, is commonly understood to mean disorder, Ellul uses it to mean no domination, true liberation and avers that this is a basic tenet of Christianity.

In the book's two chapters, he first sets forth "anarchy from a Christian standpoint," and in the next chapter seeks to show "the Bible

as the source of anarchy." Three appendices and two indices make up the book's contents.

Ellul does a good job in defining anarchy in his own terms. It is an absolute rejection of violence (11); it means a rejection of power (especially political) and a fight against it (13); and while in its ideal form it would mean no state, no organization, no hierarchy and no authorities, Ellul realistically recognizes that, so long as people are covetous and desirous of power and domination, its realization is not possible (19). This does not, however, mean that Christians should not, as much as possible, strive for the realization of the ideal.

For Ellul firmly believes that anarchy is the teaching of Scripture, both in the Old Testament (which he prefers to call the Hebrew Bible) and New Testament. God frees his people in redemption that they may freely live before him and serve him, without the oppression of human and demonic forces which impose their counter-divine wills upon people and keep them in bondage, unable thereby to be servants of the Lord.

Biblical insights and exegesis stimulate reflective thought, even if at times one cannot always accept them as a correct interpretation. Are all powers and kingdoms in this world demonic (69)? Is this truly the teaching of Jesus, Peter and Paul, despite Ellul's attempt to establish this conclusion? And was early Christianity, before its alleged corruption by Constantine who made it an ally of the state, "totally hostile to the state" (74)? To establish his thesis, Ellul at times comes up with bizarre conclusions. For example, because Roman emperors avoided calling themselves kings (remember, Caesar was assassinated because of allegedly attempting to restore the monarchy), the apostle Peter's request that prayer be made for the king (1 Pet. 2:13 ff.) is actually a subversive reference to the Parthian king (77)! A proposal such as this is at best fanciful.

Practical application of Ellul's thesis is also weak. On page sixty-two he suggests that Christians "create another society on another foundation." How to do so is not spelled out unless it be by acts of love and general benevolence. But, it should be remembered that Ellul's basic aim in this book is to set in motion a change in people's thinking (105). Perhaps practicalities will be spelled out in another book to follow?

Ellul's support of higher criticism (37, 54), universal salvation (making "proselytism" unnecessary, 4), a deficient ecclesiology (Jesus did not create an organized church, 10) and exegetical extremities at times detract from an otherwise worthwhile book.

Reading Ellul is stimulating even where one cannot always agree.

*Raymond O. Zorn*

*A Church En Route: 40 Years Reformed Churches of Australia*, edited by J.W. Deenick. Foreword by Donald Robinson. Geelong, Australia: Reformed Churches Publishing House, 1991. Pp. xii + 280, including bibliography and index. $15.00.

The history of the Christian church should always be a subject of special interest to believers. In the history of the church, the believer sees the church-gathering work of the ascended Lord and Head of the church, as he gathers his people in the unity of the true faith by his Spirit and Word. All believers who confess, "I believe a holy catholic church," should be anxious to learn how that church is being built in the world and among the nations until Christ comes again.

It was, therefore, with keen interest and delight, that I read this volume, *A Church En Route: 40 Years Reformed Churches Of Australia.* Written as a result of a decision of the 1985 Synod of the Reformed Churches of Australia (RCA), this history traces the development of the churches of the RCA from the time of their establishment and early struggles until the present day. The story told is a fascinating one, revealing both the human weaknesses of these churches and the surprising grace and faithfulness of the Lord in gathering and preserving his people.

There are several interesting features to this handsomely produced volume (marred only by a number of typographical errors which I hope will be corrected, should a second printing occur). Donald Robinson, Archbishop of Sydney, a segment of the Anglican Church of Australia, which has been characterized by its Reformed standpoint and sympathy for the Reformed Churches of Australia, warmly salutes the RCA on this milestone in its history. After an introduction by the general editor, Rev. J.W. Deenick, the book is divided into three sections: the first deals with the history of the RCA from the beginning to the present; the second deals with a selected number of issues and important chapters in the denomination's history; and the third deals with the missionary, ecumenical and future prospects of the denomination. As Deenick remarks in his introduction, many of these chapters have an autobiographical character, being written by members of the RCA who have been part of its history as participants and contributors. Though the various chapters exhibit careful research, they are written so as to have popular appeal. The book is also graced throughout with numerous photographs of key individuals, churches, schools, events and the like. Frequently, colorful stories from the church's history are told as separate stories within the various chapters. All of this enables the

story of the RCA to be told in an interesting manner, richly textured with the many sub-stories which contribute to the larger story of the denomination.

In the first part of the book, chapters are devoted to the background history of the Reformed churches in the Netherlands, the foundational years from 1951-1960, and the challenges to the Reformed churches in the new world of Australia. This section describes roots of the Reformed Churches of Australia in the Netherlands and the early emigrations from Holland in the 1950's. These Dutch Reformed immigrants immediately faced the difficult question of church affiliation. The immigrants who were from the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (Reformed Churches of the Netherlands) were disturbed by the liberalism of the major Presbyterian churches in Australia. And though contacts and fellowship were early established with two very small Presbyterian denominations (the Reformed Presbyterian Church and the Free Presbyterian Church), differences of culture, language and understanding of the "regulative principle" for worship (the Free Church forbade accompaniment of congregational singing and used the Psalms exclusively in the music of public worship) prevented the Dutch Reformed immigrants from joining any of these existing denominations. Therefore, the decision was made by many to establish Reformed churches on the basis of the Three Forms of Unity in Australia. From the beginning the RCA wanted to give a distinctively Reformed testimony in Australia.

(Incidentally, authors of this volume make several oblique references to the establishment of another small Dutch Reformed denomination in Australia. It is one tracing its roots to the split that occurred in the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands in 1944, leading to the formation of the "liberated" churches. These references raise questions that beg for further treatment. Since the RCA deliberately refused to add anything to the confessions, including the synodical decisions that provoked the split in the Netherlands, it is interesting that the "liberated" nonetheless formed a separate church in Australia. Not only does this volume neglect to treat this matter further, but it also does not treat the later decision of the synod to subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith, where it does not go "beyond" the Three Forms of Unity.)

The second part of this anniversary book addresses a number of different facets in the history and witness of the RCA. Keith V. Warren, for example, in a chapter entitled, "Singing the Songs of the Lord in a New Land," details the early problems the Dutch Reformed immigrants

had with the Free Reformed churches, which sang only the Psalms in public worship without musical accompaniment. Warren also describes various struggles in the churches regarding the use of English in worship, the administration of the Sacrament and different approaches to worship. The following chapters in this part address the work of the elders ("Tending the Flock"), the various women's ministries of the RCA ("Handmaidens of the Lord"), the development of a youth program ("Youth Under the Southern Cross"), the stewardship of the Lord's gifts to the church ("The Lord Provided"), and the provision of a seminary for the training of ministers ("The Reformed Theological College: *Doctrina Et Vita Ad Gloriam Dei*"). These chapters provide a colorful portrait of the growth and development of the RCA in its ministries and denominational institutions.

The third part of this history tends to be more reflective upon the matter of the testimony of the RCA in Australian society and culture and the involvement of the denomination in missionary and ecumenical activities. The first chapter in this section ("Reaching Beyond the Borders") notes how, from the beginning of the RCA, there was a keen interest in the support of missionaries, the primary field being in Indonesia. The following chapter discusses the difficult challenges faced by an immigrant church in reaching out effectively in evangelism within Australian society. Subsequent chapters describe the involvement of the RCA in the history of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, the establishment of a system of Christian schools under parental ownership and control, and the use of the printed page and publications to communicate the Reformed faith to an increasingly secular Australian society.

The concluding chapter of this history, "The Way Ahead," by the editor, J.W. Deenick, provides a fitting close to the history told throughout of the RCA. Deenick reiterates a number of themes that come through in the course of this volume. The story of the RCA is first of all a story of faithfulness: the faithfulness of God in preserving his people and church, and the faithfulness of those Reformed immigrants who were willing to sacrifice much to secure the establishing of a confessionally Reformed denomination in Australia. But it is also the story, repeated in many other parts of the so-called "new world," of the struggles of an immigrant church to become truly indigenous, Reformed in confession but alert to the new and specific challenges in Australia. It is one of the fine features of this study that it does not gloss over these struggles, nor does it betray a triumphalist spirit which is unwilling to acknowledge failures or problems. The reader knows at the conclusion of this book that the future of the RCA will be bright with

promise only if the Lord graciously preserves it and is pleased to use it to his glory in the days to come as he has in days past. He also knows that the RCA faces difficult challenges and issues familiar to Reformed believers in other parts of the world.

I cannot conclude my review of this volume without a personal note. One of the aspects of the history of the RCA with which I am personally acquainted was the service of a number of ministers of the Christian Reformed Church and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church of North America. The RCA was helped considerably by these ministers, especially in making the transition from a Dutch-speaking to an English-speaking culture. Reading of this contribution, I was vividly reminded again of my own experiences in the churches of New Zealand where my family lived for a number of years. The struggles and the joys of the RCA were shared by their sister denomination, the Reformed Churches of New Zealand, in those early years. The remembrance of these events struck a sympathetic chord with me as I read this history of the Reformed Churches of Australia.

Perhaps this is why I found the editor's concluding words in the last chapter so appropriate:

> [W]e hope that the record of God's blessings, as related in these pages, will be an encouragement and inspiration to younger and older people within our ranks, and possibly even to others. Again like Paul, we have undertaken to press on to take hold of the mark and the prize ahead. When he comes again, the Lord Jesus wants to find us doing just as he has instructed us (Matt. 24:46). For a church en route it is the only way into the future.

To the Reformed believer who is interested in the history of the Reformed churches, and in their testimony to the nations in our time, I would highly recommend this volume. It contains much encouragement and instruction for us all.

