

Book Reviews

EUCCHARISTIC PRESIDENCY: A Theological Statement by the House of Bishops of the General Synod

London: Church House Publishing 1997 72pp £5.95 pb ISBN 0 7151 3804 9

Three years after the General Synod of the Church of England amended a motion on lay presidency and called for 'a statement from the House of Bishops about the theology of the Eucharist and about the respective roles of clergy and laity within it', that statement has now appeared. The presupposition of the Synod motion was that 'lay presidency... is incompatible with Anglican tradition'. It is therefore not surprising that the statement's conclusions support the *status quo*. What is perhaps surprising, and certainly interesting, is how that position is reached.

In its Preface, the statement commits itself to a bold testing of received traditions, and certainly its argument is developed along non-traditional lines. Ordination is said to place a person in a special and permanent relationship to the Church as a whole – a condition described by the traditional expression 'character' (3.29). But ordination does not change the person in a way which entitles or enables them to preside at the Eucharist. Rather, the individual is ordained to embody and express the four 'marks' of the Church – oneness, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity – which belong to the priesthood of *all* believers (3.30, cf 4.34).

The ordained are thus the delegates of the Christian community, standing in a special relationship with the wider Church and with the local congregations of which they are pastors, where the Eucharist 'actualises and makes visible... the universal Church' (4.11). And it is this *relational* aspect of ordination which forms the basis for the statement's (somewhat foregone) conclusion that 'presidency over the community's celebration of the Eucharist belongs to those with overall pastoral oversight of the community' (4.46).

But this conclusion, and especially the phrase 'overall pastoral oversight', immediately raises certain questions reflecting a general untidiness in the statement's thinking. What are we to say, for example, of the celebrant 'without any or much pastoral responsibility' (5.11)? The statement's justification of their eucharistic role is by a tentative appeal to episcopacy:

On the one hand it could be argued that, if regularly practised, it fractures the pastoral and liturgical roles we are concerned to unite; on the other hand it might be replied that a visiting priest represents

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the bishop who, together with the college of priests, combine pastoral and liturgical leadership within the diocese as a whole (5.11).

However, the logic is as shaky as the suggestion is tentative. If ordination *imputes* the bishop's own oversight to those who have no pastoral relationship with any specific community, why argue from individual pastoral function in the first place? On the other hand, if actual 'overall oversight' is the criterion by which one may preside, should we allow curates to celebrate, particularly during an interregnum when it is not they but the churchwardens who, as the bishop's officers, have the *overall* oversight of the local congregation?

The fact is that *in practice* the Church of England continues to behave as if ordination endows the individual with certain powers, one of which is the *ability* (and *therefore* the right) to celebrate Communion – following the traditional view of the 'indelible character' which the statement consciously eschews (4.29). This is because our ministerial structures remain, in spite of the Reformation, basically unreformed. The statement tries to circumvent this state of affairs by constructing a new ontology of eucharistic presidency. But it proves either too little (leaving the *real* picture unchanged) or too much, implicitly denying presidency to some who customarily exercise it and then seeking to circumvent this by an appeal to a concept of episcopacy which it has previously admitted is neither universal nor essential to the Church (cf 3.36).

There are other faults and curiosities in this statement. For example, it accuses Western ecclesiology of placing too much emphasis on christology and not enough on pneumatology, citing as typical the attitude that 'Christ inaugurated the Church, the Church comprises those who confess Christ as Lord, and Christ is the ever-present Head and Lord of the Church' (2.20). This assertion is simply astonishing.

It also insists, rather bizarrely, that 'the *epiclesis* – the invocation of the Holy Spirit – is... a crucial part of the eucharistic action' (4.7). If this is so, it is curious that the Church of England has survived without it from 1552 until recently, given that Cranmer wrote it out of his revision of the 1549 Prayer Book.

The statement acknowledges that unambiguous New Testament evidence about the nature of the Eucharist or the role within it of those with pastoral oversight is almost entirely lacking (4.21,22). Yet it is wholeheartedly conservative, even though its supporting arguments are unsteady. Why, then, if the conclusion does not follow from clearer premises, is it nevertheless held to so tenaciously? The answer appears to

be the fear of lay presidency ‘introducing anarchy in the Church’ (5.2). Somehow, if ordinary Christians – even deacons or Readers – presided at the Lord’s Supper, the forces of chaos would rise up and threaten God’s Church. This, in spite of it being served by a ministry whose prime purpose, according to the statement is ‘to release and clarify all other ministries’ so that ‘they can exemplify and sustain the four “marks” of the Church’ (3.30).

In the end, therefore, is not the issue really about control, since the threat of ‘anarchy’ is greatest to those who rule? The answer will be seen in the response to the sort of criticisms raised here. If a careful refutation is made of these and other counter-arguments, we may be assured that truth, rather than power, is really at stake. However, at the presentation of this statement to the July 1997 General Synod, the Bishop of Ely already avoided criticisms of it raised by Timothy Royle, the mover of the original motion. On this precedent, there are few grounds for confidence that a critical debate will be welcomed.

