

BOOK REVIEWS & SHORT NOTICES

T. Desmond Alexander. *From Eden to the New Jerusalem: An Introduction to Biblical Theology*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008. Pp. 208. \$19.99.

T. Desmond Alexander serves as senior lecturer in biblical studies and as director of postgraduate studies at Union Theological College in Belfast. In *From Eden to the New Jerusalem*, Alexander has produced a concise, insightful, and engaging introduction to biblical theology, aimed at capturing the meta-story, or “blue print” as Alexander often puts it, of God’s redemptive work in history. Identifying this meta-story of the Bible is important, for as Alexander rightly notes, “not a book within the whole collection ... can be interpreted satisfactorily in isolation from the rest. Each book contributes something special to the meta-story and, in turn, the meta-story offers a framework within which each book may be best interpreted” (10).

To uncover the Bible’s narrative structure, Alexander adopts a creative approach: he starts at the end. After identifying the themes unveiled in the final chapters of Revelation, he then locates these themes in the Old Testament and traces their development through the New Testament until he arrives back at the end. As he claims, and ably demonstrates, “a story’s conclusion provides a good guide to the themes and ideas dominant throughout” (10).

Alexander traces the main themes of Scripture throughout the Bible in a thoughtful, lucid, and seamless manner. The themes that Alexander picks up in Revelation and tracks through the entire narrative include the presence of God, the throne and kingdom of God, the conquest of sin and of Satan, the Lamb of God and his sacrificial work, the necessity of holiness, the tree of life, the encompassing of the nations in God’s purpose and plan, and the contrast between the city of God and the worldly Babylon.

After he provides a brief introduction in Chapter 1, Alexander launches into a substantial treatment of the theme of the divine presence based on Revelation 21:1-3, in which God’s dwelling is with man. Drawing on the recent work of G. K. Beale and others, Alexander makes a detailed argument for seeing the divine presence as a major subject in the Bible. Beginning with the Garden of Eden, convincingly portrayed as a temple-sanctuary in which God dwells with His people, Alexander points out how this imagery of the garden is subsequently echoed in Israel’s tabernacle and temple. The plan of God to be with His people is fulfilled in Jesus, the Word who became flesh and “tabernacled among us” (John 1:14). The divine presence is a reality today in and through the church, described in the New Testament as a temple (Eph. 2:20-22; 1 Cor. 6:19). Finally, God dwelling with his people will be fully realized in the new heavens and the new earth, where, as Alexander points out, the New Jerusalem shares its dimensions—a cube—and its material components—gold—with the Holy of Holies, serving to identify the Holy City as a place where God resides. By far the lengthiest section of the book (60 of its 192 pages), it is an exceptional exploration of the dwelling place of God in the theology of the Scriptures. Indeed, he demonstrates the theme’s perva-

siveness and importance by essentially retelling the story of redemption through it.

Citing Revelation 22:1-3, Alexander considers the theme of the kingdom of God and the restoration of His people as royal priests in Chapter 3. After commenting on the fall and the impact of humanity's rebellion on God's blueprint for creation, he specifically examines the theocracy of Israel and the New Testament church as instruments of God's restoration project. This approach is commendable as it serves to tie together both the old and new administrations of the one covenant of grace under the broader theme of the kingdom.

In Chapter 4, Alexander discusses God's overthrow of Satan and the satanic powers as described in the early verses of Revelation 20. Rightly identifying this overthrow as a fulfillment of the promise declared in Genesis 3:15 and accomplished in the work of Jesus Christ, he also provides a highly useful series of implications for resisting the devil today as Christians await the consummation of Christ's victory. In Chapter 5, Alexander considers the theme of the Lamb of God (the designation used for Jesus in the book of Revelation) by examining the Old Testament Passover and explaining how the themes of atonement, cleansing, and sanctification find fulfillment in the work of Christ. In this section, Alexander candidly maintains the penal substitutionary elements in the work of atonement.

In Chapter 6, Alexander combines the themes of holiness, the tree of life, and the nations as they occur in the book of Revelation, showing how each of these themes finds its origin in the Old Testament and is linked to God's redemptive purpose and plan. By noting the placement of the tablets of the law within the Holy of Holies, he makes the insightful connection between the divine presence and the necessity of holiness (see Heb. 12:14). He notes, "Holiness, reflected in moral perfection, is a prerequisite for entering the divine sanctuary" (147). He then explores the implications of this for Christian living. The presence of the tree of life in Revelation 22 and Genesis 2 leads Alexander to probe the biblical texts dealing with ecological transformation, such as Isaiah 11:6-9, while he considers social transformation in connection with the theme of the "healing of the nations".

The final chapter includes a superb treatment of the meaning and significance of Babylon in the Bible, contrasted with the city of God as a "tale of two cities" (175). Noting that Babylon is described in Revelation as being "obsessed with acquiring material goods and overflows with excessive luxuries" (180), he challenges certain features of Western capitalism and the assumption that it is a friend to the church. He asserts that "People captivated by wealth and power are divorced from God" (184). Referencing the work of Hamilton and Denniss on the malaise of "affluenza" in the West, he affirms the detrimental effects this overconsumption and "thirst for more" has on the culture and on individuals.

Along these lines, one of the strengths of the book in addition to the rich theological insights is the intentional attempts to draw out the implications and applications for Christian living. In addition to the material on resisting the devil and his challenge to come out of Babylon and its obsession with worldly prosperity, Alexander insists that "[a]cknowledging Jesus as king must go beyond mere words" (96), calling the church to faithfulness in extending the kingdom in view of its regained royal status in Christ. Furthermore, he identifies the important implications of the international dimensions of God's redemptive work, concluding that racism should have no place

in the church (170). Similar applications are sprinkled throughout the book, which attest to the practicality of biblical theology.

The book is also strengthened by ample and illuminating footnotes and contains a helpful bibliography at the end highlighting additional resources. Even more importantly, Alexander supports his arguments with pointed and illuminating Biblical texts. In doing this, he displays an awareness of and keen interest in the broader context of specific texts, and is appropriately selective to avoid becoming excessive in garnering scriptural support for his points—a task not easily accomplished when the topic being addressed runs throughout the whole Bible!

While not necessarily a weakness, it is interesting to note that Alexander makes no attempt to subsume the themes he treats under one overarching theme that binds all the threads together, such as the “kingdom of God”. It is not clear whether Alexander even thinks a claim to a unifying theme can be supported as he leaves the question entirely unaddressed. And while Alexander acknowledges that more could have been made of the Davidic covenant and its connection with the temple as well as of the important themes of Sabbath and shalom (188), his exploration is not intended to be exhaustive (11). Indeed, the volume serves its purpose as an introduction and preserves an appropriately modest length.

Overall, this book is a superb, highly readable introduction to biblical theology. For those wanting to see how the Bible tells a single, progressively unfolding story of redemption from Genesis to Revelation, or as the title suggests, from Eden to the New Jerusalem, culminating in the person and work of Christ and consummated in the new heavens and the new earth, this book will not disappoint. This book is easily adaptable for use in a Sunday school class or a group study and is certain to prove valuable in helping people see the big picture and the main themes in the Bible.

—Brian Allred

Herman Bavinck. *Reformed Dogmatics: Abridged in One Volume*. Edited by John Bolt. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011. Pp. xvi + 848. \$59.99 (cloth).

Three years after the completion of the English translation of Herman Bavinck’s great work, the four-volume *Reformed Dogmatics*, another milestone has been reached with the publication of a one-volume abridgment. John Bolt, editor of the earlier four-volume translation, has once again performed a yeoman’s task in steering the project to completion and making available to an English-speaking audience a more accessible version of Bavinck’s dogmatics. Handsomely bound in a form that matches the larger work, the publication of this abridgment should prove to be a more helpful means of introducing Bavinck’s magisterial grasp of Reformed theology to a larger audience than the intimidating four-volume work.

In his editor’s preface, Bolt provides the reader with a helpful explanation of the principal features of his abridgment. Though he was encouraged to consider the publication of his own précis of each chapter of Bavinck’s dogmatics, which are a helpful feature of the earlier translation, Bolt opted to provide the reader an abridgment of Bavinck’s dogmatics that, as much as possible, retains Bavinck’s own words in their English translation. As Bolt describes his abridgment, “I worked hard to preserve Bavinck’s own voice,

even his own words, keeping my transitions and paraphrases to a minimum. Careful readers should be able to recognize whole sentences and sections taken straight from *Reformed Dogmatics*, and it is my hope that even the most attentive readers will hear only Bavinck's voice throughout" (xi). To employ language borrowed from studies of the New Testament Gospels, Bolt aims to retain Bavinck's "exact voice" (*ipsissima vox*), even though the "exact words" (*ipsissima verba*) are not always his. In his further explanation of his approach to the abridgment, Bolt draws upon the analogy of a large symphony orchestra. Bolt's role in the abridgment is to serve as a kind of "editorial assistant." The original score, which was authored and conducted by Bavinck, is "shortened and reconfigured for this one performance" (xi), but the tune remains the same. On those rare occasions where Bolt intrudes into the text, an editor's footnote is provided to offer additional historical comments, references to more recent authors, or updated bibliographical material. On a few occasions when Bolt dissents from Bavinck's view, he also does so by way of an editor's footnote.

Several of the "guidelines" that Bolt follows in his abridgment are worthy of special notice. In Bavinck's original four-volume work, a considerable amount of text addresses issues of historical theology, or engages with authors who were his contemporaries. A considerable amount of this material has been deleted from the abridgment, though references to classic Christian authors are often retained. The fifty-eight chapters of the original have been reduced to twenty-five by eliminating the extensive historical material and instances of redundancy in the treatment of topics. The most significant "structural" changes in the presentation of the dogmatics include a relocation of three sections from the discussion of God's names, and the clear division of the dogmatics into seven sections, an introductory prolegomena and the six classic loci of Christian theology. Throughout the abridgment, Bolt endeavors to retain Bavinck's language "down to specific phrasing and key citations" (xiii). Occasionally, sentences and paragraphs from the original are rearranged to permit a better flow in the argument and presentation of the topic. To assist the reader in comparing the abridgment to the original four-volume work, Bolt retains the section numbers in square brackets [] that go back to the original Dutch second edition of the *Reformed Dogmatics*. While the abridgment also includes Scripture, name, and subject indexes, it does not include the bibliography of the larger four-volume work or the editor's biographical and theological introduction to Bavinck's work as a theologian.

Though it is important to remember the limitations of any abridgment of an original, larger work, Bolt's abridgment of Bavinck's *Reformed Dogmatics* is an outstanding and welcome accomplishment. The abridgment is an obvious labor of love on his part, and makes Bavinck's theology more accessible to a wider range of English readers. For those who admire Bavinck's work as a theologian (and I count myself among them), the preparation and publication of this abridgment is a wonderful gift to the church, students of theology and pastors alike. So far as I am able to tell, Bolt has performed his service well as Bavinck's editorial assistant. Throughout the abridgment, the voice remains Bavinck's, even when some of the words and their arrangement are Bolt's. Like any abridgment, this one may not take the place of the original. But it may serve to make the original all the more accessible.

—Cornelis P. Venema

J. Mark Beach. *Piety's Wisdom: A Summary of Calvin's Institutes with Study Questions*. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2010. Pp. 368. \$20.00.

Dr. J. Mark Beach's summary of the *Institutes* is unique. His summary is done with an awareness of the significant Calvin research of the last twenty years. He self-consciously avoids commandeering Calvin to win modern theological fights. The book is written for laypersons, students, and busy pastors. It arose within the context of Beach providing a summary of the *Institutes* for an adult study group. What makes this summary unique and helpful is that it functions as a study guide that provides questions for group discussion. Therefore this work accomplishes two purposes. First, it provides a concise summary of key issues in Calvin's thought. Richard A. Muller writes about the book: "It stands as one of the best and most trustworthy introductions to Calvin presently available." Second, it provides the tools for a group study of the *Institutes*.

As a preacher, I found this summary useful for sermon preparation. Calvin's thought is so pregnant with ideas that no Reformed preacher can read this work without mining some of the ideas for use in his sermons. I was working on sermons on the topics of general revelation and justification as I happened to read the summaries of Calvin's views on these matters. The result was that I learned how Calvin formulated these doctrines and discovered some nice quotations to use in my sermons. Any tool, even a summary of a classic theological work, is helpful if it assists the reader in interacting with the critical issues in the original text. I found that this summary stimulated me to interact with and respond to Calvin's theological ideas. This summary will make you think about both Christian doctrine and Christian living.

I enjoyed reading straight through this brief summary because it gave me a sense of the breadth and vitality of Calvin's theology. I find that constantly I need to challenge the limited horizons of my own thinking about theological matters. This book helped me to see beyond my own partial perspective to the broader vistas of Calvin's vision of what faith knows about God, self, and the world. A quick read of this book present the reader with a kaleidoscope of doctrinal formulations and raises a whole array of questions. The critical reader can come up with many more relevant questions to be used in a book discussion.

Beach's method is to divide each chapter into three sections entitled *Orientation*, *Topics of Chapter*, and *Observations*. In the *Orientation* Beach places the subject matter of each chapter into its context in the *Institutes*. He also provides a birds-eye view of the topics discussed in the chapter. The summary is detailed, logical, clear, and well-written. In the *Observations* section Beach accents some of the critical insights of Calvin in a section of the *Institutes*.

A concise summary by its very nature is an implicit interpretation of what is considered relevant and significant in Calvin's thought. This element of interpretation makes Beach's work interesting. Aware of present Calvin research, Beach avoids misinterpretations of Calvin's theology and present Calvin's perspective on issues in contemporary theology.

The following topics and Beach's interpretation of Calvin show the relevance of Calvin's thought when dealing with present discussions about *covenant*, *natural law*, *the Law/Gospel distinction*, *merit*, *justification*, and *two kingdom theology*. Let us look at a few comments that Beach makes on these

subjects in Calvin to get a taste for how the Reformer's thought can be brought into dialogue with contemporary discussions.

About the *covenant of works*, Beach writes: "Calvin (like Augustine) sets forth a rudimentary doctrine of the covenant of works. He does not use that language, of course, but the ingredients that would compose that doctrine in later Reformed thinking are present" (90).

Regarding the purpose of *natural law*, Beach states: "Indeed, conscience stands in place of the written law of Moses, and man befouled by sin stands condemned on that basis" (96).

With respect to the relationship between *law, promise, and the Mosaic covenant*, Beach explains: "The law, indeed, contains promise, that is, the gospel. This gospel promise is also revealed in the law—the law here referring to the entirety of the Old testament, not merely the Ten Commandments" (109). On the *Law/Gospel distinction*, Beach writes: "The importance of Calvin's remark here is not to be underestimated. The law can refer to the entirety of Old Testament revelation; in that sense the gospel is revealed in the law. Sometimes the law can, instead, refer to God's perfect standard of righteousness, which demands from us perfection if we would enjoy fellowship with God. Then the law stands entirely opposed to the gospel..." (122).

In defending the *unity of the Old and New Testaments*, Beach observes: "In this context Calvin is particularly concerned to emphasize his first point, namely that the people of the Old Testament were not seeking merely material blessing and felicity in earthly obtainments. Rather, "the Old Testament was particularly concerned with the future life" (2.10.3)" (124).

With regard to *merit*, Calvin states that "man as man cannot merit before God—even the human nature of Christ cannot merit before God" (149). Beach argues that Calvin considers it important to defend the truth that Christ *merits* for His elect: "For Calvin, the denial of merit, i.e., claiming divine mercy absent merit, trivializes Christ's sacrifice and turns Him into "a mere instrument or minister" of salvation" (149).

Beach explains Calvin's view of how the Christian needs a "double acceptance before God" that includes a *second justification*: "Here Calvin again refers to the second justification that believers enjoy, for God reckons our works "good" from His Fatherly kindness by granting "pardon for those blemishes and spots which cleave to them" (3.17.5)" (214).

Concerning Calvin's teaching about 'a twofold government in man' or the *two kingdoms*, Beach writes: "Calvin's burden is to formulate his own version of the separation of church and state. He does not want the political sphere impinging on the ecclesiastical sphere. More importantly for his discussion of Christian freedom, as noted above, Calvin is concerned about the misapplication of Christian freedom to the political jurisdiction. He opposes the Libertines and others who, in the name of Christian freedom, argue that believers are free from obeying the civil authorities and living by the rules of society" (226).