*Cornelis P. Venema*

*A Watered Garden: A brief history of the Protestant Reformed Churches in America*, by Gertrude Hoeksema. Grand Rapids: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 1992. Pp. iv + 405 + (12). $19.95.

A history of the Protestant Reformed Churches has been a definite need. After all, even though this group of churches is small in the eyes of the world, it holds a prominent place in the group of churches which

try to be faithfully and confessionally Reformed. Often shunted to the side as an insignificant body of churches, many Reformed people do not know their history. In spite of internal struggles and external disdain, the Protestant Reformed Churches have continued to grow steadily without compromise on the truth they have always proclaimed.

There have been only two other volumes which have chronicled this history. The first, *The Protestant Reformed Churches in America*, by the Rev. Herman Hoeksema, appeared after only a few years had gone by (eleven, according to the introduction to this present volume). The second, *God's Covenant Faithfulness*, was a volume edited by the writer of this volume, in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of the denomination (1975). The first covered the earliest years and the events leading up to 1924. The second gave an overview of the various congregations and their development in the emerging denomination, as well as information about the churches' views and theological position. Both are now out of print.

This new volume takes its title from the words of Isaiah 58:11, where God speaks of the abundance of his grace to his people, and how he boldly enriches his people by that grace. The idea of the title enriches the unfolding of the story of this denomination.

Mrs. Hoeksema completes, in this volume, a dream of her late husband, Professor Homer Hoeksema. By using many primary sources, she lays out for the reader the events which led up to the stormy years of the early 1920's. She connects the earlier development in the churches in the Netherlands and in the Christian Reformed Church with the events of 1924-1925, when the Revs. Herman Hoeksema, George Ophoff and Henry Danhof, and their consistories were deposed from office in the Christian Reformed Church by Classis East and Classis West Grand Rapids, in spite of the fact that the Synod of 1924 had affirmed that both Hoeksema and Danhof were Reformed! Although the word "depose" was not used in relation to Rev. Hoeksema and his consistory, that was the significance of the classis' decision. This fact is significant in the light of a recent article which appeared in *The Banner* (July 12, 1993) which "implied" that Hoeksema simply left the Christian Reformed Church. Others, in discussing this case history, have indicated the same thing.

Many pages are filled with the developments in the 1950's when a sad split took place because of the influence of "liberated" views (those of the followers of Dr. K. Schilder of the Netherlands) which came into the churches. A significant portion of the membership left in these terrible times and returned to the Christian Reformed Church.

Although this volume has been criticized by some for having spent too much space on this event, this reviewer does not agree. It, indeed, is a part of the history and it deserves to be explained and chronicled for future generations.

The events from the fifties until the present day, however, could have been covered more thoroughly. Another painful and terrible chapter of the history when some members and a minister left and became an independent Reformed congregation in Grand Rapids, is too sketchily covered. This is understandably so because the event was so dreadful that bitter memories still remain. Nevertheless, it is part of the history and *if* certain events are so thoroughly covered, all others should be too! After all, the denomination is not large.

The purpose of this book is, as I see it, to give a popular history of the families of the Protestant Reformed Churches and an introduction to those churches for those who are outside. It is not difficult to read and it contains appendices which give the reader some primary source material. For a reader who does not know anything about the Protestant Reformed Churches, or a reader who has been thoroughly immersed in the unfortunate and unjust prejudice which has persisted against them since 1924, this book will be a help.

Mechanically, while it is beautifully printed and bound (to the publisher's credit), and the illustrating by Jeff Steenholdt is delightful, the proof-reading leaves much to be desired. On two occasions the word "ass" appears for "as." "Fee" appears for "feel." "They" appears for "the." Now, while no man is perfect, most proof-reading catches the majority of mistakes in printing. There seems to be an abnormally high number in this publication. In the appendix, a picture of the October 1, 1973, issue of *The Standard Bearer* appears. But underneath is the caption, "Cover of October, 1974, *Standard Bearer.*" Enough said.

My greater concern is the content. When I received the book for review, a correction page came with it, indicating two errors had been found, one on page 106, the other on page 344. The printing had included glaring errors which had been properly corrected by this sheet. Well and good. But when I began reading, I was confronted by a statement which was incorrect: "In the pre-war years of 1912 to 1915, Herman Hoeksema, a Hollander who had immigrated in 1904, settled in the Chicago area. Later he moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan, and enrolled as a seminarian at Calvin . . ."(10). The fact is: Hoeksema was ordained in 1915, having *already* graduated from seminary. Then on page 17, I read that Hoeksema was editor of *The Banner* at the time of the Janssen controversy. The fact is, Dr. Henry Beets was the editor of

*The Banner*. Hoeksema was editor of *The Young Calvinist*, and he served on the staff of *The Witness*. The question arises in my mind: Are there more incorrect statements? If so, how accurate is this as a history?

One more curious comment hit me as I read: "Mr. Eerdmans then [in the 1940s, J.J.] published the English version [of Hoeksema's Dutch lessons for dogmatics, J.J.] written in popular style, with the title *Reformed Dogmatics*" (116). I would like to know what this publication was, and I would like to see it.

The 1953 division in Grand Rapids' First Church and Second Church is adequately dealt with, but the story of how Fourth Church in the same city became Southeast is more than veiled in this volume. While I know it happened because I served as minister for the part of the congregation that became Christian Reformed, I learned nothing here about that chapter in their history. Nor is the reader told what happened at the Creston congregation in Grand Rapids.

It is true that a historian can choose what will be written in the volume being produced. Nevertheless, it seems that since the denomination is small and publications on its history do not exist, it would have been more helpful to produce something which would have been more thorough.

A history of the Protestant Reformed? Yes. Flawed, but a history still, and for the general reader something to be read. A definitive, thorough and scholarly history? No. Sadly I must say, that that volume remains to be written. (I had hoped this would have been it. I had great anticipations when I began the review.) Someone who knows of the early days must do it before all the early stalwarts are gone to glory. Such a volume would be of great value to Reformed historical studies. It deserves to be written and the Protestant Reformed Churches deserve to be known!

*Jerome M. Julien*

*Christianity and the Nature of Science*, by J.P. Moreland. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989. Pp. 263. $14.95.

The author of this book is professor of philosophy and apologetics at Lakin School of Religion, Liberty University, U.S.A. His purpose for writing "is to assist and encourage Christians to think more clearly about the relationship between science and theology" (12), for "the Christian community is called to witness to and interface with modern culture in a humble, Christ-honoring and well-informed way" (11).

Moreland offers his work, which is sub-titled, *A Philosophical Investigation*, "as a serious attempt to explore areas of interaction among science, philosophy and theology" (14). The book has six chapters: 1) the definition of science; 2) scientific methodology (there is not just one but several); 3) the limits of science (it is not the only rational, truth-securing approach to the world — philosophy and theology are also legitimate approaches); 4) scientific realism (i.e., science progressively secures true, or approximately true, theories about the real, theory-independent world "out there" and does so in a rationally justifiable way); 5) alternatives to scientific realism (Moreland is willing to accept the legitimacy of anti-realism as well in that theories sometimes work when not even approximately true); and 6) the scientific status of creationism (Moreland defends it as scientifically credible). A select bibliography of over twelve pages concludes the contents of the book.

Moreland makes it abundantly clear that science, far from being neutrally objective (an impossibility as a matter of fact for any discipline), operates with its own necessary presuppositions (i.e., the existence, orderliness and knowability of the external world, the uniformity of nature and the inductive method, the laws of logic, epistemology and truth, the reliability of the senses and the mind, etc.). It, therefore, cannot claim exclusive rights to knowledge of which it allegedly has sole access; in fact, insofar as its presuppositions rule out some aspects of truth (the reality of the spiritual and supernatural, the presence of revelation which pertains to more than just the natural realm, an ultimate divine cause, etc.), to this extent it actually circumscribes and limits its "knowledge."

Moreland argues that the best science can do within the framework of its naturalistic presuppositional data, is provide a model of reality (*weltbild*) as it approximately (or perhaps not even approximately) sees it; whereas an equally acceptable alternative model offered by creationists whose presuppositions include a wider range of data (i.e., divine revelation, the reality of the supernatural, etc.) is not only worthy of consideration but may be a more accurate view of reality as a whole. He is, however, willing to admit that both science and creationism can learn from one another. He therefore urges that more informed dialogue between the two disciplines take place. Since this needs more people who are conversant with the positions of both sides, not only is dialogue needed for the present, but Christian parents ought to encourage their children to use their gifts and talents for the progress of the gospel in the spheres of science and philosophy as well as

theology. The sense of vocation for these disciplines needs to be revived and implemented.

All of this is laudable, but there are minuses as well as pluses for Moreland's book. As an evidentialist apologete, he deliberately seeks common ground in an eclectic manner with those whose sphere of reference is narrower than his, since they are limited to this world's naturalistic data alone. This apologetical approach is historically that of Thomas Aquinas, whose five theistic proofs in the realm of natural theology (i.e., the data furnished by nature, which is also the realm of science) were supposed to "prove" the existence of the true God. But as Kant has pointed out (with whom Moreland as a philosopher is surely familiar), all that the theistic proofs can do, when the naturalistic presuppositions of science are acceded to as the legitimate basis of reality formulation (which thereby excludes "conflicting" supernatural Christian revelation), is to point to a finite deity (or Aristotelian first cause perhaps?) somewhat larger than the finite world for which this god in some way is allegedly responsible.