JOHN RICHARDSON

POSSESSED BY GOD: A New Testament Theology of Sanctification and Holiness David Peterson

Leicester: Apollos 1995 191pp £10.99 pb ISBN 0-85111-510-1

What does it mean to be sanctified? In this book, David Peterson aims to challenge what he believes to be the mainstream view among evangelical Christians. Most of us, according to Dr Peterson, think of sanctification as a process which follows conversion. But in the New Testament, the word and its cognates are used almost invariably to denote the definitive change of status which happens at conversion. ‘Sanctification is primarily another way of describing what it means to be converted or brought to God in Christ and kept in that relationship’ (p 136). ‘Sanctification has to do with the new status and orientation of those who belong to God and to one another as his people. Sanctification means having a new identity, with the obligation to live according to that identity’ (pp 63-4).

Dr Peterson sets the scene with a brief treatment of the Old Testament background. Israel was definitively sanctified: ie separated from the pagan nations, cleansed and set apart for a relationship with God the Holy One. The remainder of the book is a survey of New Testament material, touching on virtually every passage that speaks of the sanctification or the holiness of believers. Inevitably, the treatment becomes repetitive but the point is well made. The terminology of sanctification is used predominantly in the New Testament for the definitive event of conversion. Believers are sanctified through the death of Christ, and by the work of the

Holy Spirit who leads us to believe the word of the gospel. Christian obedience and progress are seen as the outworking of that definitive sanctification.

So far, so good. For those of us brought up on John Murray, Peterson's thesis offers few surprises. Peterson offers us a more extensive exegetical basis than Murray (*Collected Writings* Banner of Truth 1977 vol 2 pp 277-93). But it is difficult to see that in his central thesis, he is offering anything very new. We may quibble with his exegesis at odd points, but when it comes to establishing the general usage of the key terms, Peterson's case seems unexceptionable.

It is when we come to practical and pastoral application that we become more uneasy with the direction of Peterson's thought. Two overlapping emphases emerge very plainly. Firstly, that Christian assurance should not rest at all upon our spiritual or moral progress. Peterson is willing to concede that sanctification – ie genuine conversion – will always lead to change 'I admit that genuine sanctification will always be seen...' (p 70). Yet he warns insistently against the idea that we test the reality of our own standing (or that of others) by assessing progress. In this, he distances himself explicitly from Ryle and the Puritans: 'Ryle argues that a lively *sense* of justification and an assurance of God's calling depend on the pursuit of holiness. But this seems to put the cart before the horse' (*ibid*). For Peterson, a Christian who sees little or no evidence of change and progress should not question the reality of his own conversion. Rather, he should rest upon the assurance that he has been definitively sanctified in Christ.

This does not seem to me to be a necessary implication of Peterson's main thesis. Nor does it seem pastorally realistic. The Puritan view arose out of the realities of pastoral experience. The New Testament warns that many who believe that they have trusted Christ will be found to be self-deceived. So what assurance can I give to anyone (or to myself) that faith in Christ is genuine, unless it produces manifest change?

Progress in godliness is not the *basis* of assurance. The basis of assurance is our standing in Christ. But how can any Christian be certain of his standing in Christ where there is no progress in godliness?

Peterson's emphasis has profound implications not only for the individual but for the church.

We are glad to receive new converts into our churches but sometimes reject them on the grounds of continuing sin or because they fail to fit into the culture of the local church... But when we overwhelm

people with conditions which they must fulfil to prove that they are making progress as Christians, we distort the gospel. *We must learn to accept them as those already sanctified in Christ Jesus* (my italics).

This sounds compassionate. But again we have the same logical dilemma. What reason do we have to accept anyone as 'sanctified in Christ Jesus' where there is no evidence of change? The New Testament warns us that in every church there will be people who profess faith but who will prove to be false. And we are told that we will recognize them precisely by their lack of moral progress.

Secondly, Peterson appears to downplay the New Testament emphasis on the responsibility of believers for their continuing progress. He acknowledges that we are called to lives of obedience, yet his great concern seems to be in the opposite direction. '...It is possible to be so zealous for "progress" that one's attention shifts from God's grace to human effort. Moral growth and development will be God's gift to us at different stages of our lives...' (p 91). In this context, to speak of God's grace and human effort as antithetical is surely unbiblical and unhelpful. Paul writes: 'Work out your salvation with fear and trembling *for it is God who works...*' (Phil 2:12-13). Divine grace works precisely by causing us to will and to do. Peter writes 'His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness... *For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness...*' (2 Pet 1: 3-5).

Peterson's compassion for struggling believers is everywhere evident. He is concerned that they should not be left in hopeless bondage to guilt and fear. But it is doubtful whether his remedy really reflects the balance of New Testament teaching. No doubt there will be struggling believers for whom the realization that they are definitively sanctified in Christ will be a liberating one that will lead to renewed obedience. But that must go hand in hand with the reminder that *we* have the responsibility to obey all of God's commands *now*. The truth of definitive sanctification must make me say not, 'I am definitively sanctified: therefore I need not worry about my continuing sins', but rather 'I am definitively sanctified: therefore I must and can put away my sins'.

The book includes two appendices: *The meaning of hagiasmos in the New Testament*, and *Sanctification and God's law*. The latter considers the role of the law in the Christian life and includes a response to E P Sanders' *New Perspective*. This book is the first in the series *New Studies in Biblical Theology* edited by D A Carson.