I am excited about this book being used in adult study groups, adult Sunday Schools, book discussion groups, high school or college classrooms, or in pre-confession classes. Gather some friends and use this book to help guide your discussion of Reformed theology. It is vital for the health of Reformed churches that Reformed believers constantly grow in their knowledge and love of the truth. This book functions as an introduction to Reformed theology. I encourage elders in Reformed churches to promote a study group of the *Institutes* in the congregation using this summary. There are enough

lessons for an entire school year—some 24 chapters are included. Each chapter is followed by questions for reflection and discussion. The questions are detailed and cover the wide array of issues discussed in each chapter.

The questions at the end of each chapter remind me of how many questions arise out of and have arisen out of the study of Calvin's thought and the relationship between his views and those of the post-Reformation orthodox Reformed. What is the relationship between faith and assurance in Calvin? Calvin presents perspectives that are relevant for burning theological issues today. What is the nature of the covenant of works and the covenant of grace? Is there a sense in which we need a second justification or a double acceptance? What is the relationship between covenant and election? How does Calvin understand the "universalistic texts" like Ezekiel 33:11? Is the moral law equivalent to natural law? What is God's purpose in providing natural law? Why can't a mere man merit with God? How are faith and love related? Is there a "lower working" of the Spirit in the reprobate? Why does Calvin reject an absolute antithesis between the Law and Gospel? Did the Fall obliterate man's natural gifts (the image of God in the wider sense)? The answers to these questions and more are touched on in *Piety's Wisdom*.

A book group or study class could use Beach's book on its own or use it as a gateway into the actual text of the *Institutes*.

Beach is to be commended for providing a summary with study questions that can be used by laity to enter into the fertile thought of the Reformer of Geneva.

—Nathan Brummel

Alexander (Sandy) Finlayson. *Unity and Diversity: The Founders of the Free Church of Scotland*. Fearn, Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 2010. Pp. 320. \$14.99.

Sandy Finlayson, Library Director at Westminster Theological Seminary (Philadelphia, PA), has given a much needed history of the founding of the Free Church of Scotland (1843), furnishing us with striking portraits of many of its key players. This reviewer especially commends this first-rate work to the readers of this journal who, familiar with the continental tradition, may know little of the Scottish heritage and contribution to the Reformed and Presbyterian faith.

It is particularly interesting to note that at the same time as the *Afscheiding* (1834), there were similar battles going on in faithful Presbyterian churches in America (leading to the Old School/New School division of 1837) and in Scotland (the Ten Years Conflict, beginning in 1834 and leading to the Disruption that began the Free Church of Scotland in 1843). The situation in Scotland and the Netherlands particularly merit comparison: in both cases, an Erastian state sought to dominate the church, a move that was resisted by the faithful.

In the case of Scotland, the right of patronage was a particular sticking point. Patronage was the right that landed nobility claimed to name the parish ministers. The Moderate party that upheld this claim ran afoul of the Evangelicals who countered that the local kirk and its Session should have, together with the appointing Presbytery, more of a say in the selection of ministers than the local lords. The Evangelicals argued, in keeping with certain Scottish distinctives, that the "crown rights of King Jesus" were to be

maintained over against governmental authorities who usurped the right of the church to govern itself.

When the State decisively asserted its right over the Church of Scotland, maintaining that, since the Church was Established by the state, it was essentially a creature of the State, the Evangelicals were unwilling to continue to tolerate such “civil interference in ecclesiastical matters and were determined to defend the spiritual independence of the church” (29). At the 1843 General Assembly the Moderator himself declared that the state’s usurpation of the church’s prerogatives was intolerable and that the church must protest and separate itself from the state. A massive exodus occurred from St. Andrews (in Edinburgh), where the Assembly was meeting, to a prepared hall nearby where Thomas Chalmers was promptly elected Moderator. Thus the Free Church was founded with 470 ministers at that point and “it is estimated that 40 per cent of the church’s lay membership withdrew from the Established Church” (33).

It is important to note that, though the Free Church left the Established Church, she did this on the basis of Establishment principles. In other words, the Free Church did not believe in disestablishment but a godly establishment. However, she preferred to wait, watch, and pray until such time as a godly establishment might be restored than to compromise her witness by being in the thrall of a state that was tyrannical to those committed to the true Reformed faith.

Finlayson has a sound, historical treatment of the keys players: Chalmers, Robert Candlish, William Cunningham, Hugh Miller, Thomas Guthrie, James Begg, Andrew Bonar, John Duncan, Alexander Duff, and John Kennedy. Many readers are doubtless unfamiliar with many if not most of these names. This book affords a valuable opportunity, then, to get to know Cunningham, the great theologian (and friend of Charles Hodge), James Begg, a model of one who is theologically sound while being a social reformer, Andrew Bonar, evangelist and hymn-writer *non pareil*. Finlayson concludes with some thoughts on the church in the twenty-first century.

Having begun with an exhortation to the continental saints to get to know their Scottish brethren better, I must conclude by urging the same for my American Presbyterian fellows. Do we really know the Scottish church whence we came? Get to know the Free Church of Scotland a bit, a church with which Old School Presbyterians established close ties, and from which Old School Presbyterianism, our confessional Presbyterian churches today, have emerged. This history then is more relevant than many might imagine.

—Alan D. Strange

Eric L. Johnson. *Foundations for Soul Care: A Christian Psychology Proposal*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2007. Pp. 716. \$40.00 (cloth).

Eric Johnson provides serious students of the integration of psychology and theology with a massive, scholarly work on the subject. Johnson, who serves as associate professor of pastoral theology at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, sets out to propose a comprehensive matrix for counseling that flows from a Christian understanding of human beings as made in the image of God and meant to reflect his glory.

Johnson's book is divided into four parts consisting of eighteen chapters. In Part I, Johnson presents the biblical and historical perspective on the place of the Scriptures in Christian soul care. Of tremendous importance here is Johnson's critique of the Biblical Counseling Movement (BCM). Rather than flattening out the difference in the BCM, Johnson insightfully sets forth the differences that exist within the movement itself, commending what he calls "Progressive Biblical Counseling" (109) as being willing to interact with others and focusing more on being than doing. While noting the BCM's invaluable contribution to counseling within the evangelical community, Johnson notes that "the BCM has come to define itself implicitly almost entirely in terms of the antithesis principle," while functionally denying creation grace.

Part II studies the major practices required for a scientific discipline of psychology and argues that Christians must develop a hermeneutic that allows them to read and interpret the most important psychological texts available to them regarding the description of human beings (130). What we need, Johnson argues, "is a single, comprehensive, holistic discipline that seeks to understand individual human beings, using all the available and relevant resources" (143). This would, of course, include Scripture as Christian Psychology's supreme, controlling text.

Part III of *Foundations for Soul Care* is entitled "Let There Be Humans: The Semiodiscursive Constitution of Human Beings." This section represents the heart of Johnson's argument for a Christian psychology. Here Johnson explores humans as those made in the image of God, who through discourse and relationship, develop in "signs" of God (261), meant to glorify him. Semiotics is the discipline that deals with the representation of meaning. The most basic type of representation is a sign, but a sign is anything that points to something else. Johnson argues, "While almost anything can be a sign of something else, soul care is interested in the referential function of various aspects of human life: language, emotions, mental images, actions and other people, and texts in general, including narratives" (13). Humans, being made in the image of God, have a relatively high degree of semiotic correspondence, meant to reflect the glory of God.

Here Johnson also tackles what he sees as the danger of religious dualism. Religious dualists focus almost exclusively on the highest order of human life and see it as so much more important than the other orders that they are neglected or even ignored. In the most extreme cases they are even seen as antithetical to God-glorifying soul care. Such extreme division between the spiritual and other orders, Johnson argues, was the error of Gnosticism.

Because humans are made in the image of God, God-glorifying soul care can be exercised while working with all the orders of human life (biological, psychosocial, ethical, and spiritual); and Christian soul care providers must learn to prioritize their approach accordingly. In other words, healthy function on the biological level does bring glory to God, but only implicitly. God's glory is put on display in greater degree to the extent that it is recognized by God's creatures and made explicit. Johnson argues, "Drawing one another into praise is the movement of the manifestation of God's glory. As a result of this doxological *telos*, proper functioning of brain and soul, *if achieved in God's name*, intensifies the luminescence of the divine glory they put forth" (374).

Part IV represents the last section of the book and everything that has come before should be seen as preparation for it. This section addresses what is central to soul care. This center is the transformation of people as they understand more and more the glory of God. This is what Johnson calls “inwardness.” That glory is then expressed in the way one lives. This is what Johnson calls “outwardness.” Johnson ends this section by exploring and setting forth the most important modalities that should be used by soul care providers in helping those under their care. He then goes on to argue that a “metasystem,” that is, a system composed of the best aspects of various modalities represents the best approach to soul care.

Having set forth a summary of the book, several observations are in order. First, the comprehensiveness of Johnson’s book is astounding. As one reads *Foundations for Soul Care*, he cannot help but notice Johnson’s broad, yet deep understanding of the disciplines of psychology, philosophy, and theology. The reference section of the book spans almost fifty pages and its content is every bit as impressive as its length. Many theologians that Reformed and Presbyterian people value and trust fill these pages. Johnson also displays an understanding of the Reformed faith that is unmatched among Christian psychologists today. Likewise, Johnson displays an encyclopedic knowledge of Christian and secular psychology. He shows a command in these disciplines that leads him to fair and balanced assessments of the strengths and the weakness of the various views represented in them.

Second, Johnson provides his readers with a complex, thoughtful argument for a distinctively Christian discipline of psychology. He masterfully assesses what is needed to constitute such a discipline, measuring it against the standard by which scientific disciplines are accepted today. In addition, he intricately weaves together his understanding of psychology and theology, explaining how each addresses human nature, then brilliantly builds a Christian edification framework from this.

The complexity of Johnson’s argumentation, however, has the potential to be the greatest weakness of this book. The language and arguments found in *Foundations for Soul Care* are highly nuanced. This will make the book inaccessible to a substantial number of Christian soul care providers who, though interested in the topic of a Christian discipline of psychology, will have great difficulty assimilating the arguments set forth. In order to offset this liability, Johnson may find it helpful to produce another volume that would be more manageable. This is not to fault Johnson. His book is clearly an academic work. However, his arguments for a proper use of secularized psychology are so cogent and helpful we fear they will never gain traction unless they are couched in terms that are a bit more accessible.

Third, and most importantly, Johnson’s book provides a needed corrective to many of the erroneous positions, for and against, concerning the integration of psychology and theology. Johnson’s care in conceptualizing a Christian edification framework avoids the extremes of both the BCM and integrationist movements, providing a middle road in which special revelation is the controlling text, while common grace is given its proper due. In fact, since the Christian counseling wars began, there has been no better treatment of how believers can carefully use the insights of secularized psychology. This makes *Foundations for Soul Care* the most important book to come along in decades to help those who are serious about exploring how theology and psychology can be used to provide a holistic, edifying framework for use

in Christian counseling circles. If one is serious about a genuine discipline of Christian psychology, this book must be read.

—Danny Patterson

Paul C. Gutjahr. *Charles Hodge: Guardian of American Orthodoxy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xl + 476. \$74.00 (cloth).

Paul Gutjahr has written a biography of Charles Hodge (1797-1878) that is fair and historically contextualized, showing Hodge's importance in his time and world. The book is well written and its short chapters make ease in reading. This biographer, however, does not fully understand his subject inasmuch as, though a competent historian, he is not a theologian. I would maintain that one cannot really understand Hodge at any depth without understanding his theology. Unfortunately, Gutjahr makes it clear at various points that his understanding of certain theological matters lacks depth. As a minor illustration of this, he calls, at least twice, the forbidden fruit in paradise an apple, a common misconception among those not well acquainted with the Bible. He also cites Hodge's theological positions at points by directly quoting him, noting that this is what Hodge thought of this issue, when in fact Hodge is merely quoting the Westminster Standards, a point that seemed to have been lost on Gutjahr. More significantly, Gutjahr is not clear on Hodge's position on the imputation of Adam's sin, the nature of penal substitution and the atonement, his doctrine of Scripture, and other matters biblical and theological.

These immediate observations might prompt one to dismiss this work as shallow. That would be a mistake. Gutjahr has delved into the original sources, especially the Hodge papers at Princeton, and has come up with many gems. His work on Hodge's background, family, and historical context is good and at times insightful. He is as sympathetic as one might imagine a historian to be who obviously does not share Hodge's theological convictions. Given Hodge's importance, Gutjahr's volume is an important addition to what one can only hope is a burgeoning body of literature on the Princetonian.

Perhaps a case for Hodge's importance needs to be made. Hodge taught at Princeton for more than fifty-five years, coming as the third professor after having been trained by the first two, Archibald Alexander and Samuel Miller. Princeton was the most important confessionally Reformed seminary of its time; and Hodge became in mid-century its most important professor. Hodge trained more than three thousand men for the gospel ministry at Princeton. He was the single most important Old School Presbyterian figure of his time, and as the editor of the *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* influenced many in the church. His three-volume *Systematic Theology*, along with commentaries on Romans, First and Second Corinthians, and Ephesians, permit us to witness the genius of his theology. Two of his sons, A.A. and Caspar Wistar (Sr.) became professors at Princeton as well. Hodge's legacy for American Presbyterianism is incalculable.

We need more writing on Hodge for these reasons, as we have barely begun to take the measure of the man. He has enjoyed no biographer as such since his son A.A. Hodge's biography of his father in the nineteenth century. That volume has been kept in print, thankfully, and Banner of Truth just reprinted it (alert to our readers). Since the bicentennial of his birth in 1997, there has been revived interest in Hodge; and Andrew Hoffer, who wrote

Piety and the Princeton Theologians, is working on a highly anticipated biography from a theological viewpoint sympathetic to Hodge (forthcoming, P&R Publishing). This volume, while theologically unsophisticated, does several things well.

Gutjahr's work enjoys distance, both personally and chronologically, that A.A. Hodge's work on his father could not possess, naturally. In this respect, he is judicious in his view of Hodge on the question of slavery, critically, but fairly, assessing him. He is nuanced in his treatment of Hodge on politics and the Civil War. Gutjahr is also, rightly, critical of some of the deficiencies not only theologically but civilly of Hodge's Scottish Common Sense Realism. While Gutjahr does not find Hodge to be philosophically in the thrall of the Scottish view to the degree that many scholars of the last half-century have, Gutjahr does not seem to be as aware as he should of the burgeoning body of literature that attests to Hodge's greater dependence on traditional Calvinism and acquitting him of the charges of rationalism. There is a growing consensus, if not to say a paradigm shift, that Hodge (and the Princetonians more broadly) were never as captive to Scottish realism as has been alleged, being more indebted to the classic Reformed faith in general and the Westminster Standards in particular.

Everyone interested in nineteenth-century American church history (indeed, broader American history as well) and Presbyterian history should read this work. For persons from a continental background, this would not be a bad entrée into a well-contextualized history from the other half of the Reformed and Presbyterian tradition. Both the Presbyterian Church of America and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church can claim Hodge as forbear, particularly the "Northern" church. It was opined by some in that day that Thornwell was respected, Dabney feared, and Hodge loved. Gutjahr's fine new biography will give its readers a good idea of why Charles Hodge was loved by family, students, and all who knew him, while at the same time being a churchman of great significance.

—Alan D. Strange

D. G. Hart. *Between the Times: The Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Transition, 1945-1990*. Willow Grove, PA: The Committee for the Historian of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 2011. Pp. xii + 340. \$12.00 (cloth).

Darryl Hart, church historian and biographer of J. Gresham Machen, has given us another first-rate history of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He and John Muether, Historian of the OPC, previously wrote, for the sixtieth anniversary of the OPC, a history of the denomination, *Fighting the Good Fight* (he has more recently, also with Muether, written a history of American Presbyterianism on its three-hundredth anniversary, *Seeking a Better Country*). This history under review focuses on the OPC ten years after its founding up until twenty years ago, the latter date being chosen to permit proper historical distance and interpretive integrity.