Moreover, by employing this methodology, Moreland "naturally" (!) comes to surprising and compromising conclusions: e.g., both progressive creationism (theistic evolution?) and special creation have merits and problems so that further development of each model should be encouraged (220); there is no reason to hold that the fossil record does not similarly support scientific creationism because it tends to falsify neo-Darwinism (233). This leaves the Christian reader, who accepts the authority of the Bible, asking: Is the Christian supposed to be open-minded about anti-biblical alternative paradigms about reality, which since they reject the Christian *weltanschauung*, are reductionistic in nature even though they may in some measure appear to work, until such time as they are later discarded for something which science then posits as allegedly better (203)? And even more to the point, can this relativizing approach move the unbelieving scientist, whom Moreland maintains should be the object of Christian witness, to repentance and to the acceptance of the authority of God's Word and the validity of the creationist paradigm? Rather, doesn't Moreland's approach, instead of leading the unbeliever to repentance and acceptance of the gospel, simply confirm him in his unbelief?

The book is unnecessarily technical at times and Moreland even uses algebraic equations to make some of his points. Incidentally, his rather constant employment of the feminine third person pronoun tends to become grating and in one place at least creates a wrong impression

(cf. 165 where "her" might be mistakenly interpreted as a reference to the author).

Moreland suggests that his book might be used as a textbook, or even that it might "be given to unbelievers who are interested in why Christians think theological concepts are relevant to science" (15). While appreciation may be expressed for the great amount of work the author has put into the production of his book, it nevertheless, in the judgment of this reviewer, fails to achieve this twofold aim.

*Raymond O. Zorn*

*The Word Became Flesh: A Contemporary Incarnational Christology*, by Millard J. Erickson. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991. Pp. 663. $29.95.

The author of this latest work on Christology was formerly the dean and professor of theology at Bethel Theological Seminary and is presently research professor of theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. The volume under review is part of a growing list of important contributions by the author in the field of evangelical theology and ethics.

Christology remains a fascinating subject because of its focus upon the person and work of Christ. Erickson tells the reader that his purpose for writing has been, not only because the doctrine of Christ has "always been at the very center of Christian faith [but because it] is especially problematic in our time because of several developments in the intellectual world" (7).

In the face of modern challenges to the classic understanding of Christology as defined by the Creed of Chalcedon in the fifth century, Erickson asks, "Is an orthodox incarnational Christology [i.e., that Jesus was fully God and fully man] possible in our time?" He answers, "In a sense, this volume is an attempt to do for our time what the Chalcedonian statement did for its time" (10).

Erickson sees difficulties with historic Christology arising today in three areas: 1) historical criticism and critical methodology in the study of the Bible; 2) social and political changes which make theological study no longer a Western preserve; and 3) a cultural paradigm shift which increasingly is placing our society in a post-modern period. In reply to this threefold challenge, Erickson also seeks to do three specific things as he reaffirms the validity of orthodox incarnational Christology: 1) present the traditional view from the biblical material and as it has

been defined by the church, chiefly via the Chalcedonian Creed; 2) present and evaluate several contemporary views, together with their challenges to the traditional view; and 3) present a Christology which both preserves the traditional view and responds to the modern challenges (13).

Erickson divides the twenty-four chapters of his book into three major divisions: 1) the formulation of incarnational Christology (which is an adequate three-chapter survey that locates incarnational Christology in its biblical source and historical development thereafter); 2) problems of incarnational Christology (which consists of eleven chapters/essays which present and evaluate the Christologies of contemporary theological movements, i.e., theologies of higher criticism, liberation, black, feminist, functional, process, universalist, etc.; and 3) the construction of a contemporary incarnational Christology (ten chapters in which he develops his own attempt to present an updated version of Chalcedon's definition and in doing so also employs the so-called "above" and "below" approaches to Christology, i.e., Christ is viewed both from his divinity and humanity).

The reader can learn much from Erickson's essays which succinctly and adequately present the various current theological views of Christology. His method is first to present the view in question and then to give his evaluation which includes both positive and negative aspects. Notable deficiencies he identifies within virtually all of the contemporary theological movements include: a selective use of Scripture, anti-supernaturalistic presuppositions, existentialism (or experience orientation), inadequate views of sin and consequently of salvation, and the employment of a hermeneutic that imposes its agenda upon Scripture rather than deriving its method of interpretation from Scripture.

While Erickson patiently and fairly presents the views of the above-mentioned movements, the reader may well wonder at times why so much time and attention needs to be devoted to views which obviously reject the Bible's own message and make it say something else in keeping with the agenda of the particular movement's own presuppositions. So, for example, post-modern Christology, which is largely based upon deconstructionist principles (Erickson quotes Mark C. Taylor's definition, "Deconstruction is the hermeneutic of the death of God" (318)), rather than constituting "a major challenge to theology and specifically to traditional Christology," as Erickson affirms (327), might well be written off as simply "post-mortem Christology" (to coin a term), since its arbitrary and subjective approach to the meaning of

language ultimately reduces it to meaninglessness which, in fact, includes the position of the deconstructionists as well.

The heart of the book is found in the concluding chapters where Erickson seeks to present a Christology which, while seeking to be true to Chalcedon, goes beyond it; for his aim is "to do for our generation what the Chalcedonian theologians did for theirs" (515). He finds attractive Ronald W. Leigh's view that, instead of Jesus possessing both a divine and a human nature (as Chalcedon teaches), Jesus possessed "one nature, both divine and human" (534). Specifically, "Jesus was like the Father *in areas essential to deity* but unlike the Father in some areas nonessential to deity [e.g., unembodied, omniscient and omnipotent] and like fallen man *in areas essential to humanity* but unlike fallen man in some areas nonessential to humanity [e.g., created spirit, sinful]" (536).

Erickson, however, rightly rejects this view, since it does not avoid the problems of Monophysitism (i.e., whether Jesus is co-essential with either God or humanity (538)). Instead, he advocates a view of "kenosis by addition." While the kenosis view historically has taught that the Second Person of the Trinity set aside the attributes of divinity during the time of his earthly incarnation (552), Erickson differs from this by maintaining that "what [the Logos] did in the incarnation was to add something to each nature, namely, the attributes of the other nature," and he appeals to Philippians 2:7 in support of this (i.e., "taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness"). Hence, while retaining the *morphee* of God, the Logos added the form of a servant. This would mean that, while he still retained his divine attributes, they would now be exercised in connection with, and limited by, the humanity he had assumed.

When all is said and done, however, one wonders just where this view differs essentially from Chalcedon? Moreover, it does not provide Erickson with any more definite answers to some of the questions he poses than does Chalcedon. In fact, some of his "answers" may well be open to question. For example, Erickson suggests that in the birth of Jesus, Mary may not have contributed an ovum ("the Holy Spirit may have produced and implanted a fertilized ovum" (546)), which if true would throw into doubt Jesus' link with humanity, i.e., specifically, Adam's fallen race.

Again, Erickson opines that when Satan tempted Jesus, if he had sinned, the Logos would have departed from him before this actually took place, leaving Jesus not dead but "slumped" to mere sinful humanity (564), which suggests a form of Nestorianism, Erickson's denial notwithstanding. Post-Chalcedonian theologians, in avoiding

Nestorianism on the one hand and Monophysitism on the other, held to the doctrine of the *anhypostasis/enhypostasis*, the former term referring to Christ's human nature not having a *hypostasis* of its own, while the latter maintained that the human nature from the very beginning of its existence had its basis in the *hypostasis* of the Logos. But Erickson can hardly hold to this and still advocate his own view, which no doubt explains why he does not even refer to it.

Again, Erickson advocates a two-stage glorification of Christ's body after his resurrection, the second stage occurring at his ascension (575). Lutherans have a similar doctrine, the ubiquity of Christ's human nature after his ascension and being seated at the right hand of God, this doctrine being in support of their view of the real presence of Christ at the Lord's Supper. While Erickson makes no reference to this, his view, however, is equally speculative.

More seriously, in rightly making a parallel between Christ's glorified body and that which the believer will ultimately receive at his second advent, Erickson comes perilously close to a disturbing conclusion when he says, "When we are glorified, the difference between God and us will be much less, though we will never be of the same essence as God" (576). Hopefully, by this Erickson does not mean to weaken the Christian doctrine which, in distinction from paganism, maintains that the distinction between the Creator and the creature ever remains inviolable.

In his chapter on "Jesus as the Savior of All People" (23), Erickson makes a good case for Jesus being the Savior of all types of people, but in doing so he perhaps becomes too concessive to feminism. It is true that Jesus elevated the status of women by his teaching and actions, but does this justify a statement like this: "It was not that [Jesus] could not have been a woman[!?], but that the act of becoming incarnate necessarily involved his being either male or female, thus excluding him from one half of the human race" (593)? Should one therefore conclude from this that, because Jesus was not black (nor white), there may be difficulty in viewing him as a Savior of these groups? The question is as preposterous as Erickson's gratuitous nod to feminism.

Erickson's final chapter (24) is a good theodicy on the problem of evil. He suggests that the incarnation goes a long way toward helping us to be reconciled to its presence and purpose now and ultimate elimination in the future *eschaton* when Christ makes all things new.

At the beginning of the book, Erickson tells the reader that he does not deal with some specific aspects of Christology and he admits that, to this extent, his book is not "a fully articulated Christology" (14). This

factor will no doubt be a disappointment to some readers, especially since the book is over 650 pages in length. But Erickson's serious attempt to present and grapple with modern Christological views makes the reading and, for the specialist, further study of the book worthwhile.

*Raymond O. Zorn*

*Lord of the Saved: Getting to the Heart of the Lordship Debate*, by Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing, 1992. Pp. xii + 104, including an appendix and Scripture index. $6.95.

In this expanded version of an earlier, lengthy article written in 1976, Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., tackles the "lordship salvation" debate from a self-consciously Reformed standpoint. Gentry, a prolific author and minister in the Presbyterian Church of America, aims to provide a concise summary of the debate and evaluation of the no-lordship position, exposing its inadequacies and dangers. He notes in his preface that he was prompted to issue his earlier article in expanded format by two events: the continuing influence of the no-lordship position and a review of the article in the *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society*, a journal established to advocate the no-lordship view. The reviewer of Gentry's earlier essay in this journal, though disagreeing with Gentry's argument, found it a well organized and helpful summary of the lordship salvation position.