ABIDE WITH ME: The World of Victorian Hymns Ian Bradley
London: SCM Press 1997 299pp £30 hb (also in pb) ISBN 0334 02692 X

Ian Bradley, who teaches church history at Aberdeen University, has already placed us in his debt with *The Call to Seriousness*, his magisterial study of the impact of Evangelicalism in the Victorian period. He has now turned his attention to hymnology at that time, covering a wide range, both literary and musical, taking in books, authors and themes and revealing in the process an encyclopaedic knowledge of the subject.

In another major new study, *The English Hymn*, Richard Watson of Durham rather pessimistically but at the same time realistically hopes that his work

will do something to preserve the idea of the hymn as it once was, an important feature of a religious service and a living expression of the human spirit, [whilst fearing that] the older generations now living may well be the last for whom the traditional hymn is an integral part of their emotional and spiritual culture.

He kindly quotes my own words that ‘hymns form part of the literary consciousness of every Englishman, whatever his creed or sect’. I wrote that in 1960; I could not write it now. As with the classics, so with our liturgy – we have thrown away the heritage of centuries in little more than a generation.

Bradley includes several definitions of what constitutes a good hymn (p 199). I especially like Ellerton’s five qualities – sincerity, vigour, simplicity, brevity and musicality... ‘The rhythm ought not to be rugged nor the diction bald and prosaic.’ And the good tune should have what Bertram Barnby has called ‘the ring of inevitability’. It must be both expected and essential. The last thing a hymn should do is shock or disturb. Hymns, like *The Book of Common Prayer*, another part of our heritage thrown away by modern philistines, form the stuff of our liturgical memory, something deep within us not just from our own recollection but from within the race over generations. I cannot put it better than Susan Tamke does in her important sociological study of hymns, *Make A Joyful Noise unto the Lord* (1978): ‘Because familiar hymns make a special appeal to the memory, hymns are one of the most conservative components of an already conservative institution... [They] not only reflect conservative attitudes but also help to perpetuate them.’ That is why innovation, whether populist as with *Mission Praise* or elitist as it was with Robert Bridges’ *Yattendon Hymnal*, is rarely welcome and even more rarely helpful in the world of hymnology.

As the years pass, one realizes more and more how much we owe to the Victorians, what a valuable heritage they left us and how scandalously we have too often treated it. In this superb study Ian Bradley confirms in yet another context the achievement of those years. In rejecting so much of value 'trendy (and usually evangelical) vicars' are in the forefront of the vandals. Such would do well to heed our author's words when he writes that

hymns are not written to entertain or boost the audience ratings. They have an altogether nobler and higher purpose, being intended to praise or petition God, convert sinners, sustain the righteous, guide the perplexed, comfort the downhearted, challenge the complacent, wrestle honestly with doubt, celebrate the wonders of creation, teach the basic doctrines of the faith or penetrate the mystery of holiness.

How different from those who are more concerned with 'relevance, inclusive language, accessibility and political correctness... in our instant, up-front, pick-and-mix postmodern culture'. Ian Bradley has done a magnificent and necessary job.

ARTHUR POLLARD

JUSTIFICATION AND CHRISTIAN ASSURANCE

(Explorations 10) R J Gibson ed

Adelaide: Openbook Publishers 1996 135pp £8.99 pb
ISBN 0-85910-823-6

It is well known that the doctrine of justification and its pastoral implications in Christian assurance lay at the heart of theological debate at the time of the Reformation. It is less well known that these issues continue to attract controversy today. This timely collection of essays will help many pastors understand the nature of the present debate and alert them to the necessity of a sound basis for Christian assurance in their ministry.

The first two essays address the way in which E P Sanders, J Dunn and N T Wright have challenged the traditional understanding of justification by faith. Peter O'Brien deals with the general questions that have been raised by this new perspective on Paul. He does not claim to have made an exhaustive response, but he certainly highlights critical areas where it can be argued that the advocates of this new perspective have not proved their case. Philip Kerm performs the same service, although his essay is based on argument and exegesis from the letter of Galatians in particular.

In the latter part of the volume the focus switches more directly to the doctrine of assurance, though the reader will have already gained an important insight into this issue through the earlier discussion of justification by faith. Don Carson presents us with a masterly survey of Johannine teaching on assurance. He is very conscious of the ways in which certain emphases in such teaching can have disastrous practical consequences. His essay therefore serves as an excellent introduction for anyone who needs a clear and reliable guide into the subject.

David Peterson follows this up by looking at the same doctrine as it is addressed in the book of Hebrews. This is of particular interest to those who find it hard to see how a true confidence of salvation can be reconciled with serious warnings about the danger of apostasy. Peterson shows how the writer of this letter sees true believers as those who hold on to the confidence that they had at first and do not drift away from the word about Christ they have been given. It is this type of exegetical study which lies at the heart of Peterson's larger work *Possessed by God*, reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

Peter Jensen concludes this volume by reminding the reader that the gospel which speaks of justification by faith alone is the key resource for Christian ministry. Without a clear vision of that gospel the real human condition cannot be effectively addressed. Taken together the papers in this volume demonstrate why such an assertion is entirely correct.