Hart has used a variety of original sources, including minutes of the General Assembly, official denominational correspondence, articles from the *Presbyterian Guardian*, *New Horizons*, and other archival materials. At almost every point, Hart brings insight and sheds light on a variety of historical moments: the early years of the OPC, the question of hymnody and psalmody and the composition of the Trinity Hymnal (1961), matters like the Clark con-

trovsky, Westminster Seminary (its central role and decline in the life of the OPC), ecumenicity (the talks about joining with the CRC, the RPCES, and the PCA serving as highlights here) and more.

Particularly interesting to this reviewer was Hart's treatment of the continuing decline of the PCUSA, including its adoption of the Book of Confessions (1967) and the hopes that this engendered in the OPC for a mass exodus of the mainline church for a true Presbyterian church like the OPC. This, as well as the prospective mergers with other Reformed denominations, did not occur and the OPC has continued to be relatively small (just now approaching 30,000). Also of great interest is Hart's Chapter 5, "Ministry of the 'Whole Church,'" in which he treats the integral nature of home and foreign missions in the earlier years of the OPC by showing how fluid the transitions were between the two, as seen especially in the ministries of Clarence Duff, Henry Coray, and Harvie Conn. His treatment of their service, both stateside and internationally, is worth the price of the book alone, delightful and evoking praise in the heart of the faithful.

Hart has not written a sentimental or a triumphalistic history. Anyone who knows his work knows that such would be uncharacteristic of Hart. But it is a sympathetic history of the OPC. He writes of Christian Education, as well as of Missions, chronicling the production of Sunday School materials and, ultimately, the joining together of the OPC and the PCA in the production of Christian education materials. He writes of the *Guardian*, its demise and the rise of *New Horizons*. In all this, Hart's particular sympathies—one might call it a theology of the cross, of sorts, an unassuming amillennialism—prevail. His understanding of the "spirituality of the church" is on display in chapter 9 especially—"In Search of a Prophetic Voice"—in which Hart critically looks at the use of such with respect to race relations and abortion, particularly.

Hart, in general, sees the OPC as a denomination that has consciously, at various points, chosen to be Reformed and not evangelical. For Hart these two always stand in opposition to each other. To be sure, the OPC did not go into the National Association of Evangelicals or other American groups, seeking fellowship in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, preferring international reformed bodies rather than national evangelical bodies. The ethos of the OPC, however, has not always been decidedly anti-Evangelical, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, with majorities seeking union (of some sort) with the RPCES and the PCA and the rise of the New Life movement. While this reviewer's sympathies lie more with Hart in these matters, it would be salutary, one might think, to hear the story of the OPC told, at some point, by one with some different sympathies than Hart.

To Hart's credit, and in view of his Old Side convictions, he makes the following important admission: "But the OPC has not been suspicious of revivalism the way that the Old Side was, thus reflecting Orthodox Presbyterian comfort with the 1758 Plan of Union. For this reason, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in special seasons of evangelism and godliness has always had an appeal to the OPC even while the church has frowned upon revivalism spawned by defective presentations of the gospel or conducted in ways that contravened the order and discipline of the institutional church." One might have hoped that something of this would have more broadly informed this work. And there certainly is room for works that would tell this tale a bit differently. That notwithstanding, this is a first-rate history that this reviewer

is happy to commend to all who love or who are interested in, from any vantage point, the history of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

—Alan D. Strange

Daniel R. Hyde. *Welcome to a Reformed Church: A Guide for Pilgrims*. Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust, 2010. Pp. xxvi + 178. \$12.00.

Some years ago, when I was a pastor of a Reformed church in Southern California, I was often asked questions by visitors and guests at our church's services: "What does the word 'Reformed' [or 'Reform!'] mean in your name?" "Why does your church emphasize preaching in its public worship?" "Why do you baptize the children of believing parents?" "What is the 'Heidelberg Catechism'?" "What does your church believe and teach about ...?" These questions are only a small sampling of the kind of queries with which I would be peppered by visitors who were unfamiliar with the teaching and practice of the Reformed churches. Within the environment of North American Christianity, especially among broadly evangelical churches, many of the most distinctive practices of confessionally Reformed churches can appear strange or peculiar.

Daniel R. Hyde, pastor of the Oceanside United Reformed Church in Oceanside, California, knows firsthand the difficulties faced by those who are unfamiliar with the Reformed faith, when they first visit or eventually become members of a Reformed church. In his first encounter with the Reformed faith and churches as a teenager, Pastor Hyde recalls how unfamiliar he once was with the strange new world of the Reformed churches. Now that he has become a pastor of a Reformed church, he writes from the perspective of someone who understands the questions and challenges confronting those who are strangers to the Reformed faith.

The title of Hyde's book, *Welcome to a Reformed Church: A Guide for Pilgrims*, offers a clear statement of the book's purpose and content. Hyde aims to provide the reader with a kind of roadmap that will make the journey into a Reformed church more inviting and less intimidating. The purpose of his book is to show hospitality to those who may initially feel like "strangers" in Reformed churches whose beliefs and practices are well-known to the initiated, but often mysterious and off-putting to those who enter from a different background.

In order to accomplish his purpose, Hyde divides his introduction to the Reformed churches into nine short chapters, each of which treats an important feature or dimension of their faith and practice. These chapters treat such topics as: the history of the Reformed churches (Chapter 1, Roots); the doctrinal foundations (Chapter 2, Confessions); the final authority of these churches (Chapter 3, Scripture); the biblical story of redemption (Chapter 4, Covenant); the "sola's" of the Reformation (Chapter 5, Justification); the Christian life (Chapter 6, Sanctification); the distinguishing marks of the "true church" (Chapter 7, Church); the God-centred focus of Reformed worship (Chapter 8, Worship); and the "means of grace" (Chapter 9, Preaching & Sacraments). To enhance the usefulness of his study as an introductory primer in the Reformed faith, Hyde also provides two appendices, the first of which answers a number of common questions about the Reformed churches, the second of which offers a short bibliography of basic sources on the

Reformed faith. A Scripture, confessions, and subjects and names index are also provided to allow the reader quick access to particular topics or subjects.

One of the most important exhortations to believers in the Scriptures is that they show hospitality to strangers. Hyde's fine introduction and welcome to the faith and practice of the Reformed churches will prove to be a wonderful aid in the fulfillment of this calling on the part of Reformed churches. Pastors and members of Reformed churches should make grateful use of Hyde's fine book as they welcome and enfold new members. Perhaps in doing so, they will contribute to enhancing the reputation of Reformed churches as places where strangers are warmly welcomed and embraced. Since Reformed believers profess a gospel of God's gracious welcome to sinners in Jesus Christ, they ought to adorn their profession with a like gracious welcome to others.

—Cornelis P. Venema

Andreas J. Kostenberger. *A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 2009. Pp. 652. \$39.99 (cloth).

This book represents, from the standpoint of biblical theology, one of the most exhaustive treatments of John's Gospel and Letters now available. It is the first installment in a series entitled, *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, with eight large volumes projected. Dr. Kostenberger is the series editor; and the authors commissioned for this project have each written at least one commentary or major monograph related to their field of study. Andreas Kostenberger fills this criterion abundantly, having written a commentary on John, a book on John's theology of missions, co-authored a book on John's Trinitarian theology, and numerous other monographs and articles. The result is a thorough treatment of the Apostle John's contribution to New Testament biblical theology that is without peer in its field, written by a conservative scholar with an evident and refreshing devotion to Jesus Christ, who honors the divine authorship and authority of Scripture. The book is actually larger than it appears to be due to its irregular textbook size, thus addressing its subject matter in exhaustive fashion. This monumental work ought to serve as a benchmark for studies in Johannine theology for years to come, including up-to-date scholarly discussions, along with rich material that will assist ministers in preaching through John's Gospel and Letters.

Each author in the series is charged with presenting "a survey of recent scholarship and of the state of research, a treatment of the relevant introductory issues, a thematic commentary following the narrative flow of the document(s), a treatment of important individual themes, [and] a discussion of the relationship between particular writings and the rest of the New Testament and the Bible" (26). This series aims to provide a model "showing how Biblical Theology ought to be conducted" as well. Kostenberger follows this stated purpose closely, dividing his material into four major parts, sixteen chapters, and thirty-five sections.

Part I addresses the "historical framework for Johannine theology," which includes a brief statement of the state of scholarship in relation John's writings in the field of biblical theology, including a capable defense of Johannine authorship and the historical setting of his Gospel and letters (chapter 1, pp. 37-100). (The book of Revelation shall be dealt with in a separate

volume in this series.) His bibliography (pp. 568-614) is impressive and demonstrates the extent of research lying behind Kostenberger's text. Part II treats "literary foundations for Johannine theology," including genre, style, vocabulary, literary devices, and structure (chapters 2-3, pp. 101-174). This is followed by a very insightful literary-theological reading of John's Gospel and letters (chapters 4 and 5, respectively, pp. 175-272). Part III focuses upon "major themes in Johannine theology." It by far the largest section of the work and delves into biblical theology proper. This heading addresses John's worldview and use of (Old Testament) Scripture (chapter 6, pp. 273-310), the importance of the seven "signs" for interpreting John's Gospel (chapter 7, pp. 311-335), the relationship between Jesus as the divine Word and creation/new creation (chapter 8, pp. 336-354), John's Trinitarianism (chapter 9, pp. 355-402), the place of John's writings in the unfolding plan of redemptive history (chapter 10, pp. 403-435), the "cosmic trial motif" (chapter 11, pp. 436-456), the constitution of the New Messianic community as a replacement of Israel, with a treatment of divine election and human responsibility (chapter 12, pp. 457-508), "the Johannine love ethic" (chapter 13, pp. 509-524), "John's theology of the cross" as both a revelation of God *and* as a substitutionary atonement (chapter 14, pp. 525-538), and "John's Trinitarian mission theology" (chapter 15, pp. 539-546). Part IV, which closes the work, relates the findings of Johannine theology to the remainder of the New Testament (chapter 16, pp. 547-565). This is followed by a brief conclusion (pp. 566-567). This short survey indicates the breadth and compass of this book at a glance.

Any review of such an extensive work must of necessity be limited in scope. For this reason, I shall single out some noteworthy features, as well as offer a few critical observations. First, Kostenberger's treatment of John's presentation of the Triune nature of God is very insightful, particularly in light of the contemporary resurgence of interest in Trinitarianism. Trinitarian references pervade the book and the author consistently demonstrates the manner in which John presented his Gospel in terms of all three Persons of the Godhead. For example, the important Johannine concepts of "truth" (p. 288) and "glory" (p. 295) are rooted in the revelation of all three Persons, both together and distinctly. In addition to this pervasive emphasis, chapters nine and fifteen explore this topic in its own right. The former addresses allusions to the Shema and Jewish monotheism in John's Gospel, followed by a discussion of the nature and function of each divine Person distinctly both in respect to being and to economy in the revelation and work of redemption. Kostenberger's treatment of God the Father is more fulsome than most and it serves as the basis of the interrelationship of the three Persons, as well as the corresponding relationship between the Triune God and believers (pp. 370-379). Chapter fifteen, "John's Trinitarian mission theology," makes the important point that the overarching goal of John's Trinitarianism is to establish the pattern and the necessity of the mission of the Christian Church to an unbelieving world. Just as the Father sent the Son into a hostile and unbelieving world so that whosoever believes should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16), so Jesus sends his disciples into the same world with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit (who is sent by the Father and the Son) in order to spread his Gospel. While the mission of Christ is both unique and foundational, it provides a pattern for the subsequent mission of the Church, which has the privilege of extending the message of salvation to all at the initiative of the Triune God (pp. 539-546).

Second, the section treating the importance of Jesus' "signs" for the proper interpretation of John's Gospel yield fruitful insights. While most scholars are in agreement as to the importance of the major "signs" in John's Gospel, there is no consensus regarding the number of those signs. While six great "signs" are agreed upon (i.e., changing water into wine, healing the nobleman's son, healing the lame man, feeding the multitude, healing the blind man, and the raising of Lazarus), some, such as Leon Morris, make Jesus' walking on water a seventh sign, whereas others, such as D. A. Carson, include the resurrection as the greatest sign of all (p. 324). Kostenberger argues that the primary problem is one of definition. Building upon the foundation of the Old Testament, he argues that signs are not necessarily to be equated with miracles, but that they "function to authenticate the divine messengers" (p. 325). Based upon this fact, he proposes three criteria for Johannine signs: they must be public works of Jesus; they must be explicitly identified as "signs" in John's Gospel; and they reveal the glory of God in Jesus "as God's authentic representative" (pp. 326-327). For this reason, he suggests that the temple clearing of chapter two should be included as the seventh sign, since it meets all three criteria (p. 333). Walking on water, while miraculous, is ruled out because it was neither public nor was it referred to as a "sign." Jesus' resurrection is not a "sign," but rather the thing that is signified by the resurrection of Lazarus. The importance of including the temple clearing among the Johannine "signs" is that it points to the fact that Jesus replaces the Jewish temple as God's divine representative and that Jesus has now become the central "location" or focus of divine worship (pp. 333-335). This notion blends together well with the author's assertion that part of the purpose of the Gospel of John was to serve as an effective evangelistic appeal to Jews following the destruction of their temple in AD 70, after hope of rebuilding had been abandoned (pp. 60-72).

Third, Kostenberger includes a masterful discussion of John's salvation-historical perspective in chapter ten. With heavy dependence on John's use of Old Testament events, imagery, and festal symbolism, he demonstrates that John held together the unity of biblical revelation and redemptive history as culminated in the Person and work of Christ (see pp. 403, 422). He notes that this "is at best a minority position" in present scholarship (p. 403). Nevertheless, the weight of evidence presented in this chapter is decisive and it ought to serve as a starting point for future discussions of this important theme. This chapter expands the idea of Jesus as the replacement of the Jewish temple as well (pp. 422-435).

This reviewer's criticism of this masterful work shall be reduced to a single head that highlights the potentially inherent limitations of biblical theology as a discipline. While being vital to biblical interpretation, mere exegesis and biblical theology can have unintended negative consequences. Exegesis explains biblical data in individual contexts. Biblical theology expands this process by summarizing the findings of biblical data with respect to a particular book or collection of books from Scripture. However, failing to draw systematic conclusions from this data, which is admittedly beyond the scope of biblical theology to some extent, often results in ambiguity or potential error. For instance, chapter nine ("God: Father, Son, and Spirit), in spite of all of the strengths mentioned above, is an inadequate presentation of the Triune nature of God. It is not incorrect or unorthodox, but it is liable to various interpretations due to its failure to formulate a systematic definition of the doctrine of the Trinity. The author clearly establishes that Jewish monothe-

ism is the foundation of John's theology, that each of the three Persons is treated as divine, and that interrelationship between the Persons, with the resultant economic order of operation, is irreversible. This fails to rule out historical heresies such as Modalism, in which each of the three Persons are divine and follow as distinct economic order of operation in history, yet which denies the reality of three distinct personal subsistences (although the distinction of Persons is vindicated somewhat on pp. 541-543). It could be demonstrated that Modalism is contrary to the data of the Gospel of John, but not without making further distinctions and theological definitions that are of necessity derived from systematic and historical Theology. Kostenberger seems to recognize this fact implicitly by his very use of the term "Trinity," which is not Johannine but originated with the early Church father, Tertullian.

A similar problem exists in Kostenberger's treatment of election, the new birth, and faith. He maintains first that election in John precedes faith, and that it is not based upon even a foreseen faith (p. 458). Then, he asserts that the new birth follows and results from faith (p. 460). Next, he argues that the statement regarding being drawn to the Christ in John 6 refers to predestination (p. 461), which both implicitly contradicts his earlier statements concerning election and predestination as the eternal plan of God and confuses predestination with what is ordinarily referred to as "effectual calling." In the following discussion, he notes that the Holy Spirit "moves a person to faith in Christ" (p. 462) and that "spiritual birth is not the result of human initiative, but of supernatural origin" (p. 472). Finally, in footnote 60 of the same page, he gives mild approval to the idea that regeneration logically precedes faith, followed by a denial of the entire discussion by an appeal to the fact that John did not intend there to be any temporal order of events in the application of salvation. In spite of this last qualification, the fact that Kostenberger saw the need to address it on the basis of his interaction with the text of John's Gospel, the question of the logical (not temporal) order in which salvation is applied is very telling. Does the text itself imply the need to address the question of an *ordo salutis*, which is typically a question addressed by systematic theology? Surprisingly, he seems to miss the rather obvious observation (in light of the rest of this book) that "seeing" in John refers to the removal of spiritual blindness through faith in Christ (John 9:35-41). Therefore, when Jesus tells Nicodemus that unless he is first born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God, the necessary conclusion is that the new birth is necessary in order to believe in Jesus Christ. In this case, admitting an *ordo salutis* would have helped and clarified exegesis rather than hindered it.

