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Book Reviews

ROGER BECKWITH reviews

BELIEVING IN THE CHURCH: The Corporate Nature of Faith

Report by the Doctrine Commission of the Church of England

SPCK 1981 310pp. £8.50

ISBN 0 281 03839 2

DOCTRINE IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND: The 1938 Report

by the Commission on Christian Doctrine

with a new introduction by **G. W. H. Lampe**

first published in 1938

SPCK 1982 242pp. £8.50

ISBN 0 281 03847 3

In the course of the twentieth century the Church of England has appointed three commissions with a general brief for Christian doctrine. There was Archbishop Davidson's commission, which was appointed in 1922 and worked through most of the years between the wars, latterly under the chairmanship of William Temple, producing the second of the reports here reviewed in 1938. Then there was Archbishop Ramsey's commission, appointed in 1967 and chaired first by Bishop Ian Ramsay and then, after his death, by Professor Maurice Wiles. This commission produced, under its first chairman, the reports *Subscription and Assent to the 39 Articles* (SPCK 1968) and *Prayer and the Departed* (SPCK 1971), and under its second chairman the report *Christian Believing* (SPCK 1976). Finally, there is Archbishop Coggan's commission, which was appointed in 1977 and is chaired by Bishop J. V. Taylor, and has now produced the first of the reports listed above. This last commission was re-appointed in 1981, with a few changes in membership, for a further term of years. Some of the ex-members will be missed, but the general complexion of the body is unaltered.

There was a time when the House of Bishops was able to act as its own doctrine commission. It was among the bishops that Cranmer circulated the draft of his Forty-two Articles, and it was the Elizabethan House of Bishops which revised them and produced the Thirty-nine Articles with which we are familiar. There has, of course, been a learned bench from time to time in more recent centuries, and many of the commentaries on the Thirty-nine Articles (those of Burnet, Beveridge, Tomline, Laurence, Browne, Forbes and Gibson) were in fact produced by men who either already were, or later became, bishops. But it is, no doubt, a sign of the times that, though the three doctrine commissions of this century have never been totally without episcopal members, and have usually been chaired by a bishop (very effectively too), the bulk of their members have not been bishops but academics.

The first of these three commissions, as the late Geoffrey Lampe recalls in his illuminating new introduction to the 1938 report, was appointed primarily to allay the anxieties aroused by the older modernism. The anti-miraculous naturalism of Major, Rashdall and their associates, which merged the human with the divine and denied the divinity of Christ in any unique sense, was in some ways painfully similar to the radicalism of our own day. The commission,

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it was hoped, would reveal a moderate, believing consensus among the theologians of the church, which would transcend the old party boundaries and would demonstrate that the modernists were an unrepresentative minority. The composition of the commission, and the length of time it took about its work, made it less effective in achieving these hopes than it might otherwise have been, but did not frustrate them entirely. In the 1920s, no less than in the 1980s, Broad Church leanings were common among academics, and ensured that the commission would not treat the modernists in too unsympathetic a fashion. As Lampe remarks, the report displays 'the unanimity with which Anglicans from very different party traditions endorsed a strongly liberal attitude towards the authority of Scripture, Church, creeds, councils and formularies' (introduction, p.50), though without drawing the extreme conclusions from these dangerous premises which the modernists did. He adds,

The traditional approach to theological study by way of an English-style classical education tends to produce a distinctively English (rather than specifically Anglican) method of doing theology: historically orientated, rooted in the study of the biblical and patristic texts, accepting the principles of critical scholarship but applying them cautiously and conservatively, uncomfortable with dogmatics or systematic theology which have never formed a real element in the syllabus of either the Honour School of Theology or the Theological Tripos (p.30).

Again, although definite Anglo-Catholics had several representatives on the commission, conservative evangelicals had none. Lampe comments:

Such a virtual exclusion of what has since become a strong, articulate and theologically sophisticated wing of the Church of England would nowadays be inconceivable. It was regrettable in 1922, in view of the nature of the Commission's task (p.31).

Ironically, 1922 was within five years of the first presentation to Parliament of the proposed 1928 Prayer Book, and in those five years the conservative evangelicals were to reveal themselves as one of the most potent forces within the established church. In partnership with the more extreme Anglo-Catholics, they were going to stop Archbishop Davidson's 'comprehensive' liturgy; and a decade afterwards, with the same partners, they were going to condemn the report of the 1922 commission for not taking a more definite stand on the Bible and the creeds (Lampe's introduction, pp.54-6).

Looking back, the 1938 report seems fairly positive. Though proceeding from presuppositions of reverent agnosticism, it draws conclusions of a pretty traditional sort. However, the very different conclusions which could be drawn from such vague presuppositions were well illustrated by the report *Christian Believing*, which the next doctrine commission produced in 1976. Here the reverent agnosticism began to look much more like irreverent atheism. Even the agreed part of this report (which was followed by essays from individual members) could easily be read as saying that, provided the church does not actually discard the creeds, its members must be free to deny any and every article of them. Of course, the more conservative Anglo-Catholic members of the commission did not interpret it in this way (to say nothing of the conservative evangelical members, who by now were included), but such a reading of it was sufficiently plausible to cause a crisis of confidence within the church. The report was widely condemned in the church press and by individual members of General Synod, and it never secured a place on the agenda of that body, let

alone a commendation to the attention of church members. In retrospect, it looks like a precursor of Hick's sceptical symposium *The Myth of God Incarnate*, to which the chairman of the doctrine commission responsible for the report was in fact a contributor.