MARK BURKILL

BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX: Between Cult and History

Adriaan H Bredero

Edinburgh: T and T Clark 1996 320pp £24.95 hb ISBN 0 567 18523 6

The conventional image of medieval saints is of pious poses in stained-glass attitudes, and the dust-jacket of this book with the illustration of its subject haloed, gazing contemplatively and with hands composed for prayer provides just such a picture. This, however, was not the real Bernard of Clairvaux, whose behaviour often resembled more that of the stereotypical smart modern businessman, opportunistic, enterprising and even occasionally not above what looked like shady dealing. Like some of our contemporaries of this ilk he came to a less than successful end by overreaching himself in preaching the failed Second Crusade. His practice, if not his profession, would have found him in agreement with Chaucer's monk in refusing to accept the adage that a religious out of his cloister is like a fish out of water. Not for Bernard the contemplative life; more often a finger in every pie within reach. His conflicts with the sister-house at Cluny are *odium ecclesiasticum* at its subtlest and sourest.

The Dutch author of this study has worked on Bernard for nearly sixty years and his exhaustive bibliography lists no fewer than twenty-five of his own contributions to the subject. Moreover, throughout the book he cites, comments upon and at times expresses his differences with other writers on the saint. Indeed, in some senses, it might be said that at least for the general reader Brodero knows too much, or at any rate that sometimes looks the case. His subtitle is significant, particularly in relation to the various versions of the life of Bernard written shortly after his death. In these and later biographies he is concerned to distinguish between cult and history, but the result at times is a confusing *mélange* of scholarly controversy and historical interpretation. He might have done better to have analysed the work of others rather less and to have traced Bernard's career from his own point of view rather more. Nonetheless, this is scholarship of a very high order.

ARTHUR POLLARD

GOD, FAMILY AND SEXUALITY David W Torrance ed
Musselburgh: The Handsel Press 1997 214pp £9.95 pb ISBN 1 871828 32 5

As the various debates on sex grow more strident, the books written become longer and more narrowly focused. By contrast, this book has been written by a range of people from various specialisms to provide a framework and starting point for thinking. They argue that before we discuss any particular concerns we should address the undergirding questions of why God invented marriage and family, and within that, sex. The book arises from the Scottish Order of Christian Unity, and perceptive readers will note that it has one Torrance on the cover (D W) and a second writing the preface (T F) – we are in the practised hands of expert systematic theologians. Those who bemoan the lack of adequate systematic theology in the English debates about sex will find here what they lack. The range of authors covers Methodist (one), Catholic (one), Anglican (two) and Presbyterian (eight).

Any collection of essays is bound to be uneven, and this one is no exception, but it is noteworthy that of those essays which are good, two are outstanding and call for particular notice. Kevin J VanHoozer contributes an appendix on 'The Bible – its relevance today' which is orthodox and yet breaks new ground; simultaneously faithful and fresh. He reviews the contemporary mistrust of the 'text', and revisits hermeneutical theory with his own formula of the relevance of the Bible today (biblical relevance = revelatory meaning + relative significance). This is an issue that needs to be worked out more fully than the context allows, for what one reader sees as the eternal meaning of a text is another reader's cultural kernel. However, VanHoozer saves his space for a brief but important examination

of the understandings of Scripture in the homosexuality debate. This chapter should be studied carefully by all those engaging with the issue.

Similarly David W Torrance's biblical and theological essay on 'Marriage in the light of Holy Scripture' is simultaneously clear and contemporary. It is a particularly Scottish insight to stress as strongly as he does that the covenant of marriage echoes the covenant God makes with his people, and he repeatedly endorses the idea that marriage 'is a union between man, God and woman, between three people, not two' (p 31). That provides ground for him to make some provocative statements about feminism, pre-marital sex and other current issues. The thoughts on feminism are expanded by Elaine Storkey in a stretching and alarming survey of 'Spirituality and Sex' later in the book.

It would be unrealistic to expect all the other contributions to be of this very high order, but a number are very useful surveys of issues or concerns, theoretical, biblical, ethical and pastoral. The closing two chapters are specifically on homosexuality. James Walker gives a survey of current thinking on predisposing factors, and Dennis Wrigley and Linda Stalley co-author the longest and climactic chapter in the book, 'Healing and Wholeness', which argues that 'the condition of homosexuality can be cured. There is considerable evidence to show that homosexuality is not a fixed all-life condition' (p 201). This is a highly controversial conclusion for those who would say that people who were involved in a homosexual lifestyle but are so no longer were never truly homosexual in the first place. This is a brave chapter, but I would have liked to have seen more engagement with those who would disagree with their views.

Unfortunately, some chapters are weak. The chapter on childlessness, for example, although heartbreakingly honest from the authors' own experiences is biblically poor. Three examples of childlessness are taken – Abraham and Sarah, Job and Hannah – and applied to contemporary questions without notice being taken of theological purpose. It is not noted that the primary consequence of Abraham's childlessness is not personal but the very existence of the covenant and the good character of a promise-keeping God. Missing too is the fundamental ground-note from Genesis 3 that from the Fall onwards all child-rearing is marred by pain. Other chapters occasionally feel slightly dated, moralistic or predictable. One of the least predictable, by contrast, is one on birth-control by a leading Catholic lay woman. It is unpredictable because it supports the Catholic position, which is rarely argued for in Protestant circles, but the argument will not be fully heard because of its brevity.

Nevertheless I am grateful that this book is available, for its fresh thinking on old issues, and because of its willingness to be as unpopular

with traditionalists (on the possibility of remarriage, for example, or the lessons from history of the risks of self righteousness) as with revisionists. The contributors never concede an inch on the ground that all sex outside marriage is wrong. It is good to be able to welcome a book which gives the biblical and systematic background to sexuality as a whole before homing in on particular contemporary concerns. It is healthy for once to be able to see the wood as well as the trees.