The point is that it seems unhealthy to detach biblical theology (or any other branch of theological study) from the rest of the theological disciplines. While it is necessary and valuable to treat each discipline separately, it is neither helpful nor desirable to sever them completely. Exegesis and biblical theology without at least some systematic theology and the *analogia scriptura* with other biblical authors is like building the foundation of a structure followed by the skeleton of the building without ever finishing the project. The work may be stable and able to sustain a magnificent building, but it will ever remain incomplete and unfit for use. After all, is it not our doctrinal and systematic conclusions that we draw from exegesis and biblical theology that make us Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians and, even more fundamentally, Christians?

This book is a necessary starting point for any serious study of Johannine theology. It should be particularly helpful to those who plan to teach or to preach through the Gospel of John as a preliminary study. Ministers who struggle to find the time to plan ahead would do well to read this book either before or during a sermon series on John's Gospel or letters, thus providing them with a theological overview and plan that will provide them with direction through the whole book. Moreover, Kostenberger is a devout believer in Jesus Christ and his closing sentence is worth citing: "Thank you for joining me on this journey, embarked on not primarily by a scholar seeking to master the gospel but by a worshiper and disciple longing to be mastered by it. *Soli Deo Gloria!*" (p. 567).

—Ryan M. McGraw

Scholastic Discourse: Johannes Maccovius (1588-1644) on Theological and Philosophical Distinctions and Rules. Translated by Willem J. van Asselt, Michael D. Bell, Gert van den Brink, and Rein Ferwerda. Publications of the Institute for Reformation Research, editor, William den Boer. Apeldoorn: Instituut voor Reformatieonderzoek, 2009. Pp. vii + 378. €34,95.

This is the fourth volume published by the Institute for Reformation Research, and represents the collaborative efforts of four scholars laboring in Europe and the United States. The work presents a new critical Latin edition and an English translation of Johannes Maccovius's seminal and intriguing book on theological and philosophical distinctions. For the modern reader, it provides an answer to the neglected question: What did seventeenth-century scholastic discourse in theology and philosophy mean in its own context? For pastors and theologians, it provides a summary textbook in many standard theological topics and philosophical terms. For academic researchers, it makes available an important work in scholastic theology and method. Indeed, this book is invaluable in helping modern students of this period of Reformed theology learn the technical language of the Reformed scholastic writers.

The translators of this book (Willem J. van Asselt, Michael D. Bell, Gert van den Brink, and Rein Ferwerda) present an astute "Translator's Introduction" wherein they introduces us to the seventeenth-century polish aristocrat and theologian Jan Makowsky (1588-1644) (i.e., Johannes Maccovius). Given that Maccovius has often been branded a super-scholastic and a rationalist, a favorite "whipping-boy" of opponents to the project of Reformed scholasticism, and given that Maccovius is held up as a scandalous example of how far Reformed theology moved from Calvin, it is particularly apt to have this volume in English translation in order to learn first-hand what Maccovius actually taught and how he treated theological topics. Without question the form of Maccovius's presentation of doctrinal subjects is quite different from Calvin's, the content however runs in the same channel as the Genevan Reformer. Moreover, it is a mistake to think that Reformed theology as practiced in that era existed in a vacuum, cut off from Calvin's works and from the writings of other earlier Reformed authors. Rather, like today, many voices from the past and the present came into play at the same time. What Maccovius, and other Reformed scholastic authors like him, sought to achieve was clarity, so that doctrinal confusion and misrepresentations were avoided and the criticisms directed against Reformed theology, often in the form of carica-

tures, were answered. Although modern advocates of “Calvin against the Calvinists” spurn Maccovius, the translators reveal that theologians like John Owen and Alexander Comrie respected him.

The translators, as part of their introduction, familiarize readers of this volume to the slender scholarship devoted to Maccovius, as well as to his life and writings, before turning to a more detailed analysis of his *Distinctiones et regulae theologicae ac philosophicae* (the volume here translated). Readers might be interested to know that this work was published posthumously, being edited by one Nicolaus Arnoldus. It went through many additions, being printed as far and wide as Franeker, Amsterdam, Oxford, and Geneva.

While it would not be appropriate, here, to trace of story of how Maccovius’s work came to be published, interested readers are encouraged to obtain the book and read its informative introduction. That said, it is fitting briefly to alert readers to the contents of this work.

The book consists of twenty-three chapters. They form a very short summary of doctrine, treating Holy Scripture, Law, Gospel, God, God the Father, Creation, Predestination, Divine Providence, Free Choice, Sin, the Person and Work of Christ, the Covenant, Justification, Regeneration, Good Works, the Church, the Sacraments, the State of Souls before the Resurrection, the Resurrection, the Renewal of the World, Glorification, Condemnation, and a concluding chapter entitled “A Division of a Hundred Most General Distinctions.” This last chapter is particularly important for learning the import of scholastic terminology and makes up about one-fifth of the entire book. English readers of scholastic writers, say, Francis Turretin’s *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, will be greatly helped by mastering Maccovius’s vocabulary.

This volume, gathered from Maccovius’s notes and edited by Arnoldus, clearly functions as an academic textbook for beginning theological students. In other words, it was not designed for a general audience. The translation of the work, with the Latin text appearing on the left-facing page and the English translation on the right-facing page, allows immediate access to the primary source in its original tongue. This work also includes a fine bibliography and useful indices of names and places, and of subjects.

The book is available from bestellen@tua.nl. Readers may also go to the website www.tua.nl/ir for other volumes published in this series, besides an array of sources for the study of Reformation and Post-Reformation theology.

—J. Mark Beach

Eric Metaxas. *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010. Pp. 608. \$29.99 (cloth).

Quite often we aspire to be like the people we admire. Biographies of the great figures in history lend themselves to this goal. We long to be as bold as John Paton, as persistent in faith as William Carey and as selfless as Jim Elliot. By contrast, biographies are sometimes written to make the great figures in history more like us and therefore more acceptable to us. Eric Metaxas’ biography of Dietrich Bonhoeffer does just that. What we discover in the pages of this recent biography is a revised Bonhoeffer who writes, preaches and acts like an evangelical theologian committed to the basic tenets of orthodox Christianity. In an interview with *Christianity Today*, Metaxas even

went so far as to assert that Bonhoeffer's theology was just as orthodox as the apostle Paul's. But can such an audacious claim stand under the careful scrutiny of historical investigation?

Before we answer that question, we should note some of the positive aspects of this biography. Metaxas produces a beautifully written, compelling account of the life of one of the great figures in 20th century church history. Whether detailing Bonhoeffer's well-heeled German upbringing, his intellectual brilliance and rise to prominence within European theological circles, or his spiritual struggles at home and abroad, Metaxas paints a vivid portrait of an energetic man searching for authentic Christian spirituality. Of particular interest are two specific periods in Bonhoeffer's life: his interaction with American Christianity [liberal and otherwise] while at Union Seminary during the early 1930s, and his struggle against the rising tide of National Socialism in Germany in the years following Adolph Hitler's accession to power. Metaxas clearly sees Bonhoeffer as a champion of and martyr for biblical Christianity.

The problem with this portrait of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, however, is that the author employs his biography like a procrustean bed. Both history and theology are made to conform to the author's depiction of Bonhoeffer as an evangelical hero. The result is that we are presented with a distorted image of a man whose actual likeness more closely resembled the early twentieth-century modernist theology that he supposedly despised.

As others with more extensive knowledge of twentieth-century German church history have noted, Metaxas fails to do justice to the theological influence of Kierkegaard and Barth [neither of whom would ever be considered a friend to evangelical Christianity] upon Bonhoeffer. Although the author writes at length about Barth's influence upon the young Bonhoeffer, the reader is never provided with the specific contours of Barth's theology nor of Bonhoeffer's own reservations concerning biblical inerrancy, the virgin birth and the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. In fact, during the final days before his execution at the hands of the Nazis, Bonhoeffer wrote of the need for people to live "as if there is no God." Some have even questioned whether Metaxas, in preparing his biography, possessed an adequate grasp of 20th century German theology in general and Bonhoeffer's corpus of theological writings in particular. At the very least, a thorough and balanced assessment of Bonhoeffer's theology would seem to be lacking in this regard.

In addition to these theological concerns, there appear to be serious issues relating to the author's interpretation of 20th century German history. Metaxas has a tendency throughout the biography to interpret German church history as the conflict between the dead, legalistic Christianity of the German state churches versus the warm, evangelical piety of the Confessing Church. In fact, far more should have been written about the role of German nationalism and national culture in its relation to and influence upon the German ecclesiastical landscape of the first half of the 20th century. This, it would seem, is a serious deficiency throughout the book.

Is Dietrich Bonhoeffer a hero whose life and witness merits careful reflection and even admiration by evangelicals today? Of course! To that end, evangelicals could greatly benefit from Metaxas' biography and should be encouraged to read it. But that admiration must take into account the *full* story of Bonhoeffer's life. It cannot selectively pick and choose the more appealing aspects of the man and his teachings, nor recast him in a more favorable light. To succumb to those errors is to violate the very purpose of

historical inquiry. Those who read *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy* would do well to bear that in mind.

—Paul R. Ipema

George C. Rable. *God's Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the American Civil War*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010. Pp. 624. \$35.00 (cloth).

This work is nothing short of remarkable. It's remarkable, on the one hand, because the subject matter of this book, as important as it is, has not been significantly treated before. It's remarkable, on the other hand, that the subject matter of this book, as broad, deep, and, frankly, daunting as it is, has been treated now with the deftness that it has. Dr. Rable, who holds the Charles G. Summersell Chair in Southern History at the University of Alabama, has, for previous work, won both the Jefferson Davis prize (twice) and the Lincoln Prize. These widely varying prizes give some indication of the equity with which Rable deals with these delicate and difficult matters—of religion, race, and rebellion—with respect to North and South. The even-handed nature of this work, without in any sense being an apologetic for Southern slavery, with which some works alleging balance may fairly be charged, is quite impressive and refreshing.

I lamented the end of this book: Rable's recounting was so gripping and moving that one simply wanted more. Rable is a historian's historian, one who has sifted an enormous mound of evidence, dealt fairly with it, made good sense of it, and spun a captivating tale. Most religious histories of the Civil War look either at North or South and are partisan not only in perspective but parochial in approach. This work looks at both sides, and is, as Harry Stout has noted, "a stunning synthesis of myriad primary sources from North and South woven into a rich narrative."

Rable's research into primary source material is massive. He has ransacked archives and special collections throughout the nation and has produced a well-researched, well-written, judiciously argued religious history of the American Civil War that in the field of religious history ranks in importance with James McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom* in the fields of political and social history. This work should now be the first visited for any interested in its subject matter. As a religious history, it enjoys significant breadth, addressing the various denominations, theology, soldiers' personal religion, revivals North and South, and all the enormous suffering endured on both sides.

The title is quite suggestive: "Almost chosen peoples." Lincoln, in a speech, referred ironically to America as an "almost chosen people." This was a bit of a jab at New England's historic overconfident assertion that the Puritan experiment (the "errand into the wilderness") constituted evidence that New Englanders, if not Americans, were "chosen people." Lincoln, even early on, had about all he could take of such talk (seen later most pointedly in his incomparable Second Inauguration Address) and tweaked New Englanders, and the rest, for considering themselves God's chosen people by wryly referring to them as an "almost chosen people."

Rable picks up on this, recognizing in this work the remarkable degree to which each side believed itself to be divinely justified in rebellion and in seeking to quell rebellion. In the War, both sides claimed, largely, to be fol-

lowing the Word of the Lord. This was due, in part, to the particular tenor of the times and of the especially earnest religiosity of the period. Each side saw itself as a chosen people and anathematized the other side. Rable insightfully applies Lincoln's "Almost chosen" designation to both sides so that the plural appears and the word is "peoples" rather than simply "people."

This long overdue book will interest those who care about American religious history, the Civil War (the single most important event in the nation's history), and church history in general, for which it serves as a model of such properly done in context. My unbounded enthusiasm for this work may brand me a "Rable-rouser," but it is a charge I'm willing to risk.

—Alan D. Strange

Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation, Volume 1: 1525-1552; Volume 2: 1552-1566. Compiled with introduction by James T. Dennison Jr. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2008, 2010. Vol. 1: Pp. xii + 820. \$50.00 (cloth); Vol. 2: Pp. viii + 909. \$50.00 (cloth).

Many pastors labor to familiarize themselves with the confessions of their own particular denomination or wing of the Reformed tradition, perhaps glancing at other Reformed confessions from time to time. It is rare, however, to meet ministers (even Reformed academic scholars) and theologically inquisitive laypersons who know much about the breadth and depth of the Reformed confessional heritage. What accounts for this state-of-affairs I'm not interested to broach, but I do wish to commend these volumes (and the others which we hope to see published in the future) as offering a remedy to the current paucity of knowledge in this area of the Reformed legacy.

We are all indebted to James T. Dennison Jr. for assembling this vast assortment of Reformed catechisms and confessions, introducing readers to them, and either finding existing English translations or commissioning English translations of heretofore untranslated materials for publication in these volumes. The continuing project of Reformed theology can only be enriched by a rediscovery of the past as found in these documents. General readers, not just specialists, now have available to them a widening corpus of Reformed literature in English.

Volume 1 of this series presents thirty-three different Reformed confessions and catechisms. Included here we find, for example, Zwingli's Short Catechism (1523), as well as his *Fidei ratio* (1531). Also noteworthy is the Bohemian Confession (1535), Calvin's Catechisms (1537, 1538, and 1545), the Consensus Tigurinus (1549), the London Confession of John à Lasco (1551), and the Rhaetian Confession (1552).

Volume 2 offers thirty-five more selections. Here readers will discover documents such as the Waldensian Confession (1560), Theodore Beza's Confession (1560), the Confession of the Spanish Congregation of London (1560/61), the Hungarian *Confessio Catholica* (1562), and the Second Helvetic Confession (1566).

This series of volumes is not meant to displace or duplicate the more technical work of Eberhard Busch with others (*Reformierte Bekenntnisschriften*) or E. F. Karl Müller (*Die Bekenntnisschriften der reformierte Kirche*), or H. A. Niemeyer (*Colletio confessionum in ecclesiis reformatis publicatarum*), or

even that of Philip Schaff (*The Creeds of Christendom*). The above mentioned scholars produced volumes concerned to present a well-edited text of the various Reformed confessions in their original languages. Dennison's work makes use on these resources, presenting readers with English translations, so that this genre of Reformed writing is now accessible to a much larger readership. Indeed, these volumes (with the others forthcoming) are the most thorough compilation of Reformed confessional documents, translated into English, available today.

Anyone who prizes the Reformed tradition and wishing to explore the texture and diversity of Reformed theology as expressed in its confessional literature will not want to miss these volumes. We also praise the publisher for its commitment to make these materials available to interested readers; and it is nice to hold a handsomely bound book in one's hands.

—J. Mark Beach

F. LeRon Shults. *Christology and Science*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008 (originally published in the United Kingdom by Ashgate Publishing Limited). Pp. x + 171. \$30.00.

The history of theology in the modern period has often been marked by conflict, real and imagined, between theology and science. Since the eighteenth century Enlightenment and the rise to dominance of the natural sciences, traditional Christian theology has often found itself in a defensive posture. The perception of an inevitable conflict between the Christian faith and modern natural science has been fueled by the inaccurate account of the alleged "warfare" between them by authors like Andrew Dickson White (*The Warfare of Science* [London: Henry S. King & Co., 1867]).