In an introductory chapter, "The Debate Unfolds," Gentry observes that the no-lordship position is the favored one within evangelicalism in North America. This position which sharply distinguishes between "carnal" and "spiritual" Christians, permitting some believers to receive Christ as Savior but not as Lord, is a symptom, in Gentry's opinion, of the weakness of evangelicalism. The no-lordship position only reinforces the tendency within evangelicalism to teach an "easy believism," selling the gospel cheap to any who are willing to make a decision and sign on the dotted line. Gentry correctly notes that there are two primary types of no-lordship advocates: the "discipleship" view (some believers are not yet disciples, though their faith is genuine) of Ryrie, Chafer and Hodges, and the "higher life" view (some believers have not yet advanced to the higher life of victory over sin) of those who have been influenced by the Keswick movement. In his summary of the lordship salvation position of representatives like L. Berkhof, J. MacArthur, J.I. Packer and others, Gentry corrects the usual criticism that this position

teaches works as meritorious preconditions for salvation. The lordship salvation position, according to Gentry, teaches rather that works are a necessary and indispensable fruit of a believing response to the gospel.

Following this introductory chapter, Gentry takes aim at the common view of faith present within the position of no-lordship salvation. Typically, advocates of the no-lordship view treat faith as an intellectual assent to the truth of the gospel promise and history, an assent that is not inextricably joined to the components of trust and obedience to the person of Jesus Christ. In a helpful discussion of "lexical relationships" and "prepositional relationships," Gentry argues that the biblical terminology and understanding of faith include a wholehearted trust in and commitment to the person of Jesus Christ, including the gospel record of his work and its implications, which are inseparable from obedience. At this juncture, Gentry quotes John Stott approvingly, "The bended knee is as much a part of saving faith as the open hand." The no-lordship salvation position fails to recognize that, though works are not the basis of the believer's salvation, they are needed expressions of faith's response to the gospel. Though works do not "merit" salvation, they do confirm its reality and attest the working of the Spirit through the Word in the believer's sanctification.

Having offered a critique the no-lordship salvation view of faith, Gentry next turns to its view of repentance. Advocates of the no-lordship salvation view customarily claim that repentance is not a "condition" for salvation. Salvation is *unconditional* and this means that, however desirable repentance may be, only faith which receives God's gift empty-handedly is required as a response to the gospel promise. To say that repentance is a necessary and indispensable component of any response to the preaching of the gospel is to compromise the doctrine of free grace. Following the pattern of his previous chapter, Gentry tests this claim by means of a brief survey of the biblical teaching on repentance. By means of this survey, he proves that repentance is joined to faith in the preaching of Jesus and his apostles in the New Testament. Biblically defined, repentance is a necessary and inherent part of the required response to the gospel.

Gentry also addresses in two subsequent chapters the issues of "The Lordship of Christ and Salvation" and "Discipleship and Salvation." Defenders of the no-lordship position commonly argue that a believing response to the gospel may legitimately be bereft of a submission to the lordship of Christ or a life of discipleship, including a willingness to deny oneself and to bear one's cross. In these chapters, Gentry reviews the biblical givens and finds the no-lordship position wanting. Contrary

to the claim of some no-lordship proponents that the New Testament language of Christ as "Lord" often means only to designate the identity of his person as Son of God, Gentry points out that it invariably has the meaning of a relationship of authority. To confess Christ as "Lord" requires actively submitting to his rule. Similarly, Gentry shows how the language of discipleship is endemic to the New Testament view of salvation. Salvation without becoming a disciple is an anomaly from the perspective of the New Testament.

In a concluding chapter, "Preaching the Lord of Salvation," Gentry addresses the implications of the no-lordship position for the preaching of the gospel within evangelical churches in North America. He observes that this preaching often amounts to the claim of a newspaper ad which accidentally spliced a car dealer's and a church's ad, so that it read, "We preach Jesus Christ at the lowest price in years"! In his judgment, the only real antidote to such preaching is the biblical, Reformed faith, in which the full-orbed gospel is preached and the sovereign grace of God in the free justification and progressive sanctification of all believers is maintained. The alternative to the "easy believism" of the no-lordship position is the costly grace of God in Jesus Christ in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

This is a good primer on the lordship salvation debate. Though it does not include questions at the end of each chapter, it could easily serve as a discussion guide for a Bible study group in the local church. Because of its brevity, Gentry raises some questions that he does not fully answer. For example, I would have appreciated a more careful statement of the relation between faith and obedience and between justification and sanctification, than what Gentry provides. As it stands, Gentry seems to permit them to be confused. He also does not caution the reader against some of the formulations of John MacArthur which confuse faith and repentance. Despite these small defects, however, this is a good book to begin a study of the lordship salvation debate.

*Cornelis P. Venema*

*No Other Name: An Investigation into the Destiny of the Unevangelized*, by John Sanders. Foreword by Clark H. Pinnock. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992. Pp. xviii + 315, including indexes. $16.95.

It is unlikely that the historical movement within the church in North America known as "evangelicalism" has ever been monolithic or

uniform in its understanding of the gospel. The unity of evangelicalism has been predominantly the fruit of opposition to a common enemy, liberalism or modernism. Hence, the distinctives of evangelicalism were primarily a high view of Scriptural inspiration and authority and an orthodox understanding of Christ's person and work of atonement. Perhaps even this is saying more than may be warranted.

There is growing evidence, however, that whatever unity once marked evangelicalism has become ever more tenuous. Without the unifying influence of a common commitment to Scriptural teaching, as this is summarized in the historic creeds and confessions of the church, evangelicals are increasingly taking widely divergent positions on important biblical teachings. Consequently, it is becoming difficult to use the designation, "evangelical" to devote someone with a clear and recognizable doctrinal position.

The fragmentation that is occurring within evangelicalism is illustrated well in this study of John Sanders, *No Other Name*. Sanders is an instructor at Oak Hills Bible College, Bemidji, Minnesota and an adjunct professor of philosophy at Bemidji State University. In this study Sanders reviews the growing range of conviction within evangelicalism on the question of the destiny of those who have not had opportunity to hear the gospel and to respond in faith. The position which Sanders himself espouses on this question is itself at odds with the consensus opinion of earlier evangelicalism. But it is not Sanders' position only that makes this book interesting reading. It is the way it reflects this growing ferment and uncertainty within evangelicalism as a whole on particular fundamental doctrinal questions.

Sanders addresses in this book the issue of the destiny or final state of the unevangelized, those who have never had the occasion to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed and to respond in faith and repentance. The destiny of the unevangelized is an issue that the evangelical church can no longer afford to ignore, according to Sanders, since it seems to raise questions regarding the love and justice of God. How can God, who desires the salvation of everyone and who is perfectly just in all his ways, permit those who do not hear the gospel to perish? This is a pressing question for Christian missionaries who have to address the inevitable questions of new converts about the final destiny of their ancestors. But it is also a pressing question for all believers, since the credibility of the gospel is at stake in this issue. If all unevangelized persons are lost, then a stumbling block is raised to the gospel and God's justice is imperilled.

In his introduction, Sanders notes that the question of the destiny of the unevangelized has become especially pressing in the modern period. Whereas evangelicals have traditionally been committed to "two non-negotiable truths," the finality of Jesus Christ and "God's universal salvific will," these truths are being challenged today by the church's encounter with other religions and the emergence of universalism and "relativistic pluralism." Is it possible any longer to believe that all adherents of other religions, indeed all persons who have not heard the gospel preached, are necessarily damned? Is the way of salvation restricted exclusively to those who hear and believingly respond to the message of the gospel? These questions, Sanders believes, press for answers. The old answers no longer seem satisfactory.

Sanders divides his treatment of the destiny of the unevangelized into three parts. The first part deals with the way this issue has been treated in the history of the church and more recently in evangelicalism. The second part reviews what Sanders regards as "two extreme" views which have been defended on this issue. The third part then considers several views which have defended the universal accessibility of salvation to every human being, whether they have had opportunity to hear the gospel preaching in this life or not. In each of the chapters within the three parts of his study, Sanders structures the material under five headings: 1) the biblical texts cited in support of a particular position; 2) the theological beliefs that inform and serve as a control for divergent positions; 3) a brief exposition and summary of the arguments of chief exponents of different views; 4) an evaluation of the position; and 5) a historical bibliography, listing the major figures and works which have defended a particular view throughout history. Rather than attempting to present a concise statement of the argument for the view he prefers, Sanders regards his approach to be more of a "cumulative case" or "good reasons" approach. He aims to show how, on balance, the view he prefers best answers the questions raised, while conforming to the "control beliefs" of classical evangelicalism.

To the question why he undertook to write this study, Sanders answers with five reasons. First, he wants to demonstrate that the biblical doctrine of God reveals him as one who loves all of humanity, not some small segment of humanity. Sanders believes that the Bible teaches that God wills "to save everyone and works tirelessly to that end" (7). Second, Sanders fears that the position he terms "restrictivism" gives too much ammunition to the critics of Christianity. The idea that God saves only those in Christ who respond in faith to the preaching of gospel is increasingly untenable in the modern world.

Third, Sanders also wants to stimulate the reflection of Christian missionaries on what constitutes a "sound motivation" for the mission of the church. He believes that there are sounder motives for mission work than the presumption that all the unevangelized will inevitably be lost. Fourth, Sanders hopes to provide advocates of "wider hope" views the "theological muscle" they need to defend their views against the criticism of more traditional advocates of restrictivism. And fifth, Sanders aims to provide a comprehensive typology and bibliography of the spectrum of answers and defenders of these answers in the history of the Christian church.

After a broad introduction to the issue in the first part of his study, the second part of this study introduces the reader to what Sanders regards as the two extreme views that have been taken to the question of the destiny of the unevangelized.