CHRIS GREEN

THE TRINITY IN A PLURALISTIC AGE; Theological Essays on Culture and Religion Kevin Vanhoozer ed

Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans 1997 166pp \$20.00 pb
ISBN 0-8028-4117-1

The classical doctrine of the Trinity is a scandal to the contemporary world, and folly to many parts of the contemporary Church. It is said to be imposed on the biblical data, captive to non-Christian thought-forms, nonsensical to the pluralistic mind, and unable to engage with other religions. But, replies orthodoxy, the classical doctrine is what makes Christian theology Christian; it is what makes it possible for the Church to speak about her God. Does bearing witness to the Triune God make the Church's witness less credible? Is the resurgent interest in Trinitarian theology a confident re-emergence of orthodoxy, or a new god in old clothes?

This is the dilemma that this brilliant collection of essays explores, each one of which has stretched and stimulated this reviewer: I frequently closed the book to think, and as each author rehearsed the orthodox view in new ways, I frequently closed it to pray. It is a sign of the relative health of academic dogmatic theology that a book this fresh can be published on the Trinity.

The issues around which the essays are grouped are exposed in the opening essay by Lesslie Newbigin, where he shows the tensions that holding to Trinitarian orthodoxy brings, both in debate with the world (for the gods of philosophy, individualism, or power are not the Trinitarian God) and with a worldly Church. He gives a brief but penetrating critique of the non-Trinitarian Christology current in the World Council of Churches. Far from causing the Church to be defensive, the Trinity is the only ground for any public witness to the gospel.

This symposium volume has four features which make me want to commend it most strongly.

First, it is orthodox. Without being uncritical of the Classical tradition (one finds tentative critiques of both Augustine and the Cappadocian Fathers) it is unashamed in its use of the traditional language and thinking of the Trinity. Gerald Bray makes a sharp defence of the early Apologists, asserting that they were not importing pagan philosophy, but were critically minded evangelists.

Second, it is contemporary. The closing essays are surveys of the Trinitarian theology of Barth (by Trevor Hart), Rahner (by Gary Badcock) and Moltmann (by Richard Bauckham). Barth's massive emphasis on Revelation makes it difficult to think that he would be sympathetic to pluralism in any form, but Hart makes a good case for finding within Barth's theology at least the kind of language he would be using to make his points capable of being heard today. The essay on Moltmann is generally favourable in analysing Moltmann's theology of the Trinity as a loving society which is a model for human society. Bauckham's caveats demonstrate his belief that the same arguments could be made from within a more orthodox understanding of God's relationship with the world, in which creation does not determine the inner life of the Trinity. The middle essay of these three is a blistering critique of Rahner's 'theology from below': Badcock is generous and clear in his adumbration of Rahner's theology, but devastating in his conclusions.

If in his doctrine of the Trinity Rahner has contributed significantly to the development of modern theology, it is here too, in his doctrine of the Trinity that his most glaring theological inadequacies can be seen. (p 154)

Because of Rahner's importance both in contemporary theology generally, and in inter-faith theology in particular, and also because of his inaccessibility, this essay is very welcome. Other modern theologians (Pannenberg, Tillich – even Van Til) are referred to throughout.

Third, it is missiological, which is inevitable given the death-blow that pluralism deals to mission. Colin Gunton lays the groundwork, with an examination of the interrelationships between Natural Revelation and Creation: to what aspects of God's power and reality does Creation point? What is the common ground to which the existence of culture or rationality points? His answers, in terms of the unity and plurality of God's world and our experience of it, will not be new to his readers, but, as always, are fresh and illuminating. Three essays then tackle the issue of pluralism and faith. Stephen Williams defends the position that the Trinity does not present an insurmountable barrier to communicating with other faiths, but does mark out Christianity as unique and non-negotiable; indeed, the Trinity makes incarnation and immanence a possibility, thus

overcoming the problem of an abstract God. His essay opens with analyses of Pannikar and Smart. Kevin Vanhoozer analyses various pluralistic theologies of religion (Pannikar and Hick *inter alia*), to examine the claim that they are actually more inclusive of truth than classic Trinitarianism, and concludes that the identity of 'God' is fundamentally at variance in the two. Roland Poupin's essay is an imaginative and bold attempt to find bridges between Trinitarian Christianity and Sufism.

Fourth, it is scriptural. Henri Blocher examines 'Immanence' and 'Transcendence', giving them a profoundly biblical content and then uses that base to analyse Pannenberg, Moltmann and Jüngel. Making himself very clear, he writes that,

The wide gulf, or 'ugly ditch', that lies between orthodox doctrine and the new trinities should not be minimized. It is simply not the case that they could pass for updated renderings of the old dogma. In spite of Jüngel's homage to the Fathers, to the Reformers, in spite of Pannenberg's *Grundlichkeit* on issues of historical theology, they differ deeply in their foundation, elaboration and import. (p 116)

With a range of essays this rich and provocative it would seem churlish to ask for more. However, I would have appreciated two additions. I would have liked an analysis of pluralistic secular culture, with an attempt to explore how we communicate the Triune God to today's pagans. As a collection of 'Theological Essays on Culture and Religion' it seems to leave home culture unexplored, except to show how certain theologians have been influenced by it. And I would have liked an analysis of a contemporary theologian who is trying not to rewrite but to restate the orthodox doctrine: in view of the Edinburgh origins of the conference that produced the book, an essay on T F Torrance might have been expected. But those are mere quibbles. This is an outstanding collection of essays on a supremely important theme, and it should be read very widely.