Not surprisingly, when the doctrine commission came up for reappointment, there was a change of chairman and an almost complete change of membership. Only two of the eighteen members were reappointed, and one of those two resigned immediately. The first task that lay before the new body, as the chairman hints (*Believing in the Church*, p.8), was to establish its credibility. This it has now achieved in an impressive fashion. Its report is an important piece of constructive theology, and has rightly been welcomed by General Synod. Admittedly, being made up of sections written by different members, it is rather too long and rather repetitive, but (what is more important) it is both positive and homogenous. Like *Christian Believing*, it is concerned with theological method. Unlike *Christian Believing*, it does not surrender to the problems but answers them. The answers, it is true, are not always fully worked out, but pointers at least are provided, which the commission can follow through in its future deliberations.

Both *The Times* religious affairs correspondent, and the reviewer in the *Church Times*, accused the new report of complacency, though the latter exempted from this charge the section written by N. T. Wright, 'Doctrine Declared' (pp.109–41). Certainly there is no room for complacency about the present state of Anglican theology, and Tom Wright's section demonstrates with unique cogency the untenability of the view that the Thirty-nine Articles are no longer significant for Anglicans, or that doctrinal discipline is something they can now dispense with. But these contentions, qualified in every way that could reasonably be asked, were not allowed by the other members of the commission to stand as the expression of their joint thinking on the issues in question; for every section, though drafted by an individual member, was thoroughly revised in the light of discussion, so as to express, as far as was practicable, the commission's common mind (p.6).

The weightiest of the other contributions, without much doubt, is that by the other conservative evangelical participant. A. C. Thiselton. This fact is extremely remarkable, when one remembers the constitution and performance of earlier doctrine commissions. Tony Thiselton's chapter 'Knowledge, Myth and Corporate Memory' (ch.3) expounds the theme of corporate believing, from which the report gets its title *Believing in the Church*. The title is of course ambiguous, but is meant to imply that the church is the context of belief, not the object of belief, as the subtitle *The Corporate Nature of Faith* makes clear. Thiselton's main point is that the individualistic concept of knowledge, in which it is contrasted with the unreliable opinions or beliefs of the multitude, is an inheritance from the philosophy of Plato which, owing to its adoption into the rationalism of Descartes and the empiricism of Hume, dominated the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. Now, the Enlightenment has itself dominated the subsequent development of theology, in which the critical reason of the individual is regularly contrasted with the unreliable inheritance of traditional thinking. However, in modern philosophical and scientific thought the individualistic concept of knowledge is widely discarded, for the very good reason that man is not an isolated individual, and cannot make progress in knowledge if he refuses to learn from others. What may to me be mere opinion

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is in a multitude of cases other people's acquired knowledge, and the tradition of such transmitted knowledge, though it should not be received uncritically, should nevertheless be received with the most respectful attention.

So far, Thiselton has been meeting post-Enlightenment theology on its own ground. He now goes back to the earliest stages of the Christian tradition. A. E. Harvey, in an earlier chapter, has made the point that the gospel is basically narrative or 'story', as the report likes to call it (not 'myth', the misleading implications of which term are carefully analysed in Thiselton's chapter). Building on the point that the gospel is basically story, Thiselton reminds us that the story was from the beginning handed on in the Christian community by the two methods indicated in 1 Corinthians: by teaching, and by the symbolical ceremonies of the sacraments. It was in due course recorded in the New Testament writings, the earliest of which, no less than the latest, show a concern that it should not be perverted into 'another gospel' (Gal. 1:6-9); and it is to these writings that reformers of the Christian tradition, like Luther or Kierkegaard, have always gone back. In reforming the tradition, they have never tried to escape from it. Our forefathers in the faith were not all fools or knaves, and the respect for transmitted knowledge which is common today in philosophy or science is equally appropriate in theology.

The other chapters are all really variations on this theme, or cautionary footnotes to it from the liberal angle. The Christian story in liturgy and lectionary is illustrated by John Barton and John Halliburton. There is a typically racy introduction by the chairman and a typically swashbuckling career through the history of doctrine by J. A. Baker, which makes the important point that the commission should now go on from the method of theology to its content (p.285). Reverent agnosticism is still apparent in various places. But the promise that this book contains of a redirecting of Christian theology into more positive and constructive courses is a real one, and is one of the most cheering signs that has appeared for a long time past.

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ABRAHAM: Genesis 12-23 Ronald Wallace

1981 145pp. £1.85

ISBN 0 281 03808 2

ISAAC AND JACOB: Genesis 24-36 Ronald Wallace

1982 144pp. £1.85

ISBN 0 281 03844 9

Triangle: SPCK The Bible for Every Day Series

These are the first in a new series, 'The Bible for Every Day', which will be based on great characters of the Old Testament. The aims are twofold: to be a stimulus to preachers and to be a devotional guide for daily Bible readers.