Within the framework of a perceived conflict between the findings of modern science and orthodox Christian theology, various solutions have emerged. In some forms of "fundamentalism," the tendency to ignore or to reject outright the claims of modern science has prevailed. In the tradition of theological "modernism," the teaching of Scripture and traditional Christian theology were accommodated to the presumed "facts" of modern science. Whereas fundamentalism sought to accommodate science to the Bible and traditional orthodox theology, modernism sought to accommodate the Bible and traditional orthodox theology to the dictates of modern science. Still other theologians in the modern era adopted an alternative, intermediate approach. In order to avoid the possibility of conflict between theology and modern science, mediating theologies of various forms emerged that sharply distinguish between the disciplines of theology and the natural sciences. For advocates of this approach, there is no possible conflict between theology and science, provided the two remain within their respective boundaries and areas of expertise. In this third approach, a kind of "double truth" theory prevails, which compartmentalizes the disciplines of theology and natural sciences.

For a number of years and in several different studies, L. LeRon Shults has undertaken a "theological project," as he terms it, to redress the failure of theologians in the modern period to engage constructively the findings of contemporary philosophy and science. *Christology and Science* represents his reformulation of Christology, the doctrine of Christ's person and work, from

the standpoint of the contributions of modern philosophy and natural science. The aim of Shults' project is to engage in an "interdisciplinary dialogue with contemporary sciences such as evolutionary biology, cultural anthropology and physical cosmology, which question the coherence and plausibility of many traditional Christological formulations" (1). According to Shults, many of the traditional assumptions about humanity and the world that shaped the formulations of Christology in Christian tradition "no longer make sense in light of contemporary science" (1). If theologians wish to gain a hearing or express their theology in terms that are intelligible within the modern context, they will have to engage critically the task of reformulating the doctrine of Christ in the light of these new assumptions. Inasmuch as many traditional Christological formulations rely "heavily on ancient concepts of substance or medieval concepts of jurisprudence," they "seem irrelevant to the concrete concerns that shape late modern culture" (1-2). If I may paraphrase the language of the German liberal theologian, Schleiermacher, Shults' project is intended to address contemporary cultural and scientific despisers of the Christian doctrine of Christ's person and work in an intellectually intelligible and coherent manner.

While Shults acknowledges that his book offers only a set of "case studies" in Christology, he attempts to mediate between Christology, philosophy, and science, in three broad areas of Christology. The first of these areas, which he addresses in Chapter 2 of his study ("Incarnation and Evolutionary Biology"), concerns the traditional doctrine of the incarnation. The second of these areas, which he addresses in Chapter 3 ("Atonement and Cultural Anthropology"), is the doctrine of Christ's work of atonement. And the third of these areas, which he addresses in Chapter 4 ("Parousia and Physical Cosmology"), is the traditional doctrine of Christ's "parousia" or coming again at the consummation or end of the present age. In each of these areas, Shults begins with an identification of the peculiar scientific challenges to traditional formulation, then surveys various theological attempts to address these challenges in recent theology, and concludes with a provisional attempt to offer his own reformulations of traditional Christology in a way that responsibly answers to these challenges.

To illustrate the approach that Shults takes to the task of reformulating Christology in the light of modern science, I will only consider what he does with the traditional doctrine of the incarnation.

According to Shults, the traditional formulation of the doctrine of the incarnation relied heavily upon the doctrine of "substance" that was an important feature of ancient Greek philosophy. In this formulation, the Son of God became incarnate through a "hypostatic" union of the divine and human natures. The great Christological problem that the ancient formulations addressed was the problem of God-becoming-man through the assumption of human nature into personal union with the eternal Word without any confusion or change in the two natures of the God-man. In the traditional Christological formulations of the incarnation, a sharp distinction was also drawn between the identity of Christ's Person as the incarnate Son, and the particular work of atonement that he came to effect. The identity of the Person of the God-man was first established, and only upon the basis of the identity of his Person was the work of Christ able to be understood. Furthermore, in the understanding of the saving work of the incarnate Son, traditional theology assumed a static "human nature" that originally existed in a state of sinless integrity (though not yet fully glorified) when God first created Adam and Eve.

The work of Christ was understood in the traditional formulation as a kind of “restoration” or “remedy” for Adam’s sin and fall, which required that the Son of God “assume” a sinless human nature like that of Adam before the fall.

Within the context of contemporary philosophy and the science of evolutionary biology, these assumptions and corresponding formulations of traditional Christology have become untenable, Shults argues. “On this [the traditional] model, Jesus escaped this diseased and guilt-ridden inheritance because his human nature was alleged to be of the same substance as that of Adam and Eve before their unfortunate lapse. This theory of the incarnation presupposes the ancient notion of a fixed (ideal) form of humanity and an historical paradise in which death did not exist, both of which have been undermined by Darwin’s theory of evolution” (31). From the standpoint of modern philosophy and science, therefore, the traditional formulations of Christ’s incarnation are “no longer plausible” (43) and in need of “radical reconstruction” (45). We no longer think in terms of “fixed substances,” whether of God in his immutable nature or of humanity in its fixed state. A formulation of Christ’s person in the modern context requires a more relational and developing view of his identity, whether in relation to God or to us.

In his own preliminary formulation of the doctrine of Christ’s identity, Shults insists that we must “affirm that Jesus’ coming-to-be was wholly embedded within the evolution of our species and wholly embodied in the natural emergence of consciousness nested in the neural processes of a human brain” (60). In the process of Jesus’ “coming-to-be,” we see a model of true humanity in relation to God. In the coming-to-be of Jesus, all human beings are confronted with a model that calls them to experience “the gracious presence of the Logos (or Wisdom) of God” who “faithfully tends to creatures, who are naturally dependent on the arriving presence of absolute divine Futurity for any and all becoming” (*sic*, 60).

My purpose in citing Shults’ attempt at a preliminary reformulation of the doctrine of the incarnation in dialogue with evolutionary Darwinism, is to illustrate his method (and not his penchant for writing a poor man’s version of Hegel’s prose!). On the one hand, Shults assumes that the traditional formulations of the doctrine of the incarnation were dependent upon the assumptions of ancient Greek philosophy and metaphysics, which are no longer viable in the modern period. On the other hand, Shults assumes (or better: asserts) that any modern formulation of the doctrine of the incarnation must likewise be tied to the putative theories of modern philosophy and natural science. Upon the basis of these assumptions, Shults endeavors to formulate a Christology that is attuned to the dictates of modern scientific theorizing, even as the older Christology was conformed to the dictates of ancient philosophy and natural science in the pre-modern period. Though I have not considered Shults’ other case studies, his method at each point is similar. The doctrines of Christ’s work of atonement and of his Parousia at the end of the age must likewise be radically reformulated to accommodate modern scientific viewpoints. Neither the doctrine of penal substitutionary atonement nor of a temporally future return of Christ is tenable from within the frameworks, respectively, of modern cultural anthropology or modern natural science.

In my judgment, there are several significant problems with Shults’ project. First, it is not self-evident, as Shults seems to think it is, that the traditional Christian doctrine of Christology is necessarily linked to tenets of ancient philosophy and natural science that are now outdated. Second, it is no

more self-evident that any modern reformulation of the doctrine of Christology must assume as unimpeachable the theories of modern philosophy and natural science. Even were we to assume that these theories are uniformly adhered to among modern philosophers and scientists, they would not on that account be immune from scrutiny and criticism from the standpoint of the worldview of biblical theism. At no point in Shults' project does there seem to be a place for a rigorous intellectual criticism of modern philosophy and the theorizing of modern natural science. As a consequence, Shults seems to commit the error that he warns against in his introductory chapter, namely, the temptation to marry Christology to the science of a particular age, only to risk its becoming a divorcee in the next. Accordingly, his project belongs to a long tradition of Christian theology in the post-Enlightenment period that too uncritically embraces the thought forms and assumptions of contemporary philosophy and science.

For these reasons, Shults' project does not hold out much promise for a resolution of the alleged tension between traditional Christology and contemporary thought.

—Cornelis P. Venema

Steven W. Smith. *Dying to Preach: Embracing the Cross in the Pulpit*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic and Professional, 2009. Pp. 175. \$14.99.

Is your preaching, or the preaching you hear, cross-centered? More: as a preacher do you (or does your preacher) exhibit bearing the cross in the preparation and delivery of sermons? Steven Smith, assistant professor of preaching, associate dean for the professional doctoral program, and James T. Draper Jr. Chair of Pastoral Ministry at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, offers this book in an attempt that preachers will make their own pulpit efforts focus on the cross, and in doing so sacrifice themselves in the pulpit. The former idea might seem obvious—what you say about the cross—but the latter idea is also quite important—how you say it. If the cross is central in the message of the gospel, that centrality must also be lived in the act of preaching, in the preacher's own person.

Immediately it become obvious that this book wages a polemic against a kind of preaching that stresses style over substance, where the medium isn't merely the message but more important than the message. The result of this error is that though the good news of the gospel (centered upon the cross of Christ) is acknowledged as most important, in practice it is shoved to the periphery. Parishioners increasingly come to think that they have heard a good sermon even when Christ and his cross are absent. They also come to think that a certain pulpit polish or trendiness constitutes good preaching. Style counts for everything. Against these fashions Smith urges preachers not only to preach the cross of Christ, but to exhibit the cross in their pulpit manner.

The author introduces this interesting book with these words: "There comes a time in the life of every preacher when he must decide who owns the pulpit. If the pulpit belongs to the people, then their desires will drive its content and presentation. If the pulpit belongs to the preacher, then his thoughts, intents, and desires will drive its content and presentation. If the pulpit is driven by delivery—eloquence, relevance, being trendy or intellectual—then it is driven by what style appears the best" (17). Against these er-

rors, the preacher must instead give up his preaching to the cross, i.e., he with his sermons must be delivered up to God and surrendered. Self-exaltation must give way, better “die,” so that God-exaltation occupies its proper place. The preacher, then, in preaching must become like Christ, dying so that others might live. “The pulpit is to present a translucent soul laid over the vicarious suffering of our Lord, modeling His sacrifice” (19).

So how can preachers die in the pulpit? Smith expounds various texts from Paul’s epistles in order to explore this theme. Part 1 (“The Cross in the Pulpit in Paul’s Ministry”) examines Paul’s ministry to the Corinthians, which Smith identifies as “dying for others.” In Part 2 (“Four Implications of the Cross in the Pulpit”) Smith treats four texts in exploring the implications of the cross of Christ for the work of the pulpit (2 Cor. 4:1-6; Col. 1:24; Heb. 13:10-14; and Phil. 2:5-11). These passages may be summed up with the words: ignite, invite, identify, imitate. Part 3 (“The Cross and the Pulpit Ministry: Surrendering to Christ in the Preaching Task”) demonstrates how the cross always brings forth death, a dying. Thus Christ’s cross in the work of preaching also means death, a dying, a surrender. First, the preacher must surrender to the text itself. Having submitted himself to the text, he must, second, surrender himself to his audience—for he must meet their needs to know the truth. In other words, it is mistaken to love the Word in a manner which disregards the people to whom you are called to preach the Word. If the Word of truth is not adapted to their capacities to understand, receive, and be edified, the preacher has not shown his hearers that he loves them and in so doing he contradicts the truth he would convey. Third (and last), the cross in the pulpit requires self-surrender to the labor of faithful, good—yes, great—gospel proclamation. Here Smith wants to urge the majority of average preachers with “average gifts” to strive to do better. Too many preachers acquiesce to mediocrity too easily and rest content to be “second-rate” or “run of the mill” in the pulpit. Too many preachers are satisfied with their preaching and no longer endeavor to produce great sermons.

At his point, Smith knows that a word of caution is necessary. He asks: Why should we want to preach great sermons? “What is our motivation to move forward with relentless, aggressive tenacity toward becoming effective preachers? The answer—the only one that gives me a modicum of satisfaction—is the cross” (157). Smith doesn’t deny that God uses crooked arrows to shoot straight, that God uses our half-baked sermons to bless, that God overcomes our weaknesses with his strength. However, to settle for the crooked, the half-baked, the weak—to not aim to do better—is not Christian (158).

From here Smith pleads for the return of eloquence, understood in the sense of aiming to persuade others of the truth and make them better, so that all attention is focused on God (not in the sense of mere art-form or to win the approval of others and acquire an impressive reputation, with the focus is on the preacher). Not that. Over against boring sermons, we must aim to captivate our hearers—that they become Christ captivated! This requires teaching, portraying, and persuading.

Smith reminds us all that true preaching is not people hearing us; rather, true preaching is people hearing *God*. If preachers would preach to others, they must first listen to God speaking to them in the biblical text. Much failure in the pulpit begins with the preacher failing to listen in the study. If a preacher is deaf in the preparation of sermons, he shouldn’t complain if people are deaf in his preaching them.

Smith warns all preachers, especially the highly-gifted, that they must bear the cross of Christ in preaching; otherwise, they aren't preaching Christ and his cross.

—J. Mark Beach

Kenneth J. Stewart. *Ten Myths about Calvinism: Recovering the Breadth of the Reformed Tradition*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011. Pp. 301. \$24.00.

Kenneth Stewart, professor of theological studies at Covenant College (Lookout Mountain, GA), has written a helpful book, particularly for those new to the Reformed faith or for those who might have too narrowly understood the Reformed faith and failed to perceive its true breadth. Many novitiates reduce the Reformed faith to the so-called five points of Calvinism, or some other feature(s), particularly among the Young, Reformed, and Restless movement. It is, in fact, in coming newly into the Reformed faith, easy to do so with an imbalance, often an imbalance in the direction of highlighting the decrees of God and downplaying the covenant. There are those who define Reformed almost exclusively in decretal terms and who wind up in hyper-Calvinism. Of course many who do may not be new to the Reformed faith but have long practiced a narrow, sectarian version of that faith. It has been my experience, as a former Calvinistic Baptist, that those who embrace soteriological Calvinism but reject covenantal theology tend toward a practical hyper-Calvinism, even an unhealthy kind that prompts undue navel gazing and not enough “looking to Christ” in his glorious person and finished work. This book, among other things, serves as an antidote both for an imbalanced Calvinism on the part of practitioners and an unfair portrayal of Calvinism from non-Calvinists.

Professor Stewart believes that there are a variety of Calvinists who are likely to see “their Calvinism” as the only valid expression of Calvinism. In the interest of full disclosure, I consider myself an Old School Presbyterian of the Princeton sort, which means I am friendly to New Side, wanting to be distinctly Reformed as well as properly catholic, holding fast while reaching out. There are Calvinists of different sorts, as Stewart notes, and we should not read out of Calvinism those who may not happen to be our exact stripe. This book is carefully researched and written and should go a long way to clearing up misconceptions that render us more parochial than we need to be and provide a basis for a greater unity in the Reformed faith (which Stewart rightly prefers as a designation instead of Calvinism, though he recognizes the wide popularity of the latter, a development that Calvin, eschewing acclaim as he did, would doubtlessly denounce).

In this book Stewart addresses two kinds of myths that he maintains have been perpetrated about Calvinists and Calvinism. The first kind of myth is that which comes from Calvinists themselves: “Four Myths Calvinists Should Not Be Circulating (But Are).” The second kind comes from opponents of Calvinism: “Six Myths Non-Calvinists Should Not Be Circulating (But Are).” Each of these are worthy of attention and treatment and shall receive such herein.

The first myth is “One Man (Calvin) and One City (Geneva) Are Determinative.” This myth is one that the renowned historian Richard Muller has battled for years. Professor Muller has written incisively on John Calvin

(1509-1564) and certainly gives him his due as a Reformer of the first rank. But Calvin was not the only Reformed theologian in his time and Geneva was not the only important city. In Calvin's own time and afterwards, his importance was not as paramount as it became in the Victorian era in Britain, when, beginning in 1843 (with the establishment of the Calvin Translation Society in Edinburgh, following the three hundredth anniversary of the first edition of Calvin's *Institutes* in 1836), a Calvin renaissance began that has not ended. Previously, various Calvinistic successors—like Turretin in the seventeenth century—had been regarded as more up-to-date in treating matters than Calvin. Hence Old Princeton assigned Turretin as its theology text, rather than Calvin, allowing Turretin to stand as such until replaced by Hodge. The Calvin versus the Calvinist movement of the twentieth century, undertaken in no small measure by Barth and his followers, sought to cast the Calvinists in a bad light, as having betrayed Calvin, whom they cast in a good light. Though there has been considerable pushback in defense of the Calvinists, Calvin remains supreme in a way that he did not for the three centuries after his life during which time Calvin shared the limelight with, and was even eclipsed by, other Reformers.