These views are "restrictivism" and "universalism." Restrictivism is the view that only the evangelized are saved. Based upon the conviction that Christ alone is the Savior, restrictivism insists that only those who respond appropriately to the gospel of Christ can be saved. General revelation provides enough to render the unbelieving without excuse, but it does not provide a saving knowledge of the gospel. All those who are unevangelized are sinners in Adam and unworthy of salvation. Hence, unless they respond to the gospel message in this life, they will not find salvation. Among the defenders of this position, Sanders lists prominently Augustine, John Calvin and the Reformed tradition.

Universalism, by contrast to restrictivism, teaches that ultimately all the unevangelized will be saved. Though Sanders acknowledges that some universalists have been "pluralists," that is, those who acknowledge a variety of ways of salvation, he is most interested in the universalism that teaches that all persons will be saved through the work of Christ, whether they have opportunity to hear the gospel in this life or not. Usually, universalism appeals to God's attributes of love and justice to defend the position that all will finally be saved. Among the advocates of this position, Sanders identifies Origen, Charles Chauncy and more recently, J.A.T. Robinson.

In the third and most extensive part of the book, Sanders turns to a number of views which argue that salvation is universally accessible. Clearly, Sanders finds these "wider hope" views more to his liking than the extremes of restrictivism and universalism. Each of these views, however divergent in detail, is committed to the thesis that God grants every individual an opportunity to participate in the redemptive work

of Christ. No human being, according to these views, is deprived of the possibility of benefitting from God's saving grace.

The first of the "wider hope" views surveyed by Sanders argues that all persons are evangelized in some manner before death. This view of universal evangelization before death has three forms: first, the form which says God sees to it that all persons are confronted with the gospel before death; second, the form that suggests that all persons are granted an evangelistic encounter with God at the moment of death; and third, the form that insists that God will judge all persons by the light they were given in this life. Each of these forms of this view shares two convictions: that people must be evangelized or hear the truth in some form on the basis of which they are judged by God; and that the final destiny of all persons is determined upon death, thereby excluding the possibility to accept Christ after death. Sanders identifies Thomas Aquinas and Jacobus Arminius as among the defenders of the first form of this view. He also regards the second form of this view as primarily defended among Roman Catholics. The third form, in his judgment, has not had many advocates.

The second of the "wider hope" views which captures Sanders' attention is one which he terms "eschatological evangelization." This view argues that all persons who have not heard the gospel in this life will have opportunity to hear the gospel in the life to come before their final destiny is determined. Though sometimes confused with universalism, proponents of this position (mostly Protestants) reject the extreme of universalism and maintain that only those who respond appropriately through faith will be saved. Interestingly, Sanders notes that defenders of this "wider hope" doctrine have frequently appealed to those passages which speak of "Christ's descent into hell" (e.g., Eph. 4:8-10; 1 Pet. 3:18-20; 4:6). These passages, however difficult to interpret, are taken to teach some form of evangelization by Christ among persons who have died, but to whom a further opportunity is given after death to come to faith and salvation.

Sanders concludes this third part of his study by addressing what he terms "inclusivism," the third category of "wider hope" views and the one with which he finds himself most at home. Sanders defines "inclusivism" as a position which teaches the universal accessibility of salvation apart from evangelization.

Inclusivism teaches that the unevangelized are saved or lost on the basis of what they do with that knowledge of God available to them. While inclusivists affirm the particularity and finality of Jesus Christ as Savior, they do not believe that an explicit knowledge of the gospel is

required in order for someone to be saved. Provided persons believe in the "God who saves through the work of Jesus" (215), they may be saved whether they are fully aware of Jesus' person and work. This view distinguishes between the "ontological necessity" of Christ's saving work and what is "epistemologically necessary" to salvation. Believers may have only an inchoate and partially formed knowledge of God's revelation and still be saved. What is decisive is the attitude of the heart and the nature of the response to that *revelation of God available to the believer.* This view rejects universalism and the idea of evangelization after death, insisting upon the necessity of a believing response to God's revelation for salvation. However, it maintains that God is busy revealing himself, albeit to a greater or lesser degree, to all men whose salvation he seeks. Only those who will not respond appropriately to the knowledge of God available to them are lost.

In his presentation of inclusivism, Sanders sets forth several of the arguments which support it. Inclusivism maintains, for example, that just as believers were saved before Christ's coming without needing to know his person and work, so believers today may be saved, though the content of their faith does not include everything that can be known through the gospel. Inclusivism also argues that general revelation is sufficient, apart from special revelation, to provide a saving knowledge of God. In addition to this general revelation of himself, inclusivism also believes that God, who seeks the salvation of all people, actively works by his Spirit to draw all to himself. This active revealing and seeking on God's part is confirmed by the presence of truth within other religious traditions and movements. It is also consistent with the biblical teaching of Christ's cosmic significance and work as the Word by whom all things were created and the "light" that enlightens every man coming into the world. For these reasons, figures like John Wesley, C.S. Lewis and Clark Pinnock have advocated inclusivism.

Although this is only a bare bones sketch of the main lines of Sanders' argument and discussion, the general tenor and direction should be evident enough. Sanders is convinced that the evangelical church needs to re-examine its historic commitment to restrictivism and adopt some version of a "wider hope" approach to the destiny of the unevangelized. The main tenets of restrictivism present insuperable obstacles to a compelling presentation of the gospel in the modern world. God's love and justice compel us to adopt some form of inclusivism, without denying the particularity and finality of Christ or the necessity of a believing appropriation of God's revelation for salvation. The "problem of evil," in the modern setting, also includes

the problem of defending the gospel against the charge that it makes God the author of the evil of condemning the unevangelized who comprise the vast majority of the human race.

There are several observations that I would like to make about Sanders' book and argument.

Sanders is to be commended for having written one of the few recent studies that provides a comprehensive statement of this question and review of the history of answers given to it. This is a helpful book in that respect. Those who want to be introduced to the discussion of this question in the history of the church, including the primary sources of the past and present, will find this a useful source. Sanders has obviously done a great deal of reading on this subject and helps the reader to find his way through a body of literature that might otherwise be an impassable maze.

One of the contributions of this study to the discussion is the taxonomy of positions that Sanders develops. Sanders provides a helpful categorizing of the types of answers that have been given to the question of the destiny of the unsaved, especially when it comes to those he terms "wider hope" views. However, it is unfortunate that he chooses the terminology of "restrictivism" for the historic view of evangelicalism. This terminology, though accurate from the standpoint of the "inclusivism" Sanders prefers, carries negative connotations that tend to prejudice the reader against this position. Who, after all, in our expansive and accepting age would want to be identified with something called "restrictivism"!

However, there are some serious problems of *methodology* that emerge throughout this study. In order to illustrate what I mean, I will mention two of them in particular.

The first problem relates to what Sanders terms "control beliefs." By such beliefs, Sanders means to refer to non-negotiable convictions of a theologian or believer. These beliefs are convictions which limit the range of views which are acceptable or tolerable. If a position should be inconsistent with or clearly contradict a control belief, then it is a position that cannot be adopted. Among the control beliefs for an evangelical, Sanders mentions such things as: the authority of the Bible, the particularity and finality of Jesus Christ, and the necessity of a believing response to God's revelation in order to be saved.

However, in addition to these less controversial control beliefs, Sanders also seems to assume throughout his book an additional, much more controversial control belief: that God loves all persons with a redemptive love and, accordingly, provides atonement for all persons

and actively by his Spirit seeks to persuade them of his love. In one of the clearest passages setting forth this "control belief," he writes: "God the Father loves all and desires the salvation of all, God the Son made this salvation possible through his redemptive work and God the Holy Spirit has a universal outreach in seeking lost and sinful humanity" (236). This kind of assertion is not unique, but runs like a thread through the entire study.

The difficulty here is this: *presupposing this view of God's universal love and redemptive activity in relation to all persons, one is inevitably driven to adopt some form of "wider hope" teaching.* Furthermore, when this control belief is joined with the other control beliefs which Sanders regards as characteristic of evangelicalism, one can hardly avoid coming to the position of "inclusivism," which happens to be Sanders' preferred position. Given the fundamental importance of this presupposition or control belief to Sanders' argument throughout this study, it is surprising that he presents so little evidence for it.

To state this difficulty in another form, as a convinced Reformed believer I do not regard this particular presupposition or control belief to be biblical. I do not believe that God loves all men in the same way, with a redemptive love. Nor do I believe that God has provided atonement in Jesus Christ for every person, as though the atonement were *designed* by God to save everyone. Nor do I believe that God works by his Spirit in the same way in the hearts of everyone to bring them to salvation. Nor do I believe that God's redemptive love, Christ's atoning work and the Spirit's work through the gospel, *can be frustrated by the powerful exercise of each person's free will!* I am not convinced, for example, as Sanders seems to be, that God is busy trying to persuade everyone to believe, but is helpless to bring anyone to faith unless the person chooses to comply. All of this is thorough-going Arminianism, even Arminianism of the boldest kind — but it is not biblical teaching. In Sanders' argument, it seems to me unavoidable that the believer becomes ultimately responsible for saving himself. The reason some are saved and others are not is simply that some choose to believe and others do not.

In this connection, it is surprising how quickly Sanders chooses to dispense with the argument that all persons are by nature worthy of condemnation and death. The presumption throughout his study is that it would be unfair for God to fail to seek to bring everyone to salvation through faith. But this is a presumption that is not consistent with the argument of the apostle Paul in Romans 1-3, nor with the idea that all men are "by nature children of wrath," deserving of condemnation.

Here Sanders seems to give more credence to contemporary views of what is fair and just, than he does to the biblical givens that bear decisively upon the question of the fairness of the damnation of the unevangelized.