CHRIS GREEN

HUMAN NATURE AT THE MILLENNIUM: REFLECTIONS ON THE INTEGRATION OF PSYCHOLOGY AND CHRISTIANITY

Malcolm A Jeeves

Leicester: Apollos 1997 254pp £14.99 pb ISBN 0-85111-451-2

The author of this work is a distinguished psychologist who has been president of the International Neuropsychological Symposium. For many years he headed the Department of Psychology at St Andrew's University in Scotland where he is now an honorary research professor. He is the author of several notable books on the relationship between biblical

Christianity and science, in which his major interests have included the biblical view of man, the mind-body problem and the relationship between determinism and free will. He is well-qualified to deal with matters in these fields; he is not only an active experimentalist, but for thirteen years was editor of one of the leading journals reporting on work in behavioural and cognitive neuroscience.

His approach is broad, up-to-date and non-dogmatic, though there is no doubt where his own sympathies lie, rooted as they are in the well-studied biblical teaching about man. (How refreshing it is, incidentally, to find a scientist of his international standing who is really cognizant of what this latter is; so many of the secularists who venture into this field are woefully ignorant of it). He notes how wide his field of discourse is; neuropsychology, behavioural pharmacology, psychopharmacology, physiological psychology, genetic psychology, comparative psychology, cognitive psychology, social psychology and personality psychology are areas of diverse subject matter using different investigating techniques, and he has something to say about all. The reader can probably guess what is the subject matter of each, and that the mind and the brain are central to all of them. Finally the ultimate question of consciousness comes into the picture; it has now become a hot topic, witness *The Astonishing Hypothesis* by the Nobel Prizewinner Francis Crick, a self-confessed atheist.

It is difficult to summarize such a wide-ranging and masterly survey as this, so I must choose a few of the emphases that have remained uppermost. In an early chapter 'Science and Faith: Learning from the Past' he quotes approvingly (and then illustrates) Hooykaas's view that the Enlightenment became a secularized puritanism, an essential difference being that for the former, freedom led to truth, whereas for the latter, truth led to freedom. His next chapter 'Neuropathology; Linking Mind and Brain' discusses the increasingly decisive evidence that mind and brain are closely linked. But the nature of the link is still unsettled. The old dualist view that the link is an interaction between two distinct entities is still held by quite a number of eminent thinkers (the Nobel medallist Sir John Eccles and the late philosopher of science Sir Karl Popper for instance). Others more numerous hold an 'identity' view, and still others a psychophysiological 'parallelism'. His own view is akin to that of the late Donald Mackay, that 'the irreducible duality of human nature is... duality of *aspects* rather than duality of *substance*', a view associated with 'perspectivalism' – a change in perspective – in the general relation of religion and science. There follows an illuminating discussion on 'Neuropsychology and Spiritual Experience'. A trying case of Alzheimer's disease in an aged and mature believer, Sargent's too-hasty and uncritical dependence on Pavlov, the medieval 'dark night of the soul', the experiences of Luther, William Cowper, and Shaftesbury all pass under

helpful review. A later chapter 'Human Nature: Biblical and Psychological Portraits' is especially to be welcomed. 'The biblical account' examined in some detail

is, in a very profound sense, a timeless view. It made sense to our forebears long before science appeared... Its main concern is with what God thinks about man. It does not talk about species, it talks about people; it is not biological, it is biographical. It is not concerned with the properties of human beings... but with how individuals act in history.

Other matters discussed are 'psychotherapy; is it effective and why?', centering on a 'generally acclaimed book' by Robyn Dawes, *House of Cards: Psychology and Psychotherapy Built on Myth*, (1994). Again, 'Human Nature and Animal Nature; Are They Different?' a matter of very contemporary debate. This book, in short, is full of interesting matter discussed by a careful expert who knows what he is talking about. It is not a book for everyone; but for those for whom modern psychology in the widest sense presents an obstacle to biblical faith it can be strongly recommended.

DOUGLAS SPANNER

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY CHURCH AND ENGLISH SOCIETY
Frances Knight

London: Hodder and Stoughton 1995 230pp £12.99 pb ISBN 0340 642688

Frances Knight's book sets out to investigate what it meant to be a member of the Church of England during the nineteenth century, at the grass roots level of the people in the parish and the Sunday worshippers in their pews. The author's stated intention is to avoid a presentation of the Victorian church which focuses on episcopal strategies, doctrinal controversies and church-state relationships. The result is a book which tries to present a view of the church from below.

Frances Knight gives us many insights into the spiritual lives of the parochial clergy. Her book is well-rooted in a rich variety of primary sources including bishops' charges, clergy visitation returns, private correspondence, personal diaries and church minutes. The book is largely centred on the East Midlands and has four main sections: lay religion; church and community; clerical life and clerical relationships. It provides the reader with many delightful cameos. We meet with many instances of acute clerical poverty, lay people who move freely from church to chapel, parents who believe their unbaptized children will die prematurely and young people who are confirmed more than once in order to have another share in the party celebrations which customarily accompanied nineteenth-

century confirmation services.