Ultimately, however, as influential as any of these Reformers might have been or might still be, neither Calvin's nor anyone else's view is properly determinative. What is determinative is the Word of God, and the first rank of authority in interpreting that Word is the church as an entity. The church as a collective has expressed her reading of the main doctrines of Scripture in her confessions. So if anything is said to be properly determinative or properly to define the Reformed faith, it is the confessions of the Reformed churches, especially the Three Forms of Unity (the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confessions, and the Canons of Dort) and the Westminster Standards (the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms).

The second myth is "Calvin's View of Predestination Must Be Ours." This concern is obviously related to the first though it focuses more narrowly on Calvin's doctrine of predestination. What is at issue here is, first of all, what is Calvin's doctrine of predestination, and, secondly, is it that of the Bible and the Reformed confessions, and, thus, must it be ours? While there has been debate over whether Augustine affirmed double predestination, there has been little over whether Calvin affirmed it. Clearly he did, believing that the God who decreed all that should come to pass ordained both the salvation of the elect and the damnation of the reprobate (whether Calvin distinctly affirmed limited atonement remains a more contentious matter). Some might allege that Stewart is denying double predestination here because he takes issue with Calvin's construction of it. I do not read Stewart, however, as doing that but rather preferring the more careful way that Bullinger treats this and especially the way that the Canons of Dort and the Westminster Confession treats it, both of these making it clear that while God ordains all that comes to pass, the decree to damn and to save are not equally ultimate. Clearly, WCF 3.8, in speaking of the "high mystery of predestination" intends the doctrine for the comfort of the saints and never as a speculative matter that might break bruised reeds or quench smoking flax. Stewart's point here is that the earlier Calvin (it is the later Calvin that gets a bit ham-handed and treats reprobation and election as parallel) and the Reformed confessions are to be preferred in their treatment of this blessed yet easily abused doctrine.

The third myth is "TULIP is the Yardstick of the Truly Reformed." What Stewart means here is the myth that the so-called five points of Calvinism,

summed up in a certain order to assist in making of them an acrostic in English, accurately reflect Reformed teaching. Stewart believes that Reformed teaching is not be reduced to these points and that many who come into the Reformed faith because of these points, together with those who identify the Reformed faith with these five points, distort and wrongly depict the Reformed faith. Many assume this acrostic to have deep historical roots; in fact, it does not. Stewart shows what some of us have learned for ourselves (who have looked into this): the TULIP acrostic was developed early in the twentieth century and not popularized as such until considerably later (with Steele and Thomas in 1963; probably introduced in a published book first by Boettner in 1932 in his work *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*). And the formulation of it, particularly in terms of “definite atonement” betrays the greater nuance (and cosmic aspects) of the way the Synod of Dort treats it. In other words, to speak of Dort’s response to the five points of the Remonstrance as the points of Calvinism denominated as TULIP, is to engage, undoubtedly for the sake of clarity, in brevity and bluntness that does not as accurately as it should reflect the Canons of Dort. Stewart is not rejecting Dort but this popularized, inaccurate, somewhat harsh summary of Dort. This is not how the Westminster Standards address Calvinistic soteriology, nor, e.g., someone like Charles Hodge in his *Systematic Theology* (and certainly not Robert Lewis Dabney). The acrostic TULIP, Stewart thinks, has been more harmful than helpful and ought to be replaced with more accurate ways of describing what Dort addressed.

The fourth, and last of the self-perpetuated myths, is “Calvinists Take a Dim View of Revival and Awakening.” This is a large area of discussion and debate today. Historically, Reformed historians and theologians, while distinguishing between the First and Second Great Awakening (seeing the former as more Calvinistic and the latter as becoming, ultimately, Semi-Pelagian under Finney), have not rejected revivals but have sought to sift the good from the bad. Iain Murray, for instance, has largely commended Calvinistic revivals and condemned revivalism, which does not wait upon the Spirit for blessing the means of grace but employs tactics and gimmicks to stir up the crowds and induce hearers to “walk the aisle” and give themselves to Jesus. Stewart rightly notes that Calvinists have not been inimical to all forms of revival but have saved their scorn for the “new methods” inaugurated in the latter part of the Second Great Awakening. Stewart is concerned that some Reformed scholars, in their zeal to distinguish Reformed from evangelical, have been critical not only of evangelical departures from orthodoxy in more recent years, but have sought to separate Reformed and evangelical at the inception of evangelicalism in the eighteenth century. Historically, however, Calvinists have tended to see the rise of evangelicalism not as inimical to Calvinism but as closely related to it. This is why Stewart regards it as a myth that Calvinists take a dim view of revival and awakening. Some Reformed scholars today may take a dim view of revival but that has historically not been the case, with Calvinists both praying and preaching for revival in which the Spirit empowers the ordinary means of grace so that sinners are awakened and converted and saints are revived in a marked way.

The first of the myths circulated by non-Calvinists about Calvinists, the fifth myth, in other words, is “Calvinism is Largely Anti-missionary.” It is assumed because of the strong view that Calvinists have of the sovereignty of God that many Calvinists would have little incentive to engage in vigorous evangelism. This is not true and Stewart demonstrates that from the time of

the Reformation, countless Calvinists have supported missionaries and acted as missionaries, even before William Carey, on all continents. Part of the perceived slowness of Calvinists out of the starting gate in this respect is due to circumstances beyond the control of the Calvinists. The era of exploration and the settling of the New World were coterminous with the Reformation, and Roman Catholics (Jesuits especially) had greater access to the sea than the more land-locked Protestants, Spain and Portugal being pioneers in this and also ultra-Catholic nations. Furthermore, Protestants, rightly, saw Europe as imperfectly Christianized and began much of their work there, among their Roman Catholic neighbors. Once they gained sea access, however, they took off and we see Calvinists evangelizing Brazil, and, in North America, native Americans (at least in some cases, like in the work of John Eliot and David Brainerd), as well as Dutch Reformed missionaries to Southeast Asia. Calvinism, Stewart convincingly demonstrates, is vigorously missional.

The sixth myth is "Calvinism Promotes Antinomianism." It is true that some Protestants, even Luther and Melancthon (not in Lutheran theology as such but with respect to "tolerating" Philip of Hesse's bigamy), and certainly some of the Anabaptists, have given reason for the charge of Antinomianism, the label applied to those "against the law of God." Calvinists generally, with their third use of the law, can hardly be said to be antinomians and some in fact have gone more in the direction of legalism. Some Methodists, though, have argued that since Calvinists believe in the perseverance of the saints, such security as that affords tends to prompt Calvinists to despise the law and teach that the elect need not bother with it. While it is true that there have been some antinomians who identified with Calvinism, especially some in seventeenth-century England like Tobias Crisp and those against whom the Westminster Assembly took action, as well did the Massachusetts Bay Colony, notably against Anne Hutchinson, the vast majority of Calvinists have promoted a vigorous (third view) of the law, teaching the reality and necessity of obedience for Christians. Calvinism has not characteristically been antinomian.

The seventh myth is "Calvinism Leads to Theocracy." This myth is based chiefly on the misconception that Geneva was a theocracy and that Calvin was its tyrant. Calvin was not only exiled from Geneva because of his resistance to her Erastianism (the civil authorities seeking rule over the church) but even upon his return it was only five years before the end of his life that he was granted citizenship. Key to this myth is often a wrong definition of theocracy, which involves, ordinarily, clerical rule of civil affairs. Geneva was not ruled by her clergy, a fact that Calvin and Farel knew all too well inasmuch as the civil authorities expelled them from Geneva from 1538-1541. Instead, the question might be, Did Calvin have undue influence on the civil government? He came, at last, to enjoy a measure of influence (after 1555) but even then he had many enemies, strong ones, and did not wield unchecked authority. The broader question might be, has Calvinism tended to produce theocratic states? And apart from rare exceptions, the answer is that Calvinism had tended to yield a good deal of freedom, playing no small role in the rise of republicanism and democracy. The fact is that the Western world has not known any sort of theocracy for centuries, though the Muslim world has (as well as some parts of the East, arguably).

The eighth myth is "Calvinism Undermines the Creative Arts." It is true that compared to the worship of Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox, Calvinists have tended to be iconoclasts. They are such even in comparison with

Lutherans and Anglicans in worship, operating according to some form of regulative principle in which the Scriptures determine the elements of and give shape to divine worship. Even more strict in this regard are the German Reformed, with Zwingli forbidding music in worship (though what he precisely meant by this is disputed). Outside of worship, however, Calvinists, like those in the Netherlands, greatly advanced the arts, the Dutch producing a truly “golden era” for art in the seventeenth century, and in more modern times Kuyper and the neo-Calvinists likewise producing much in terms of art.

The ninth myth is “Calvinism Resists Gender Equality.” It is assumed that Calvinists have, with their narrow biblical views, especially resisted and retarded gender relations. Stewart notes that Calvin, in fact, was not as regressive in this as many have assumed and that Calvinists have led the way in bettering the position of women with respect to education, marriage and divorce, and the support and place of women in the work of the Reformation, both originally and throughout the history of the modern church. Stewart notes that the PCA, of which he is a member, does not permit ordination of women to any of the offices. While it is clear that Stewart supports ordination of women to the office of deacon, it is not clear whether he does to any other office. It seems to me that he appears not to. This is a hot button issue now in the PCA. Confessional Calvinists have largely excluded women from the diaconate (though the RPCNA, the confessional covenanters have not). While this reviewer thinks that the ordained office of deacon, particularly as that office has come to be understood, should remain properly open only to males, it should be noted that certain women clearly played a role in diaconal work in the New Testament, perhaps auxiliary to the ordained deacons. That has often not been recognized and it is right for the local church (even through its session) to encourage women so gifted to assist the diaconate in its work.

And the tenth, and last, of our non-Calvinist canards, is “Calvinism Has Fostered Racial Inequality.” This was the most moving, and disturbing, section to me. In it, Stewart chronicles the place of slavery in the Western world in earlier classical and medieval times, showing the rise of African slavery, including the role played in it by Muslims and other Africans. He makes it clear that Calvinists did not cause the problem but inherited it, with those from Portugal and Spain taking a leading role in the slave trade and slavery in the New World. It is the case that Calvinists, as Dutch, English, American colonials, and others, took an active role in this iniquitous venture (American Presbyterians particularly played a role in justifying chattel slavery on these shores). Sadly, so did all other religious groups. Part of Stewart’s point is that for some time Christianity did not play a salutary role with respect both to questions of slavery and race. But then it did come around and led the charge for its demise, first with the Quakers and Wesleys and then with men like Newton and Wilberforce and by actions like that of the 1818 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church that forcefully condemned slavery. The apartheid of South Africa was not because of Calvinism but in contravention of it, with Calvinists of various stripes condemning it and calling on South Africa to abolish it.

Stewart has produced a wide-ranging work with which anyone is bound to have some quibbles, covering the amount of historical material that it does. On the whole, however, this is a very able work that ought to receive a hearing among all Calvinists and those having any interest in it. It is a work that might truly help some misinformed Calvinists understand their history a

bit better and not be misled by some popular conventions, some that even Calvinists themselves hold. Stewart ends his work looking at Calvinist resurgences from the French Revolution to 1990. He seeks to make sense of the history of Calvinism for the past two hundred years by, as he puts it, “drawing the threads together.” In so doing he, first, calls upon all Calvinists to admit interdependence, which is to identify the kind of alloyed Calvinist that one is. There is no pure Calvinism; and repristination projects that claim to take us back to such, or rediscover such for us, are to be avoided and resisted. Rather, Stewart advises, let us be loyal to the best of the past and the present as we see its faithfulness to God’s Word. In all, Stewart pleads: hold the triumphalism! Calvinism should see itself neither as faultless nor should we hide our distinctives but go forward as humble and brokenhearted.

Finally, Stewart counsels, it is time for more Calvinist unity and forbearance. We ought to be more patient with one another because none of our particular communions are ends in themselves (OPC, PCA, URCNA, etc.). Indeed, the means of grace are just that, means and not ends, the end being Christ himself, God and his glory. Even the institutional church is not an end in itself. This was part of the Roman Catholic error of the Middle Ages—to see the church as an end in itself, thus eclipsing soteriology, or worse, permitting ecclesiology to swallow soteriology. Stewart counsels: “We should be more ready to recognize that this movement [Calvinism] is broader than our little corner of it and bigger than the circle we feel most comfortable in. We need fewer angular, sharp-elbowed Calvinists who glory in what distinguishes their stance from that of others and lot more supporters of the Reformed faith who rejoice in what they hold in common with others” (289).

Stewart concludes: “When versions of Calvinism contend with one another over which is most authentic, we have sunk to a much lower level than that of the sixteenth century when the Swiss reformers and their international allies aimed at the broadest possible collaboration and widest possible mutual recognition. Calvin, after all, insisted he would if necessary ‘cross ten seas’ if he could promote agreement in the central doctrines of the faith with fellow believers” (289-90). It is one thing to contend for the truth because we believe it to be biblical. This we should do (without being contentious, hopefully). But when it comes to claiming the “true mantle” of Calvinism, or proclaiming what it really means to be a Calvinist historically, far more humility and candor would serve us than is sometimes displayed. Stewart’s book is a real help in recovering the fullness of what Calvinism means, encouraging us to have less of a party spirit and instead to pursue greater unity and forbearance.

—Alan D. Strange

William Still. *The Work of the Pastor*. Revised edition. Foreword by Sinclair B. Ferguson. Geanies House, Fearn, Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2010. Pp. 122. \$9.99.

This book has been reprinted, being first published in 1984, and here includes a foreword by Sinclair Ferguson. William Still, we are informed, labored in the pastorate in Scotland for fifty years. He died in 1997. This work is the fruit of many years of pastoral experience and reflection. Given the limited size of this work, it is not a comprehensive guide to the work of the pas-

torate or to the numerous perplexing issues that ministers inevitably find themselves trying to handle.

The book consists of five chapters. The first, "Feed My Sheep," examines the nature of the pastor before tackling the work of the pastor, treating the pastor as evangelist, as teacher and preacher, which requires a big diet on God's Word, not merely and perpetually the simple gospel. Still then moves on to discuss feeding the converted and the importance of the pastor himself being well-nurtured in the Scriptures. "To be true pastors, your whole life must be spent in knowing the truth of this Word, not only verbally, propositionally, theologically, but religiously, that is, devotionally, morally, in worshipping Him whom it reveals, and in personal obedience to Him whose commands it contains, in all the promised grace and threat of those commands" (24). Sadly, many pastors have a poor diet in this regard. Still urges us to labor in the Word so that we are "Spirit-Inspired"—that is, men of God—who are sure of their calling and preach the whole counsel of God.

In short, the pastor must know Christ in order to communicate Christ to others, and prayer is pivotal in doing the blessed work of the minister.

The pastor laboring beyond the pulpit is the subject of chapter two. Here Still cautions pastors to know their limitations, especially in seeking to minister to needy people who wish to become pastor-dependent. Still also advises that pastors become effective listeners, a skill many pastors find particularly difficult. "When real people come seeking real help, receive them with all grace, patience and forbearance. Let them talk: don't jump to conclusions and turn their interview into another sermon on the lines they may have heard many times before" (47). A pastor must exercise the common sense of sanctified wisdom, keep people focused on the gospel (Christ isn't "ruthless sergeant-major"), assist them to live as sheep with the other sheep and in the world of goats without becoming goats, and visit the flock.

Chapter three argues for the sufficiency of Scripture in the work of the ministry, which nonetheless requires that pastors speak in the idioms of their own time and culture, not parrot the dialect of a former glorious age of the church or try to perform their work as if they live in centuries other than their own. Still chastises pastors who attempt to market themselves in the shape of sixteenth-, seventeenth-, eighteenth-, nineteenth-century situations. Many of us have met Reformed pastors who discover the seventeenth-century Puritans and suddenly begin to speak in a manner that betrays a comic mimicking of a former age. Still pleads for a proper sense of communicating the gospel without modern or ancient gimmicks; rather, pastors must communicate the up-to-date grace in the up-to-date circumstances of our times.