But it is not only this unwarranted control belief that skews Sanders' method and argument. It is also the nature of what he terms a "cumulative case." Such a case, according to Sanders, need not provide compelling reasons for the position adopted. Such a case need only show that, on balance, there are "more reasons" to hold one position than another and that the position held is consistent with other control beliefs that are non-negotiable.

This understanding of a "cumulative case" accounts for one of the frustrating features of Sanders' book. Arguments, pro and con, are often presented for different positions in a quick, summary and superficial fashion. Often biblical arguments which involve appeals to biblical passages are cited, but without an effort to offer a careful exegesis of these passages in their biblical context to determine whether they truly serve to support the position espoused. Nowhere in the course of the argument does Sanders attempt to argue his case in a strictly exegetical fashion. Apparently, in a "cumulative case" argument, this is no longer required.

Perhaps all of this is only to say that Sanders' study serves well as a primer on the subject of the destiny of the unevangelized. But it will not serve well as a help to a biblical resolution of the questions raised.

If I may be so bold, I would suggest that there is a biblical answer to these questions, but it is not the one Sanders offers. Reformed believers who profit from their rich inheritance in the biblical faith, as this is summarized in the Reformed confessions, should know what this answer is. As Lord's Day 7 of the Heidelberg Catechism affirms, all men do perish in Adam and are worthy of damnation, unless they are joined to Christ through faith. Working with a biblical set of control beliefs (all are fallen in Adam, all are worthy of condemnation and death, God has sovereignly and graciously elected to save his own in Christ, ordinarily outside of the church there is no salvation, etc.), Reformed believers are content to leave it at that. Though they are prepared, on the basis of the covenant promises of God, to teach that the children of believers who die in infancy are saved, they are not prepared to declare confidently, as does Sanders, that all persons have access to salvation.

There is much more that could be said regarding the argument of this book. Another example of the weakness of Sanders' arguments may be instructive. On page 295, in an appendix dealing with "Infant

Salvation and Damnation," Sanders purports to quote from "the theologians at the Synod of Dort." The quote cited, however, is taken from a document prepared by several Swiss theologians at the Synod of Dort and has no official standing. Sanders' citation of their statement leaves the misleading impression that the view espoused is the classic view of the Reformed churches. This book, therefore, is a helpful illustration of the growing diversity within evangelicalism today on basic questions of faith. It shows how far many evangelicals are willing to stray from a previous consensus position on a matter as important as the destiny of the unevangelized. It is not a help, however, to the resolution of these questions. *Cornelis P. Venema*

*Introducing Christian Doctrine*, by Millard J. Erickson and edited by L. Arnold Hustad. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992. Pp. 423, including indexes. $24.95.

Readers familiar with Millard J. Erickson's three volume *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983, 1984, 1985) will be interested in the publication of this condensed version, *Introducing Christian Doctrine.* In the preface Erickson indicates that it has been prepared and published in response to the suggestion of instructors in Christian liberal arts colleges and Bible colleges. Many of these instructors expressed an interest in a shorter version of the earlier work, stripped of its more technical portions and yet comprehensive enough to serve as a broad introduction to Christian doctrine or teaching.

*Introducing Christian Doctrine* is, accordingly, a condensed, edited version of Erickson's earlier, more comprehensive systematic theology. It is intended to serve college-level study rather than seminary-level study of Christian doctrine. Erickson hopes, however, that readers of this condensed version will still refer to the earlier, more expansive work for a fuller discussion and treatment of many doctrinal issues. In that way the condensed edition will serve as a companion volume, a kind of primer in Christian doctrine, to the earlier study.

The primary work of editing this volume was done by L. Arnold Hustad, a professor of theology and philosophy at Crown College and a former student of Erickson's. The nature and extent of the deletions from the former work were determined jointly by Erickson and Hustad.

What remains of Erickson's earlier work is the substance, but without the more sophisticated wrapping and packaging of the original. This should enable this volume to suit its purpose admirably as a

textbook for college-level courses in Christian doctrine. It may even allow it to serve as a study guide for courses of adult education in churches whose members are confessionally and theologically informed and alert. Certainly, in a day and age which prizes things which are accessible and "user friendly," many who appreciated Erickson's original study will welcome this condensed version. Whereas the earlier three-volume work initially intimidates all but the most energetic reader, this version will prove attractive to more people.

Reformed readers of Erickson's study should be aware that he writes from a broadly evangelical and baptist standpoint. Erickson was formerly professor of theology at Bethel Theological Seminary and is presently research professor of theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Though Erickson's exposition of Christian doctrine is often consistent with Reformed theology, especially in its doctrine of revelation and Scripture, it also reflects the distinctives of his own ecclesiastical and confessional background. For example, Erickson adopts a "moderately Calvinistic" view of a number of doctrines, including the doctrine of God's plan or decree (114-116), the doctrine of "total depravity," the doctrine of Christ's substitutionary atonement and the doctrine of perseverance. Though he is cautious and mediating in his comments, he adopts positions that will likely make many Arminian readers uncomfortable. However, Erickson also goes contrary to a Reformed position at a number of critical points: he modifies the doctrine of original sin to teach that we only become responsible for the sin of Adam "when we accept or approve of our corrupt nature" (203); he shies away from arguing that some of the gifts of the Spirit, including speaking in tongues, are restricted to the apostolic age (274); he endorses a congregational church polity (345); and he embraces premillennialism as the best eschatological viewpoint.

Readers who are aware of Erickson's confessional commitment and able to sift through his arguments from a biblically Reformed standpoint will, nonetheless, find much in his introduction to affirm. Erickson is to be commended for his attempt to contribute to the instruction of God's people in the teachings of the Word of God, especially in a period so often marked by theological illiteracy.

*Cornelis P. Venema*

*Jesus the Intercessor*, by David Crump. Tübingen, Germany: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1992. Pp. 295. DM 124.

This doctoral dissertation by a minister of the Christian Reformed Church in North America continues the series of scholarly books, *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament*, published over the years by Mohr-Siebeck and whose number has reached over 100 titles, a dozen of which have been reviewed in previous issues of this journal.

Crump tells the reader that the purpose of his dissertation "is to elucidate the christological significance of Jesus' prayer-life as portrayed in Luke's gospel and then show the significance of this presentation for the christology of the book of Acts" (12). Specifically, he seeks to show

> that Luke presents Jesus as the Chosen One of God, the final eschatological Prophet, who superintends the revelation of the Father, especially the revelation of his own messiahship/ sonship; who extends God's call to the elect and relieves their spiritual blindness; who experiences God's guidance and the Spirit's power in his own ministry; and who preserves the discipleship of his followers through tribulation, all through the avenue of prayer. But beyond this, his efficacious prayer ministry on this earth is preparatory to his exercising a similar role in heaven as the church's exalted Intercessor (14).

In carrying out this ambitious project, Crump openly tells the reader that he has made use of "the insights of redaction and literary criticism" (12), which, however, to this reviewer does not appear to be excessive nor overly critical of the unity of Scripture. Perhaps in this respect it would not have been necessary for Crump to assert that Luke has re-written Jesus' prayer and introduced the angel (in Luke 22:43-44 as over against parallels in Matthew and Mark (123)), though to be sure, it may be acknowledged that each evangelist has altered factual material at his disposal in the interests of his particular evangelistic purpose.

Crump also gives ample evidence of his familiarity both with the original Greek text, portions of which appear in untranslated form in his thesis, and with the abundantly present literature on the subject, his bibliography consisting of thirty-four pages listing of commentaries and reference works. Indexes of biblical and extra-biblical references, together with modern authors and subjects, complete this comprehensive work.

In the development of his thesis, Crump makes a number of practical and helpful observations on the subject of prayer. For example, he points out that the rather popular view in some circles that prayer is the "means by which God guides the course of redemptive [and we might add, present] history" is a fallacy, for Scripture teaches in general and Luke-Acts in particular, that "prayer is one of the channels for the realization of God's will among his people, but [in his sovereignty] he is not limited to it. Prayer . . . simply opens a window through which man may 'see' God's activity and perhaps, become a part of it" (126).

Moreover, Crump's assertion of God's sovereignty and fulfillment of his elective purposes, while not popular with the modern mind occupied with man's belief in his own autonomy, is nevertheless refreshingly biblical. Crump makes this point in his discussion of Jesus' prayer for the eleven disciples, particularly Peter, which preserves them, while Judas is permitted to go his own willful way and is lost. "Jesus prayer has again served to separate two classes of individuals [i.e., those of his own whom the Father has given him and who are preserved and saved and those who are not and, following their own unrepentant devices, are ultimately lost]" (166).

Another helpful insight that Crump gives on Luke's teaching concerns Jesus' present role as the heavenly Intercessor of his people. He develops this specifically in connection with Stephen's vision of the exalted "Son of Man standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:56), just prior to his martyrdom. From the twelve different interpretations which Crump presents, perhaps the most popular is that Stephen sees Jesus standing "in order to give him the strength he needs to remain faithful in his martyr's struggle" (179). Crump, however, cogently argues for the view that Jesus' standing is a judicial witnessing on Stephen's behalf, supported elsewhere in Scripture and by Jesus' own testimony (Luke 12:8). "Luke thus presents a double trial scene. The once condemned but now vindicated Son of Man acts as the Vindicator of his condemned disciple; 'as Stephen's witness confessed Christ before men, so Christ is standing to confess him before the angels of God'" (183).

Crump's book is not the common variety of "how to" manuals on the subject of prayer. Nor is its aim necessarily to present Jesus as the paradigm of prayer for his people's exercise of prayer. Nevertheless, it is an exceedingly useful exposition of the subject as the following paragraph, with which we conclude this review, will reveal.