As these windows are opened, Frances Knight is able to analyse some important trends and developments. Most significantly it is shown that during this period the Church of England moved from being a national institution to a denominational church. She shows clearly the ways in which the Church of England became disengaged from society in general. Many church buildings ceased to be used for secular functions such as concerts and village meetings. The parish had a diminished social role after the Poor Law Act of 1834 and vestries lost their *raison d'être* after the abolition of church rates in 1868. At the same time many men drifted from the ranks of Sunday worshippers. Contiguously high churchmen and Evangelicals increasingly urged attendance at Holy Communion as the badge of Anglican membership. Despite this secularizing process in which ordinary people in the parish became indifferent to ecclesiastical matters, Knight sees evidence of a residual diffusive Christianity in the late Victorian years.

This book is a good read and provides many valuable insights into nineteenth-century Church of England parish life. If it has a weakness it is perhaps that it tries to make wide and general conclusions for the Church of England as a whole based on documentary evidence which is largely confined to the East Midlands and the Lincoln diocese.

NIGEL SCOTLAND

THE MESSAGE OF 1 TIMOTHY AND TITUS (The Bible Speaks Today series) John R W Stott
Leicester: IVP 1996 232pp £9.99 pb ISBN 0-85111-172-6

The publication of another commentary by John Stott in the IVP's *Bible Speaks Today* series is always a welcome event, and the arrival on the scene of *1 Timothy and Titus* now completes the New Testament library, apart from a treatment of the whole of Matthew's Gospel. John Stott's volume on 2 Timothy was one of the earliest to be published in this series in 1973. Readers will not be disappointed as once again the author combines lucid exposition with competent scholarship and the insights gained from many years of experience – particularly of pastoring the pastors.

In the introduction the authenticity of the pastoral letters is maintained against a clear understanding (with rejection) of the case for a pseudonymous author. The text is then analysed and opened up in a way which will bring fresh insights for every Bible student. Many will doubtless first turn to the controversial passage of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 to

see how this is treated. Here the author does not claim to have answered all the questions – indeed he concludes the section by posing three further questions which require theological reflection. Hermeneutical principles are obviously the key to understanding how to interpret the passage, and pp 74-81 are devoted to exploring these issues. Stott sees the solution in the principle of ‘cultural transposition’ applied consistently to the three issues of men’s prayers, women’s adornment and women’s submission, all dealt with in vv 8-15. This provides a reasonable approach to a very difficult and complex issue, and those who want further enlightenment should read the full argument for themselves.

Writing from his evangelical viewpoint, the author does not hesitate to criticize his own school where it is deserved. In connection with 1 Timothy 2 there are trenchant comments about the approach of some Evangelicals to worship. Other thorny points (eg election and universalism on pp 64-5, limited versus universal atonement on pp 70-1, and the meaning of ‘husband of one wife’ on p 94) are dealt with in Stott’s gracious and fair-minded way of setting out the various views and examining their deficiencies before making quite plain the reasons for his opting for a particular understanding of the passage.

Though the section on Titus may appear disproportionate (only forty-seven pages compared with one hundred and twenty-eight on 1 Timothy) the treatment of that letter is no less thorough, and pp 200-8 in particular have a masterly exposition of the doctrine of salvation in commenting on 3:3-8. Both books provide scope for memorable *obiter dicta* – eg ‘simplicity, gratitude, contentment and generosity constitute a healthy quadrilateral for Christian living’ (p 163).

Introducing 1 Timothy the author sets out six main topics concerning the pastoral care and oversight of local churches which offer wisdom for the local church in every generation and in every place. This commentary, to which is appended a useful study guide, will add insights and a deeper understanding of the text to every pastor and preacher. It is definitely a must for every minister’s bookshelf.

DAVID WHEATON

**NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY OF OLD TESTAMENT
THEOLOGY AND EXEGESIS** **W A VanGemenen ed**

Carlisle: Paternoster Press 1997 5760pp (5 volumes) £169.99 hb
ISBN 085364 834 4

This major publication (henceforth called the *Dictionary*) is more wide-ranging than previous works of its type, beginning with an introductory Guide (200 pp), and appending a substantial Topical Dictionary (1000 pp).

Two-thirds of the contributors are American, the remainder represent the rest of the English-speaking world. They are mostly theologically conservative, and include many eminent names.

The 'Guide to Old Testament Theology and Exegesis' contains ten essays covering issues of hermeneutics, textual criticism, Old Testament history, literary criticism, linguistics, and theology. Taken together, they present an approach to God's self-revelation in Scripture which draws on story before proposition, literary/canonical context before theological content. They espouse an 'anti-Princetonian' stance, ie a belief that the Bible is not to be seen as the theologian's 'storehouse of facts'. However, Merrill's article on 'History, Theology and Hermeneutics' does seek to provide some historical counterbalance, and he addresses the question 'But did it actually happen?' in a positive and helpful way.

These essays are not strictly a guide to the *Dictionary*. Only those by Walton and Schultz make much explicit connection with the *Dictionary* proper; the other contributions vary from the directly relevant (Cotterell on lexical semantics) to the peripheral (Waltke on text criticism). They are better seen as providing examples of the exegetical and theological method which the editors consider appropriate for responsible (and evangelical) students of Scripture. For someone unfamiliar with any of the disciplines covered in these essays, the relevant contribution would make an excellent starting place, and the bibliographies are a valuable addition. I suspect that one further goal of this section was to broaden the *Dictionary's* appeal beyond the academy, an aim characteristic of the whole work.