The fourth chapter treats what Still regards as an over-emphasis on reaching the lost with the gospel to the neglect of the already gathered flock. His comments here are cogent and on-target. Nonetheless, I feel compelled to demur a bit since I don't know of any confessionally Reformed pastors who exhibit the problem or error Still here describes. Instead, confessionally Reformed pastors need to be encouraged to do the work of an evangelist—to preach the gospel to the lost, which means the lost need to be reached and situations produced where this can happen.

The last chapter of Still's book is entitled "Walking the Tightrope." Still reminds readers that "the God-honouring and fruitful minister walks a tightrope ... a tightrope of the Spirit" (101). This is work of balancing the past and the present, being "in the world" but "not of the world." We must live in the world of people, while we live in the world of the Book. A minister must not

cordon himself off from the world (an easy thing to do, for his books and the people of his church easily become the whole scope of his world). Pastors need to read the newspapers, know what's up on radio and television, what are the goings-on of local and national politics, how parishioners spend their leisure time, the sorts of sins that most tempts the members of his flock, just as the pastor needs to keep up with the intellectual side of things expressed in journals, books, plays, articles and the like. And not least, pastors need to know what the common people are saying and doing. We must fearlessly and faithfully bring the gospel to that world, armed with the Scripture, encouraging the members of Christ's church to stand up for Christ and divine truth. This isn't hopeless, nor is it harmless, and it certainly isn't our own project. We depend on God's grace. It is his project.

Meanwhile, in walking the tightrope of the Spirit Still warns pastors to beware of two dangers: "One, that of being so preoccupied with soundness in the truth, with doctrines, formulations, propositions and principles, that we go all academic and dead." "The other danger is that we go all activist, constantly running around in fruitless circles, constantly stirring the pot of emotionalism to boiling point, equating the presence and the working of the Spirit with noise, clatter, chatter, laughter and tears, clapping hands and wringing hands, etc." (113)

In sum, this book is a nice reminder of the work of the ministry, both in and out of the pulpit, with a proper and inspirational accent upon the pastor's own walk with God. Much of what is presented here is not new or novel or profound, but it is edifying, and makes the pastor examine his own heart and life, his own commitment to Christ and the gospel, and his own sense of call and willingness to sacrifice in laboring for the Lord. Every pastor will benefit from the wise counsel of this little volume.

—J. Mark Beach

Harry S. Stout. *Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the Civil War*. New York: Viking Penguin, 2006. Pp. xii + 552. \$18.00.

Harry Stout has been one of America's premier religious historians for the last few decades. As the Jonathan Edwards Professor of American Religious History at Yale University, Stout has made signal contributions to eighteenth century American history. Here Stout weighs in with some heavy nineteenth century history, a moral history of the U.S. Civil War (1861-1865).

What Stout shows us is not a pretty picture. General Sherman opined that "war is hell." And Stout shows us, sometimes in gruesome detail, just how much that was true in the Civil War. As the War progressed, both sides fought harder, approaching in some campaigns, particularly Sherman's "March to the Sea," that awful reality called "total war." Both sides claimed to be humane to the other and complained that it was the other side that failed to conduct the war in a Christian fashion. In fact, both sides grew more and more brutal in the prosecution of the War as the conflict dragged on.

Stout demonstrates, in unmistakable fashion, that both sides, were relentless, each in its own way. The South's record of the treatment of prisoners (blacks most particularly) was abysmal even as the North's march under Grant and Sherman often failed to distinguish between combatants and non-combatants. Stout paints for us a horrific picture in which each side, reading

from the same Bible and praying to the same God (as Lincoln so memorably put it), mercilessly slaughtered each other.

What makes the slaughter especially noteworthy is that each side not only claimed to be Christian but justified the violence in the name of Christianity. In other words, the South saw itself as a beleaguered defender of a more orthodox and biblical Christianity that did not condemn but regulated slavery. And the North saw itself as the savior of the Union (without which freedom was at risk and well-being in peril) and, ultimately, the liberator of the slave. In this each saw itself as righteous, as representing good and light and saw the other as evil, representing darkness and destruction. This civil religion enabled both sides to engage in brutalities otherwise unthinkable without such religious justification. If one's army can be conceived in some fashion as the "army of the Lord" almost anything can be argued as warranted.

Stout is critical of religion being enlisted to play the role that it did in the carnage of the Civil War. One wonders at points, however, if his criticism of the violence is so ubiquitous and all-consuming that Stout would ever see a war as justified. Is Stout really promoting pacifism? If the point of this work is that war as such often solves little, certainly less than it claims to (such has to be claimed to justify all those deaths), this is a rather unremarkable point. If on the other hand, Stout is saying more than this—that nothing is worth dying for, that no war is ever worth it—he makes an argument so at variance with his subject, it is doubtful that he can treat it with equity. At times, this reviewer wanted to say in exasperation, "OK, Dr. Stout, but what could the Army of the Potomac have done in such a case?" Is this an argument that the North should not have fought the South? I do not suggest that it is, but Stout's view of both sides is so uniformly critical that it does raise the question of whether war is ever justified. If Dr. Stout's answer is "no," he needs to be prepared to live with all the consequences that entails. I am not prepared to live with it, and that has not been the historic Christian consensus, especially ever since Augustine and his development of just war theory.

This remains, however, an unparalleled examination of the moral fabric of both sides, showing how troubled both were and how this played out in the way the war was conducted. This should be of wide interest now that the 150th anniversary of the Civil War is upon us.

—Alan D. Strange

Carl R. Trueman. *Histories and Fallacies: Problems Faced in the Writing of History*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010. Pp. 192. \$17.99.

Professor Trueman has given us in this volume a much-needed corrective to the problems that plague the writing of history, including church history. This reviewer recalls, with delight, discovering, as an undergraduate (some years ago), that inimitable book on the fallacies of historians by the redoubtable David Hackett Fischer. Fischer's book was like good preaching of the law: reading Fischer, one will be deeply convicted of one's many historical and methodological transgressions. Read Trueman, and if one has done any historical research or writing and reflects on it, fallacies will become evident. Trueman's book is a call to recognize the kinds of fallacies that historians can commit and how to repent of such and strive after new obedience. And he does it as always with humor and grace.

Trueman has wearied of postmodern perspectivism and its claims that lead to relativism and solipsism. It is the case that in the nineteenth century, in the heyday of modernism, neutrality and objectivity were conflated and viewed as essentially the same thing. Most scholars have learned the lesson that there is no neutrality (excepting dogmatic scientific sorts and the like); while some scholars rightly distinguish between neutrality and objectivity, some continue to conflate the two and write as if, since there is no such thing as neutrality, there is no such thing as objectivity. Trueman readily admits that we all have a perspective, that we have presuppositions (he teaches at Westminster, after all!), but this does not mean that we ought not to be committed to as objective an approach to our subject matter as is possible. There is no neutrality, to be sure, Trueman concedes, but this does not mean that there is no objectivity, even of a weaker sort.

The postmodern dismissal of the possibility of objectivity has undercut the ability of the profession to rule out certain approaches as invalid. That there is no neutrality does not mean that every approach to history is legitimate. Trueman's point here is that all approaches to history are not equally valid. Part of the legacy of postmodernism in its zeal to dethrone modernism, and science, especially, has been a relativism that does not properly discern among competing claims, so that "anything goes." This has been exploited by some fringe groups which seek legitimacy for their spurious projects. In this respect, Trueman surveys the movement known as Holocaust Denial, a group that in the current postmodern climate claims that it has as much right to be heard as any and what it claims is that the Holocaust, as such, did not occur. Trueman argues that the overwhelming evidence of the Holocaust renders such a claim not only untenable but not a respectable historical position to take. He shows the legitimate range of historical views with respect to this and argues for the recovery of a standard of objectivity that will permit historians to rule some hypotheses out of bounds altogether.

After treating what he calls in his first chapter "The Denial of History," particularly with regard to Holocaust Deniers, Trueman proceeds to address what he calls "Grand Schemes and Misdemeanors." If there are those, like Holocaust Deniers, who seek to exploit the relativistic soft underbelly of postmodernism, there have also been dogmatists of different sorts who impose their *a priori* grid on all of history. Among those who bring a grand scheme to historical investigation are Marxist historians. They believe that the economic always dominates and that one can understand the dialectic of history through material development, seen especially in the class struggle. To be sure, economic motivations and realities are no small part of much history and Trueman acknowledges that. However, the problem with Marxism, as with all such schemes, is that it reduces all of history to the material aspect, absolutizing the material so that every other aspect is marginalized, even dismissed, as "false consciousness." This Procrustean bed does not allow for one to account for evidence that does not fit the model and the position itself is counter to science since its basic presuppositions are not falsifiable. All such schemes enjoy, on the part of their promoters, revisionary immunity, and as such are not fit as working scientific hypotheses but have the nature of a religious commitment. Trueman could deal more trenchantly with these sort of things from a philosophical and apologetical position, but he is, after all, a historian and seeks to focus on the craft itself rather than examine what is necessarily foundational to the intelligible practice of the craft. In this chapter, his engagement of the great Marxist historian Christo-

pher Hill was particularly intriguing and well done. What balance and reasonableness! We are in short supply of such sensibleness when it comes to history of every stripe, not the least being church history.

The third chapter is aptly titled, "The Past is a Foreign Country." That evocative aphorism should remind us all that we ought not approach history with all of our current concerns and seek to mine history merely for what we can get from it to make our case for something in the present. Such de-contextualized, historical cherry picking bedevils the profession, perhaps especially in church history. Trueman instructs us, then, about how we may approach the past as carefully as possible, seeking to understand it on its own terms, in its own context, using the full range of sources (both primary and secondary), to get a clear picture of a time and place, which is very different from ours. He well illustrates this with two extended examples that every student of history should read: he compares John Calvin (of the sixteenth century) and Francis Turretin (of the seventeenth century), showing how such should, and should not, be done; and he addresses the question of Martin Luther's racism. With respect to the latter example, Luther's virulent 1543 attack on Jews has been cited as leading to the Holocaust of the twentieth century. Trueman analyzes this and shows how Luther's 1523 work on *Jesus Was Born a Jew* had a completely different sensibility about it, a loving and caring one, rather than a brutal and violent one. Trueman explores the change and those reading this will have to read Trueman's book to see how he treats it.

Finally, in the fourth chapter, Trueman catalogs a host of additional fallacies that should prove enlightening to any student or reader of history. Reification, oversimplification, *post hoc [ergo] propter hoc*, the genetic fallacy, generalization, category confusions, and others are here treated. These are all menaces that occasionally plague those who are historians and mislead those who are readers. His treatment of these are worth the price of the book alone. Anyone can have a misstep, either in methodology or fact: For example, under "asking the right questions," Trueman cites what he calls the "old chestnut, 'When did you stop beating your wife.'" This is not the old cross-examination entrapment question, however: it's "have you stopped beating your wife?" Such entrapment only works on a leading question in cross-examination to which one may only answer "yes" or "no." This is a fun little quibble, however, in a book that is outstanding and which ought to be read by everyone who reads or writes church history, which would be all seminarians and pastors at least. The reading lay public will also find it interesting as it has the inimitable Trueman style and wit. This book is highly recommended.

—Alan D. Strange

Carl R. Trueman. *Republicrat: Confessions of a Liberal Conservative*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2010. Pp. 128. \$9.99.

Professor Trueman's basic thesis for this book is that "religious conservatism does not demand unconditional political conservatism." This is a point that this reviewer thinks needs badly to be made, and heard, particularly in contemporary America. And for a Briton like Trueman to make this point is apt: from Dickens to Tocqueville to Trollope, America has enjoyed certain Europeans as its most trenchant observers. In many quarters of American

evangelicalism, political conservatism seems more important than religious soundness. It's rather shocking to realize that many who name the name of Christ in our conservative churches are more concerned about the political sphere and how one ought to vote than concerned about the religious orthodoxy: support Joel Osteen and his deficient gospel all you want just don't ever support a candidate who might raise taxes for some.

Trueman's point here is not that Christians should be politically indifferent or that the Christian faith has no consequences in the public square. It's just that men and women who agree religiously may differ politically. To be sure, Trueman would affirm a right "spirituality of the church": the calling of the church as an institution is to carry out her Lord's commission, to minister Word and Sacrament for the gathering and perfecting of the saints. As such, her mission, properly, is not political as such. And she does not give a "thus saith the Lord" on those things that divide people of the same religious convictions into political parties.

Trueman essentially here pleads for the recognition of this: that while he, as a Christian, as should all Christians, opposes abortion and gay marriage, he also has a concern for the environment and poverty (and thus, among other things, supporting governmental policies that would address both). Trueman wearies of Americans who take Limbaugh and Beck for gospel and who are more concerned with a fellow believer who might support universal health care than with one who denies justification by faith alone. It is not that Trueman would claim that his faith does not inform his politics. As Sean Lucas rightly wrote in another context, it is impossible for our faith to fail, in some sense, to inform our politics as well as every area of our lives.

In the highly charged political atmosphere of our day, Trueman will appear to many as neither fish nor fowl, too economically liberal to please the Christian right and too socially conservative to please the left. Trueman is only asking that his Reformed bona fides be recognized and that his orthodox theology be accorded higher status than his political views that happen to be at variance with many fellow Reformed and Presbyterian Christians. While Trueman and this writer politically diverge at points, we do not diverge confessionally and that is more important than his being a political mixture, a "republocrat."

—Alan D. Strange

Willem J. van Asselt. *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*, with contributions by T. Theo. J. Pleizier, Pieter L. Rouwendal, and Maarten Wisse. Foreword by Richard A. Muller. Translated by Albert Gootjes. Reformed Historical-Theological Studies, General Editors: Joel R. Beeke and Jay T. Collier. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011. Pp. xiv + 263. \$25.00.

With the translation of this standard work, first published in the Dutch language (*Inleiding in de Gereformeerde Scholastiek*) in 1998, English-language pastors and scholars have, at last, a competent short introduction to Reformed Scholasticism. Heretofore, no basic text has been available in English to orient readers to this development in Reformed thought. Van Asselt's work, with the assistance of other competent scholars, fills an important lacuna in the secondary literature for early modern studies. It also serves interested pastors and theological students who wish to explore the breath of the Reformed heritage for doing theology today.

This work consists of eleven chapters, with two appendices. The first appendix offers a helpful reading guide to both primary and secondary literature, which is supplemental to the sources listed at the end of each chapter. The second appendix presents a translation of Gisbertus Voetius's disputation on the use of reason in matters of faith. Those who know little about Reformed scholastic writers may well begin here, for Voetius is careful to circumscribe the role of reason in the theological enterprise, while defending the authority of Scripture. Here readers will also find Voetius's polemic concerning the use of scholastic methodology for expounding and defending the truth of Scripture.

As there is a learning curve in coming to understand any theological tradition, such is the case in comprehending and mastering the theological cadence, vocabulary, and form of argument characteristic of Reformed scholasticism. This includes how Scripture is used, the exegetical tradition lying in back of an appeal to Scripture, and the circumstances for writing theology this particular way in this particular context. Much of this has been misappropriated by modern theologians looking back at the Protestant scholastic writers. Van Asselt's work should help an emerging generation of scholars (and interested pastors) in reading these sources with accuracy and appreciation—even if not with full approval.

Chapter one is introductory and asks the question, What is Reformed scholasticism? Among the many issues examined in the chapter we note only the following: First and foremost, as for "the scholastic" side of the above mentioned question, this movement is best characterized by a *method*, which was ecumenical in scope, for after the Reformation Lutheran, Reformed, and Roman Catholic authors all increasingly made use of scholastic method. Moreover, scholastic method "was practiced in close connection with other disciplines, such as philology, exegesis, philosophy, and so forth" (3). Last, inasmuch as scholastic method was used by theologians from different traditions and possessing diverse theological convictions, it is mistaken to confuse the method with the content of any specific doctrine. In other words, an Augustinian and a semi-Pelagian view of free will can both be defended using scholastic method. Similarly, using scholastic method, various aspects or traits or implications surrounding any number of God's attributes can be explored and defended but with very different results or conclusions. As for the term "Reformed orthodoxy," this is best described as the period of institutionalization and codification of Reformed theology after the Reformation. It should be noted, however, that not all Reformed orthodox theology produced during this period was scholastic. Other genres of theological writing exist alongside the academic, school theology composed by these authors.