> Luke is guided by the conviction that prayer is a channel through which God reveals his will to men; neither faith, nor

> persistence, nor even specific requests for apparently good things may guarantee that the prayer will receive exactly what he asks for. Such 'positive' answers to prayer are instances where the individual's request coincides with the Father's will, which is the ideal situation of all prayer and which is exactly why Jesus' prayer-life is seen to be so effective: he always prays according to the will of his Father (Luke 10:21-22). True prayer involves learning from God as much if not more than asking of God (134).
>
> *Raymond O. Zorn*

*Christ the Lord: The Reformation and Lordship Salvation*, edited by Michael Horton. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992. Pp. 240. $11.95.

Though Reformed believers have generally been on the sidelines, there is a spirited debate going on today within North American evangelicalism on the subject of "lordship salvation." This collection of essays, edited by Michael Horton, president of Christians United for Reformation (CURE), aims to correct this by entering the fray and introducing the debaters to the insights of the Reformation on the disputed issues. Horton has gathered together a number of authors and articles, written from a distinctively reformational perspective (Reformed and Lutheran), in order to lend historical clarity and depth to the discussion which has been marked by excesses and errors on both sides.

The "lordship salvation" debate has thus far been the exclusive domain of two sharply diverging positions. On the one side are authors, predominantly dispensationalist, who insist that saving faith need not be accompanied by repentance. These authors, chief among them Zane Hodges (*Absolutely Free: A Bible Reply to Lordship Salvation* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989]), insist that believers can find forgiveness and acceptance with God solely by believing the gospel promise, whether or not that faith produces the fruits of repentance. Simply put — *a believer may have Christ as Savior, but not surrender to him as Lord.* Some believers are "carnal Christians" who have not produced the fruits of repentance; they are nonetheless true believers and heirs of salvation. These authors are convinced that to make repentance and obedience a necessary "condition" for salvation is to fall prey to a position that

deprives the believer of assurance and compromises the graciousness of God's gift of salvation in Christ.

On the other side of the debate are authors, chief among them John MacArthur, Jr. (*The Gospel According to Jesus* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988]), who have insisted that saving faith is inseparable from repentance. These authors maintain that *you cannot have Jesus as Savior unless you submit to him simultaneously as Lord.* They regard the position of Hodges and others as a form of "easy believism," a profound misunderstanding of the gospel which distorts the biblical demands of discipleship and cross-bearing. According to these writers, no believer can embrace Christ through faith as Savior without also submitting to him as Lord. Hence the short-hand for the debate — "lordship salvation." Within the context of this debate, which continues unabated and without much promise of resolution, Horton hopes the collection of essays in this volume will provide a reformational perspective and answer to the issues raised. Acknowledging that writers on both sides of the divide have appealed to the Reformers, particularly Calvin, to support their understanding of the matter, Horton believes that a careful look at the Reformation's understanding of salvation will offer a corrective to both positions. In Horton's judgment, neither side of the debate can legitimately appeal to the Reformers for support. Both sides have lost their biblical balance and often display an inadequate grasp of the views of the Reformers. In order to provide that biblical balance and appreciation of the Reformers' views, Horton has drawn together the essays of this book.

To accomplish this purpose, Horton divides the book into two parts sandwiched between a lengthy introductory chapter and a series of appendices. The first part, "Light from Scripture," addresses several biblical teachings that relate to the most prominent aspects of the lordship salvation debate. The second part, "Lessons from the Past," addresses a number of historical precedents for this debate in the Reformation and post-Reformation periods.

In his introductory chapter, "Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover," Horton introduces the reader to the positions of the two chief antagonists in the debate, Zane Hodges and John MacArthur, Jr. Though Horton criticizes the position of both men, he reserves his strongest criticism for the "Arminianism" so evident in the writings of Hodges. Horton argues that, despite Hodges' frequent appeals to the Reformers in defense of his view, Hodges' position is seriously at odds with that of the Reformers on many important points. Hodges, for example, is charged with viewing faith not as a gift, but as a human work of

appropriating the grace of God. Repentance likewise is treated by Hodges as though it were a human work, subsequent to saving faith and dispensable so far as the believer's salvation is concerned. Horton's conclusion? "Hodges makes both of them [faith and repentance] separate and unrelated human contributions, dependent on human free will rather than on divine grace" (20). Contrary to Hodges' claim that he is defending the doctrine of free grace, Horton judges that his position places all of the emphasis upon human initiative in procuring salvation.

Horton is gentler in his criticism of MacArthur, though he does not hesitate to criticize his position as well. Even though Horton is pleased that MacArthur does not separate faith and repentance, he believes MacArthur nonetheless *confuses* them and in so doing threatens to make salvation depend upon the believer's obedience. MacArthur, he maintains, confuses justification and sanctification. Though MacArthur's position is mitigated somewhat by his insistence that salvation is wholly of grace, a sovereign working of God in the hearts and lives of his people, he tends to move in the direction of a doctrine of justification by "a faith that is works" (39). Against this confusion, Horton sets the Reformation teaching that "[w]e are not justified by God's work within us, but by his work for us, and this is received through faith . . . alone" (44). Because MacArthur confuses justification and sanctification, he also undermines the Reformation's view of the "assurance of faith": if our standing before God is founded upon the reality and degree to which our faith is working through obedience, then it rests upon an uncertain and shaky foundation. In the end MacArthur's position shades off into "legalism," just as Hodges' position shades off into "antinomianism."

The first chapter in the first part of the book, addressing the biblical aspects of the controversy, is an essay by Robert B. Strimple, "Repentance in Romans." Actually, contrary to the impression give by the title, this chapter deals primarily with the apostle Paul's teaching in Romans 6. Strimple begins by noting that Hodges tends to treat justification by grace alone through faith alone, as though it were an occasion for denying the necessity and indispensability of repentance and obedience. Hodges' position smacks, therefore, of antinominianism, precisely the enemy Paul combats in Romans 6. Strimple regards the "no-lordship salvation" view of Hodges to be but the latest form of the antinomian distortion of the gospel. According to Strimple,

> [w]e need to see clearly that in the perspective of the inspired apostle the *victorious* life, the life of victory over sin, is the

> *Christian* life. Paul in this sixth chapter of Romans is not speaking of some super-normal Christian experience, but simply of the facts about any believer (66).

Strimple nicely summarizes the point by remarking, "[s]anctification, being set from sin's dominion, is God's gift to you, along with justification; it is the inevitable partner of justification" (66).

In the following chapter, Rick Ritchie considers the subject of "The Law According to Jesus." In this chapter, Ritchie primarily deals with MacArthur's argument that the Sermon on the Mount is an integral part of the gospel of Jesus, demonstrating the necessity of conformity to the law in the believer's life. While recognizing that MacArthur rightly wants to argue the normativity of the Sermon on the Mount for the Christian (against the denial of its normativity within many dispensationalist circles), Ritchie believes that MacArthur fails to distinguish carefully between "law" and "gospel," particularly when he fails to recognize that the law in Matthew 5 serves primarily "to condemn, not to save" (71). The Sermon on the Mount is not so much intended to show the way of obedience for the believer but to show the impossibility of salvation by works done according to the law. If our righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees, then the only hope for us is the gospel of salvation by grace alone. Ritchie finds the same confusion of law and gospel in MacArthur's treatment of the "rich young ruler" in Matthew 19:16-22 (par. Mark 10:17-22; Luke 18:18-25).

In a helpful chapter on the subject of faith in the Scriptures, "What is Faith," Kim Riddlebarger contrasts the biblical view with the positions of Hodges and MacArthur. Riddlebarger detects in Hodges' definition of faith a kind of intellectualism. Faith, according to Hodges, is little more than an intellectual assent to the truth of the gospel history and promise concerning Jesus Christ. The elements of trust and personal assent tend to be minimized, if not obliterated. Strangely enough, though Hodges insists that he is upholding the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, he treats the human act of faith as decisive in procuring salvation; faith is not merely an instrument but is also a cause of this procurement. Furthermore, Hodges so separates faith and repentance that no intrinsic or necessary relationship remains between them (90). Riddlebarger also finds MacArthur's definition of faith confusing, since it tends to treat repentance as though it were "an essential component" of faith itself, thereby undermining the believer's assurance of salvation. Contrary to Hodges' intellectualizing of faith and

MacArthur's confusing of faith and repentance, Riddlebarger argues that, biblically, faith and repentance are clearly distinguishable, though inseparable, components of a Spirit-wrought response to the gospel. Faith alone unites us to Christ, though true faith is never alone but bears "fruits" in keeping with repentance.

This part of the study is then concluded with a brief chapter by Michael Horton, "Union with Christ." In this chapter Horton takes issue with views which divide the Christian response to the gospel into stages, including a "lower" and a "higher" stage of Christian experience. Whatever the extent or position of a believer on the way of sanctification, no believer who is united with Christ through faith can fail to find himself somewhere along the way. Christ not only justifies but also sanctifies those who belong to him.

The first chapter in the second part of this study, "Calvin and the Council of Trent," is authored by W. Robert Godfrey. As the chapter heading indicates, Godfrey compares and contrasts the positions of Calvin and the Council of Trent on the matter of justification. After noting that much of the confusion on both sides of the debate about "lordship salvation" is owing to a lack of historical awareness and study, Godfrey first summarizes the position of Trent. He then briefly summarizes the position of Calvin. According to Godfrey in this helpful chapter, the main difference between Trent and Calvin has to do with the relationship between justification and sanctification. Whereas Trent tended to confuse these two gifts of God's grace, making our standing before God depend partly upon our own righteousness, Calvin carefully distinguished them. Calvin understood that we are justified by grace alone through faith alone, but that the faith which justifies *inevitably and necessarily* works through love.

In a strangely titled chapter, "Christ Crucified between Two Thieves," Michael Horton next traces the history of the twin errors of antinomianism and legalism. One of the interesting features of this chapter is Horton's treatment of the difference in emphasis between the Reformers and the English and New England Puritans over the question of assurance. Though this latter difference has been much observed and disputed in the history of theology, Horton tends to side with those who stress the difference more than the similarity between Calvin and the Puritans. Although he carefully avoids drawing too sharp a contrast, he argues that the Puritans did not follow Calvin in including assurance as an essential aspect of true faith. The Puritans, consequently, moved in the direction of emphasizing the moral renewal brought by the gospel

and the importance of that renewal to a determination of one's state of grace.