Compared with other works of its type, the *Dictionary* is very user-friendly: all Hebrew except the head-words is transliterated, and every head-word has a Strong's reference number attached. The *Dictionary* also goes beyond the strictly theological, including many articles on theologically insignificant words, and (in the Topical section) articles on proper names, places, the theology of books, etc. The basic layout of each lexical entry is similar, with three sections: (1) cognate languages, (2) Old Testament, and (3) post-biblical/New Testament (including the LXX and Qumran). I sometimes found section (1) perplexing, especially in view of the strong rejection of etymologically-based approaches to lexicography expressed in the Guide. Although cognates are essential for rare words, the inclusion of cognate information where it has no bearing on the meaning of the Hebrew seems otiose in a work of this kind. Section (3) is most useful when it sheds light on the way later generations understood the Old Testament. However it was disappointing to see the not infrequent omission of any information from the LXX.

But the heart of the *Dictionary* is section (2), and it contains a mine of

useful information. Rare words tend to receive very brief treatment, but the typical entry interacts with scholarly literature, synthesizes and categorizes meanings, and comments on the theological significance of the word as it is used. This type of entry is often like an abbreviated version of its *TDOT* equivalent (G J Botterweck and H Ringgren edd *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1975). As opposed to *TDOT*, however, the information is easy to absorb and can be mastered quickly, making it useful for the preacher. A good number of excellent articles go beyond other dictionaries, making some original contribution, whether in applying a new method of analysis, or in comprehensiveness and/or critical engagement with recent literature. Unfortunately, however, there are also articles of extreme brevity which fall well short of the standard set by the majority (eg ^ʿ*lōhīm*, which is less than a page long).

Concerning the final volume of indexes I have only one complaint: there is no contributor index. In the absence of a table of contents, there is no way of finding articles by a given writer. Otherwise it is a valuable volume, especially the Scripture index. But my particular praise goes to the Index of Semantic Fields, which contains over two thousand lists of Hebrew synonyms drawn from seven hundred and fifty fields of related words. An abbreviated version of the relevant list(s) is appended to each lexical entry. For the academic user, this is probably the most significant feature of the *Dictionary*. It is not a complete semantic domain index, but it is an important resource for linguists, translators, and exegetes.

In summary, my two main criticisms are the occasional lapses in the standard of the entries (which a second edition can address), and the not entirely successful attempt to be useful to as wide a market as possible. The use of Strong's numbers and transliteration, the addition of introductory essays, and the tone of VanGemeren's editorial comments, combine to suggest a work aimed at the pastor and preacher with limited time for study and even less knowledge of Hebrew. For such a user the cognate information, extensive bibliographies, and probably the semantic field lists, will be so much dead wood. This is not a real impediment. But the price paid for this eclecticism is a lack of the substantiveness (in some articles) and exhaustiveness (of semantic fields) which would have made it a classic for the scholar.

Having said all this, the *Dictionary* is a welcome addition to the modern lexical armoury. The above-mentioned criticisms affect just a small proportion of a vast work of scholarship, whose excellence should make the *Dictionary* a first choice, especially for those who want something more wide-ranging, up-to-date, readable and concise than *TDOT*.

ANDREW SHEAD

THE CONFESSIONS OF A VICAR'S WIFE

Jane Grayshon

Crowborough: Monarch 1996 (New edition)

193pp £5.99 pb

ISBN 1-85424-357-8

A generation ago the pseudonymous James Insight wrote a trilogy, *I Turned my Collar Round*, *I Become the Vicar*, and *Country Parson*. Rumour had it at the time that the move from 'Vicar' to 'Country Parson' was triggered by the fact that too many of his parishioners recognized their pen-portraits and did not appreciate them!

Jane Grayshon has no such wish to hide her identity in this collection of fifty-six short talks originally given on Radio Merseyside. Forty-nine of them were given in the course of a calendar year, and are frequently topical and always relevant. The remaining seven reflect on her move to London from the North-West and on the emphasis she places (would anyone else today?) on being upgraded from the vicar's wife to the rector's wife.

Her aim is to show us how God is reflected in our everyday lives, and each talk centres on some experience she has had as a vicar's wife. The incidents are well-described, in a style obviously suited to radio presentation and portray many aspects of life familiar to those who happen to be married to a minister. One advantage of a series like this is that week-by-week the speaker can highlight and respond to the feedback she receives following the previous instalment.

There is plenty of humour in the anecdotes, and inevitably one gets the impression that some were written under pressure to have something to say that week. The gospel connection is not always obvious, but that is because these talks are definitely pre-evangelistic and were designed to help people see that clergy and their wives are ordinary, interesting, approachable people with a good sense of fun.

Many discussions have taken place in recent years about the so-called identity crisis of the ordained minister, but less has been written about that facing the wife (or even less today about the husband) of the vicar. Jane Grayshon's contributions reflect this, and her book should be required reading for those whose spouses are preparing for ordination, and could provide a useful basis for discussion in any spouses' group at a theological college or part-time course.

DAVID WHEATON

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