Chapter two introduces readers to the state of scholarship concerning Reformed scholasticism, while chapter three explores what it means that these writers used Aristotle in the service of theology. This chapter is not to be missed since many novices to this movement, and even scholars who "dip" into the primary sources, fail to learn the vocabulary of Reformed scholasticism and consequently are unable to comprehend it. Chapters four, five, and six trace the background to Reformed scholasticism, treating successively Augustine, medieval scholasticism, and humanism and scholasticism during the era of the Reformation. Chapter seven makes the transition to scholastic method itself, demonstrating how Reformed-orthodox authors constructed theological arguments by using scholastic methodology—that over against rival methodologies then current.

Chapters eight through ten trace the history of Reformed scholasticism, from the period of early orthodoxy (ca. 1560-1620), to high orthodoxy (ca. 1620-1700), to the period of late orthodoxy (ca. 1700-1790). Each of these chapters initiate readers in important sources and figures, areas of disputation, important primary and secondary literature, as well as providing samples of doctrinal formulation. These chapters also trace in brief form the rise and development of scholasticism (in its distinct periods) in England, Scotland, Switzerland, the Netherlands, France, and Germany. Chapter ten also treats the emergence of rationalism and the Enlightenment, which served to bring the period of Reformed scholasticism to an end.

Last, chapter eleven presents a valuable summary of conclusions regarding Reformed scholasticism. Among the important summary statements van Asselt presents we offer this one: “Finally, the authors [writing in this volume] have argued that there are in any case two positions that cannot be maintained: (1) a radical discontinuity and reductionist paradigm, which considers the development of post-Reformation Reformed theology as a break with Calvin; and (2) an oversimplified continuity model, which assumes an identity between Calvin and orthodoxy and fails to do justice to complex historical phenomena by disregarding the fact that orthodoxy drew inspiration not only from the theology of Calvin, but—like Calvin himself—from patristic and medieval sources as well. Methodologically, this implies that the terminology of continuity and discontinuity should be used with great care. ... The developments of the two centuries following the Reformation are part and parcel of a living tradition, characterized by a quest for alternative ways of doing theology for the sake of meeting the demands of the time, while simultaneously protecting continuity with the past. The tradition of Reformed theology was a highly dynamic process” (196). How ironic that many modern critics of Reformed scholasticism deny the permissibility of this dynamic process to seventeenth-century Reformed theologians while pleading its necessity for their own theological work today.

Van Asselt concludes this fine book with a section that addresses the question: Why study the Reformed scholastic writers today? In forming a reply, he quotes Paul Tillich who wrote that Protestant orthodoxy is “the abutment against which the bridge of all later Protestant theology leans.” The point is this: “Ignorance of [Reformed scholasticism] causes the vagueness and superficiality of much theological discourse today. When doing theology we cannot start from scratch; rather, we should remain in continual discussion with all centuries of Christian thought, including the founding fathers of Reformed identity” (205). Well said.

Reformed pastors and students of Reformed theology, certainly anyone who wants to come to a rich understanding of the Reformed tradition through the authors of this period cannot afford to do without this most valuable introduction.

—J. Mark Beach

Clifford Williams. *Existential Reasons for Belief in God: A Defense of Desires & Emotions for Faith*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011. Pp. 188. \$22.00.

Clifford Williams, a professor of philosophy at Trinity College (Deerfield, IL), found himself convinced by friends who saw evidential apologetics as wanting and who wanted to draft him to write a book exploring “needs-based

grounds for believing” (9). Williams admits that “Christians have differing viewpoints about the role that the satisfaction of needs should play in acquiring and sustaining faith” (11). Those who think that the satisfaction of needs should assume “little or no role” in faith unduly privilege reason, according to Williams. This sort of rationalism, as he sees it, is why Williams has written this book. Many Christians, he argues, “have come to faith because it satisfies deep needs” (11).

Williams prefers what he sees as a more balanced approach: one that embraces need and does not reject reason, though this book is an extended argument, as the title has it, for defending desires and emotions for faith. It is, in other words, not an argument based on reason or evidence (there’s enough of that, Williams would argue), nor one that is presuppositional as such, but an existential argument for believing God. Williams also notes that Christians differ on the place of emotions: are they helpful? Are they a part, an element of faith? Williams argues that emotion, not merely reason or evidence, is constitutive of faith, giving a number of examples, or case studies, throughout the book in which desires, needs, and emotions played a decisive role in someone’s faith.

The last question—about the role emotions play in faith—is interesting, inasmuch as classic Protestantism (Reformed and Lutheran) has seen saving faith as consisting of knowledge, assent, and trust. One wonders if emotion for Williams plays the role that trust plays in the Protestant conception of saving faith, as the third and completing element. That it might is suggested when he writes, “the advocates of emotion, however, view faith-as-assent as lifeless” (12). This charge of mere assent is one brought by orthodox Protestants against some few fringe dwellers who intellectualize faith and insist that saving faith is “belief only.” Trust, as that final part of saving faith, is coming to Christ, casting oneself on Him, leaning on the promises and the everlasting arms. What earlier seems to threaten—emotion is an important part of faith—has by chapter eight (“Faith and Emotion”) developed explicitly into Williams’ assertion that both faith and repentance are emotions. Indeed, the exercise of saving faith may evoke a whole range of emotions as sorrow of a godly sort is involved in repentance. Does Williams simply “want to make room for emotions” in the Christian life? If so, there are other, and better, ways to do this than to becloud the definition of saving faith.

If by emotions he means what the theologians mean by *fiducia* (trust), then this reviewer has no problem. But the balance of the book seems to indicate otherwise. He says, in fact, “faith should consist of both emotion and assent,” (12 *passim*) putting emotion in the place of trust. Trust is a whole-souled believing and resting in the truth. Trust, in fact, is extraspective: it looks away from all that we have and are and do to Christ and to Christ alone. Emotions are states of feeling that are neither good nor bad in themselves. Emotions are affective reactions to things and may or may not be salutary.

True, saving faith in Christ is always salutary. Emotions are true or false depending upon what they are based. If I am joyful because I am contemplating God’s gracious work on my behalf that is good; if I am happy because I am plotting revenge on my neighbor that is evil. This is why we must, in treating saving faith, emphasize the order: We know the Truth, we assent to (or believe) the Truth, we entrust ourselves to the Truth. And the truth is the Word of God, centrally, the gospel. Believing and trusting in the gospel is saving. Whatever role emotions play in that is not constitutive of saving faith.

Emotions come and go. The classic biblical three-fold view of saving faith anchors us, in this changing world, in the unchanging God and his word. In difficult times, I do not need to be cast upon emotions but to anchor on the solid Rock. I do not by any means eschew emotions, or their importance—they always tell us something if carefully attended to—but to make them, as it were, an aspect of saving faith is simply misguided and wrongheaded. It's a category mistake, in fact.

Another major question of the book—in addition to the one about emotions—is this: Is it legitimate to acquire faith in God solely through satisfaction of needs? This is the way that Williams sees it: the satisfaction of need may, and frequently does, draw us to faith. His concern here again is that many of the classical apologetical arguments are deficient, particularly in our post-modern culture. Truly seeing our need for Christ, however, is a work of the Holy Spirit. So, yes, if the Spirit awakens us to seek Christ, we will keenly feel our need of Him. If this is all that is meant by emotion and need, who could disagree with this? I agree with the hymn-writer who says, “the only fitness He requireth is to feel your need of Him.”

In his second chapter, Williams details what he means by needs. He says that there are two kinds: self-directed and other-directed. Self-directed needs are cosmic security, to be loved, a larger life to be lived, meaning, and to be forgiven. Other-directed needs are to love, to experience awe, to delight in goodness, to be present (with those we love), and justice and fairness. Unbelievers, however, in experiencing these needs are happy to these needs met, as they would see it, but want them met outside of Christ. And believers, even though they have a relationship with Christ, often feel these needs keenly and seek them outside of Christ, which is to say that these “needs” or “desires” become idols. When these needs are pursued directly and for themselves, they inevitably become idols. What we should tell believers is to come to Christ and to rest and trust in Him, part of which is knowing that he supplies our needs. And believers need to be challenged as well to die, to lose our lives so that we might gain them and found them hidden with Christ in God.

These existential needs of chapter 2 develop into chapter 3 into an existential argument for the existence of God. Again, that these needs are met in Him is true. That in some way they become part of an argument for God eludes me. Might the need for cosmic security, as Williams defines it, be a desire that draws us to God? Certainly. But how that becomes an argument for God remains unclear. As a presuppositionalist, I agree that the evidential and rationalistic proofs for God are inadequate. I believe that the transcendental proof, which sees God as the necessary and indispensable precondition for the intelligibility of reason, logic, truth, beauty, love, etc. is compelling. I believe that the proof of the Ontological Trinity and the Self-Attesting Christ of Scriptures is the impossibility of the contrary—that without Him we can prove or know nothing at all. I agree that we need something more foundational (not less) than empiricism or rationalism. While needs and desires are suggestive of God (Lewis was good at pointing this out)—and Williams cites, among others, Pascal, Unamuno, and Kierkegaard, especially, in this regard—I do not believe, as helpful as some of things that Williams mentions is, that he has offered an argument for God.

Simply put, he states the existential argument for God like this:

1. We need cosmic security [then he proceeds to mention all of the self-directed and other directed needs listed above].
2. Faith in God satisfies these needs

3. Therefore, we are justified in having faith in God.

This is, as I mentioned above, not a real argument and Williams cannot, in this reviewer's opinion, surmount the objections that he himself notes to his argument in Chapters 4-7: the existential argument does not guarantee truth; it justifies belief in any kind of God; not everyone feels existential needs, and existential needs can be satisfied without faith. This review will not take the time to work through each of these. Williams, in endeavoring to answer them, offers some useful insights. But even his helpful comments do not turn what is not really a proof into a proof.

One telling admission that Williams makes is that this existential approach, focusing on needs and desires, does not "justify belief in all the features of the Christian God, such as that God is triune or exists necessarily. But then it is not meant to justify belief in a full-blown Christian God. All it is meant to do, and all it can do (if it can), is to justify belief in a 'merely Christian' God" (35). This is a remarkable concession: if an existential approach cannot even justify the necessary existence of God, it falls considerably short of a proof of any value in my view. And this reviewer has no idea why Professor Williams (apparently) evokes C. S. Lewis's "mere Christianity," which assays to define God in explicit Biblical and historic Christian terms while omitting some points that divide Christians. But all Christians of every stripe affirm the tri-unity and the necessity of God. If a proof cannot establish God's deity as triune and necessary, it is no proof of the Christian God. No "merely Christian" conception of God would ever omit God's tri-unity and necessity. That Williams even suggests such indicates to me that his project is at best fuzzy and at worse deadly.

We ought to point people to Christ as the source of eternal life and of comfort and solace in the difficulties of this life. We should all understand that God uses suffering in our lives to conform us to the image of Christ: God's loving discipline of us in all the difficulties of life, in fact, is a mark of His love for us and of our being His children. I am not suggesting that Williams would disagree with this. I am further not arguing that needs and emotions play no role in our spiritual lives, helping us to see things about God and ourselves. I agree with Williams that we should not fear emotions and that we should seek to cultivate right emotions. I am not one of those types that fear emotions. Yet, I still argue that the use that Williams would have us make of them is confusing and that his approach tends to point people to themselves rather than to Christ, the only one who can do our sinful, needy souls any good. Faith is knowledge of who He is, assent to that truth, and resting and trusting in Him. As we walk with Him, our needs and emotions are rightly ordered; though we remain sinful below, we can, in Him by the Spirit, know joy unspeakable.

—Alan D. Strange

Timothy Z. Witmer. *The Shepherd Leader: Achieving Effective Shepherding in Your Church*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2010. Pp. xi + 268. \$17.99.

For every Reformed pastor looking for a book to place in the hands of seminarians aspiring to the pastorate, to candidates, interns, elders, and to pastors who periodically wish to remind themselves of the work of shepherding God's flock, Witmer's book is made to order.

Witmer is Professor of Practical Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary and the Minister of Preaching at Crossroads Community Church (PCA) in Upper Darby, PA. This volume has three parts: Part 1 treats the biblical and historical foundations of the task of shepherding. Witmer goes back to the Old Testament, where we are given the first examples of this work, before moving on to the New Testament materials. He traces the rise and fall of the shepherding ministry in the church as well. Part 2 examines the task of shepherding, wherein he treats in successive chapters the requirements for shepherds to *know, feed, lead, and protect* the flock of God under his care. A useful summary of this sort of work can be found in “the Table” on page 189. Part 3 is more synthetic and explores how the multifaceted work of shepherding comes together in a practical, hands-on manner. This section of the book also urges leaders to implement an active (versus passive) shepherding ministry in their churches.

Witmer’s volume is peppered with some well-placed charts and helpful diagrams. Best of all, however, is that the book is biblical in content, wise in counsel, and finds an appropriate balance between theological instruction and practical application. It makes a fine resource for pastors and elders, and for those training to become shepherds of the flock.

—J. Mark Beach

Frances M. Young (with Andrew Teal). *From Nicaea to Chalcedon: A Guide to the Literature and Its Background*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010. Pp. x + 406. \$39.99.

Students of the history of Christian theology acknowledge the formative importance of the early church’s articulation of the doctrines of the Trinity and the Person of Jesus Christ. During the first five centuries of the church’s history after the coming of Christ and the fixing of the New Testament canon, the church achieved by God’s grace a broad consensus regarding the doctrines of the Trinity and Christology. This period of history was marked by a series of great ecumenical councils that resolved a series of Trinitarian and Christology controversies that racked the early church. It was also a period in which a wide array of church fathers contributed to the church’s efforts to reflect upon the teaching of Scripture and express in the form of dogmatic pronouncements its theological and Christological convictions. These dogmatic pronouncements remain a vital part of the church’s ecumenical and theological inheritance to the present day.

Given the importance of the early history of the church for the formulation of the doctrines of the Trinity and Christology, historians of the period will welcome eagerly the second edition of Frances M. Young’s thorough and insightful study, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon: A Guide to the Literature and Its Background*. Young’s acclaimed study of the period from the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. until the Council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D. has been revised and updated in a way that will enhance its reputation as one of the most important and thorough studies of this vital period of the early church’s history.

In the preface to the second edition, Young acknowledges that a generation has gone by since the publication of the first edition of his study in 1983. During the intervening period, studies of the history and politics of the Arian controversy have considerably revised older accounts of the history of the post-Nicene era. Whereas the older literature tended to view the Antioch-

ene school's Christological tendencies with greater sympathy, more recent studies have advocated a more sympathetic interpretation of the Alexandrian school's Christological emphases. Young incorporates the findings of these more recent studies into his work, and makes profitable use of a number of more recent biographical studies of particular influential figures in this period. He also takes into account the growing study of the Cappadocian fathers, increased attention to the asceticism and the early monastic movement, early Byzantine society and politics, and Syrian studies. In each of these ways, the second edition expands upon and enhances the reputation of the first edition for thorough and balanced scholarly treatment of the period.

The second edition of Young's study retains a number of the distinctive features of the first edition. Young intends his book to serve as a "guidebook" to the study of the doctrinal history during the period from Nicaea to Chalcedon. As a kind of "companion" to more standard texts on this history, Young's book provides background material, an introduction to the primary characters and authors of the period, and a guide to the literature and its background. The chapters of the book provide "a series of essays on a number of significant literary figures, laymen, bishops and heretics of the fourth and fifth centuries, essays which offer biographical, literary-critical and theological information" (Preface, vii). Throughout these essays, Young has augmented the material from the first edition with bibliographical and historical information that reflects more recent scholarship.

In addition to the retention of these features of the first edition, the second edition is enriched by the contributions of Andrew Teal. Teal authored the first draft of the new Chapter 2, "Athanasius and the Shaping of Nicene Theology." He also "traced more complete publication details of old material cited, helped with identifying and gaining access to new material of which we need to take account, assisted with the final editing of the typescript for submission to the publisher and prepared the index" (viii). In these respects, the second edition is really a collaborative effort.

With these additions and changes to the first edition, Young's second edition should prove an outstanding resource for the study of the history of doctrine during the period from Nicaea to Chalcedon. Students of this history will find in his study a thorough review of the principal actors, the historical circumstances, and the doctrinal developments of the period, and all of it in conversation with the leading scholarship of past and more recent studies.

—Cornelis P. Venema