In a fascinating and useful chapter, "An American Tale," Paul Schaefer sketches briefly earlier chapters of the present lordship salvation debate. Schaefer demonstrates that this debate has precursors in the history of evangelicalism. The first of these precursors Schaefer finds in the exchange between the dispensationalist, Lewis Sperry Chafer, and the noted Calvinist scholar, B. B. Warfield. This exchange occurred in the context of Warfield's review of Chafer's book, *He That Is Spiritual*, in *The Princeton Review* of April, 1919. Warfield argued in his review that Chafer's distinction between "carnal" and "spiritual" Christians echoed the "victorious life" view of the Keswick movement. This distinction and its associated aspects, according to Warfield, illicitly separated between the works of justification and sanctification, both of which are inseparably and simultaneously given by the Spirit through the gospel to all believers. This first skirmish between Chafer and Warfield was followed by a similar exchange between Steven Barabas of Wheaton College and John Murray of Westminster Seminary. Barabas, who had written a history of the Keswick movement, was criticized by Murray for his sharp distinction between two classes of Christians and failure to recognize that *all* believers are simultaneously justified and sanctified, though the latter work is a life-long progress of renewal in which some Christians have advanced further than others (only in degree, not in quality of experience). After summarizing these two earlier chapters, Schaefer concludes with an interesting discussion of contemporary writers within evangelicalism who have taken similar views to the "no-lordship salvation" proponents.

The book then concludes with a chapter by Paul Schaefer, "A Battle Royal," which nicely summarizes the major points in dispute, and a chapter by Rod Rosenblatt, "Conclusion: *Christ Died for the Sins of Christians, Too*," which argues that the keynote of the gospel in evangelical preaching must still be "the clear and unqualified pronouncement of the assurance of salvation on the basis of the fullness of the atonement of Christ" (206).

To these chapters the editor also has appended three appendices, the first a short list of "Ten Propositions," the second the review of Chafer's book by Warfield, "Benjamin B. Warfield on Lewis Sperry Chafer," and the third a selection of statements from the Reformation confessions, "Select Doctrinal Statements from the Reformation."

Within the growing body of literature devoted to the lordship salvation debate, this book will prove to be a useful starting point for

those who seek a discussion of the biblical and historical dimensions of the debate from a self-consciously reformational standpoint. It will also serve well for many as an introduction to the debate between lordship salvation and no-lordship salvation adherents, though it concentrates primarily on the writings of Hodges and MacArthur.

In my judgment a book like this has been needed for a long time. As the editor and several of the authors point out, many of the parties to the debate have appealed to the Reformers in their defense. In some ways the debate has been reducible to the question: who is closer or more faithfully presenting the reformational perspective on the matter of salvation, the lordship or the non-lordship proponents? Unfortunately, neither side has done a very good job of citing accurately and carefully the Reformation sources. This has been especially true in the case of Hodges, whose reading of the Reformers, particularly Calvin, tends to be superficial and one-sided.

The misrepresentation of Calvin's position in this debate has led me for some time to contemplate writing an essay on "John Calvin and the Lordship Salvation Debate," precisely in order to clear Calvin's name of the misunderstandings introduced by the appeals being made to him. Having written a dissertation on Calvin's understanding of the relation between justification and sanctification, I am convinced that he has been inappropriately used in this discussion and that his treatment of this relation *would greatly contribute to a more biblical understanding* and *clarifying of the issues*. Calvin sharply distinguishes justification and sanctification, thereby avoiding the evil of moralism or legalism. And at the same time, Calvin recognizes that justification and sanctification can no more be separated than Christ can be separated from his Spirit, or the office of Christ as priest be separated from his office as king, thereby avoiding the evil of antinomianism. For Calvin, the inseparable unity of justification and sanctification is founded upon the unity of Christ's work for and in believers who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Though I am generally appreciative and thankful for this helpful contribution to the discussion, there are some reservations that I wish to register with this collection of essays.

One of them has to do with the organization of the book and the sequence of the chapters. Though the division between biblical and historical sections is legitimate, the reader is nowhere presented with a chapter that succinctly traces the history of the debate, distinguishing the issues that have emerged. Perhaps the book would have profited from an opening chapter that simply traced this history and presented the problem to which the various chapters of this volume wish to make

their reply. There is something about the arrangement of the chapters and the distribution of the subject matter that does not satisfy. As a result, there is some repetitiveness between the chapters, even some rather considerable differences in the length of respective chapters.

Another problem is the lack of sustained attention to the writings and positions of the Reformers, particularly those of Luther and Calvin. For a book that advertises itself as dealing with "The Reformation and Lordship Salvation," it is disappointing to be served with tidbits from the Reformers throughout the various chapters, but nowhere with a sustained treatment of the position of the Reformers. I would like to have read, for example, a chapter detailing Calvin's careful treatment of the relation between justification and sanctification, as well as his understanding of the "uses" of the law in distinction from the gospel. The same holds true for the position of Luther, who has often been charged (to some extent, unjustly) with an antinomian distortion of the gospel. Interestingly, the chapters dealing with more recent history, as it bears upon this debate, provide more material than those dealing directly with the Reformation.

These weaknesses notwithstanding, this book deserves to be added to any collection of "must-reading" sources on the lordship salvation debate. The stakes in this debate are high — the proper understanding of the gospel, providing a hedge against the twin dangers of legalism and antinomianism. The confusion, biblically and historically, which is present on both sides remains great. This book will help to clarify that confusion somewhat, and for that those who cherish the biblical, Reformed faith can only be grateful.

*Cornelis P. Venema*

*God the Economist*, by M. Douglas Meeks. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1989. Pp. 257. n.p.

This book with an unusual title has been written by the Professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. It might just as easily have been entitled, "The Great Divorce," for in seven incisive chapters, Meeks develops his thesis that, while God may be described as an economist par excellence (economy being derived from the Greek οἰκονομία which refers to "the law or management of the household" (3), God and his relation to the economy have become separated so that the latter functions according

to completely secular norms rather than in harmony with the teaching of God's Word.

And yet, while not giving a ready-made solution to modern economic dilemmas, the Bible nevertheless gives "the shape of God's economy to which, for Christians, our economic systems should correspond as much as possible under the conditions of history. God's own economy is God's life, work and suffering for the life of creation. As such it is meant as ground of the human economy for life. God's 'law of the household' [i.e., the Church as the οἰκονομία τοῦ Θεοῦ and ultimately all of creation] is the economy of life against death and cannot be disregarded by our economy with impunity" (3).

Consequently, Meeks seeks to point out how God, as the economic Trinity, relates to the world in creation and redemption,

> . . . i.e., οἶκος and the oik-paranymns (economy, ecology, οἰκουμένη) point to the interrelatedness of God's work of creating, reconciling and redeeming . . . . The question of economy is, Will everyone in the household get what it takes to live? The question of ecology is, Will nature be given its rights or must it protest by dying, thereby cutting off the existence of human beings? The question of οἰκουμένη is, Will the world become mutually habitable by the peoples of the earth? (34).

> The great promise of the modern market is that through its own control mechanisms, exchange and production, it can organize millions of human beings and coordinate massive human energies *without external authority* . . . (50).

But the market cannot control such sins as greed, exploitation, domination by haves of the have-nots, coercion, in a word: fallen human nature. The economy, like all else, needs the involvement of God's redemptive activity. As economist, or steward of his creation, he the Righteous One does righteousness. He delivers his people from bondage, provides freedom and fulfillment in his household, provides the model by which his redeemed people, being provided with means, are to use such with respect to others in the exercise of a faithful stewardship on their part.

In the final three chapters Meeks relates the teaching of God's Word to property, work and needs. With respect to property, where it is regarded as an exclusive right both to use and to dispose of material things, it is bound to result in inequality of wealth and power (109). Individuals themselves become commodities to be exchanged in supply and demand ratios. Rather, God has given human beings authority to

use possessions to meet human needs and to create human community (122). With respect to work, God again as Triune provides the model with distinctive (each Person working) cooperative, equalitarian and self-giving love. Work is therefore the power to answer with effort God's call to be God's economist in God's household (137). A humanizing economy depends upon the creation of meaningful work for every person who is able and wants to work (151). With respect to needs, while to be human is to have needs, to define one's own needs in isolation from others leads to a society of strangers (164) and an increasingly exploitative society.

> Nothing is deeper in the spirit of capitalism and socialism than the belief that there is not enough to go around. The Church, however, is called to live and organize itself out of the faith that God the Holy Spirit is willing and providing whatever is necessary for all persons and the whole creation to live (171).

"The point of the gospel is not simply to have one's needs met, but to have one's needs met so that one can meet the needs of others" (175). "The purpose of human life is not to consume or accumulate but to do justice. All needs should be defined in relation to that" (177).

Some questions, of course, remain. While Meeks' analysis and remedy appear well-founded, how the latter is to be carried out, apart from God's redeeming grace, is not really made clear, unless it be that the people of God recognize their errors and begin putting the right things into practice. Meeks' universalistic Barthian theology and sympathies with liberation theology (with its new hermeneutic) come into view here and there and color his views of creation, redemption and eschatology. Also, some additional forty pages of endnotes at times proves tiresome reading, especially when some turn out to be lengthily discursive in nature. Twenty-six pages of bibliography, however, is helpful, as are also the Scripture, Subjects and Authors/Names, indexes.

On the whole, Meeks has done a commendable job in tackling a subject about which the people of God have had too little to say. Reading this book should provide a needed stimulus in both areas.

*Raymond O. Zorn*