There is warmth here, and plenty of application to Christian discipleship. Dr Wallace knows the commentaries well (not forgetting Luther and Calvin) and is always fair in his use of them. But he rightly takes his own line, which he sums up in one of his asides (*Abraham*, p.132), namely 'to struggle as best we can, with honesty, prayer and consistency, to use our imagination—as well as our biblical knowledge—as we try to enter sympathetically into the situation.'

This imaginative sympathy is, to me, the special strength of these books, in reminding us that the biblical characters were real men and women, whose

outward acts were the product of inner conflicts, insights, temptations and complexities which were basically very similar to our own. The spiritual decline of Isaac, for example, is very thoughtfully expounded; as is also the long testing of Abraham. Admittedly the application of a story to our own day may at times be rather forced. For instance, while we are rightly made to see Rebekah's justified exasperation with her husband's misuse of the family headship, and to understand her resolve to outmanoeuvre him, it seems far-fetched to find there an encouragement to lay people 'not to wait too long for an official lead when they see a need around the church and nobody else concerned to meet it' (*Isaac & Jacob*, p.56).

Another minor criticism could be of occasional carelessness over details, and a tendency to seize on some striking expression in translation without checking on the original. As a case in point, the Jerusalem Bible's lively version of Abimelech's protest to Abraham, 'What possessed you...?' (where the RSV is nearer the mark with 'What were you thinking of...?'), sparks off a whole section on the danger of being 'possessed' by passing moods.

But if at times a shade too much is squeezed out of a passage, how much better this is than too little! Here is wealth, ripe wisdom and engaging originality. May it be the source of many series of sermons in our churches!

Histon, Cambridge

DEREK KIDNER

NUMBERS: An Introduction and Commentary
Gordon J. Wenham Tyndale OT Commentaries

IVP 1981 240pp. hardcover £5.75
 paperback £4.95

ISBN 0 85111 635 3
 ISBN 0 85111 836 4

Lucky Numbers? It is obvious that in Dr Wenham a much-neglected book finds a learned and sympathetic commentator, and his work can readily be commended as a fresh, informative, and stimulating contribution to its study. His notes are on the whole clear and to the point, and every user should learn a great deal from the commentary (though I wonder whether the general editor's comment that it will prove 'readily understandable by any reader' [p.5] is not a little optimistic). The reasons for the neglect of Numbers are not far to seek, and Wenham resolutely tries to do battle against them in his exposition.

'Numbers is the least coherent of all the Torah books' (B. A. Levine). So it has seemed to most scholars, and the lack of a clear structure and disposition of the material has usually been traced back to its complex literary and historical origins. While Wenham considers this possibility, his own discussion is almost uniformly 'conservative' in such matters. One of its attractions lies in his attempt to find a basic structural unity to the book, and method in the apparent madness of its arrangements. The clue lies in the structured cycles of narrative and law material concerning, on the one hand, the Israelites' stays at Sinai, at Kadesh, and in the plains of Moab; and, on the other, their journeys between these places (see pp.14ff., 103, 115, 148, 184f.). I have in general terms some sympathy with this attempt, but it seems to me to have serious weaknesses when worked out in detail (some of which are hinted at by Wenham himself), not least the lack of adequate structural markers: it is by no means obvious that the material falls into clear cycles of the sort postulated. Similarly, while some

of Wenham's suggested reasons for the positioning of narrative and law within Numbers are sensible and helpful, others seem weak and of doubtful usefulness. A rather nervous comment on the compatibility of such structural patterning with historicity concludes that 'the honesty of the biblical records is attested by their inclusion of much material that does not fit the cyclical scheme exactly: the traditions they inherited had to be handed on faithfully even when they were inconvenient from a purely literary standpoint' (p.18). But this is neither the only, nor, in my view, the most obvious way of interpreting the situation; and however much one is committed to the task of expounding the 'final form' of the text (cf. p.9), many of the unevennesses remain, and Wenham's attempts to argue against source-critical analysis frequently appear unconvincing (as, e.g., at pp.141f., 184ff.). The general discussion of source-criticism at pp.18ff. is too obviously weighted on one side, while the related arguments concerning the historicity and antiquity of the material, drawing on archaeological evidence, are often greatly oversimplified (see, e.g., pp.24, 95, 156f., 179f.)—even within the constraints imposed by a brief commentary.

This said, however, much of the detailed comment is very valuable. When we come to the further recalcitrant problems of how we are to make sense of the content of Numbers, especially with its ritual and symbolism, Dr Wenham makes potentially illuminating use of recent work in social anthropology, with positive stress on the nature and centrality of ritual within cultures (see pp.25ff., 82, 146, 202). This may well help us to a more sympathetic appreciation of strange matters, though, once more, many questions remain. I do not find wholly convincing the attempts to render more comprehensible in this light such matters as uncleanness and cleansing, and the ordeal (pp.79ff., 82ff., 145ff.); I wonder how far an essentially didactic view of OT ritual (pp.30f.) is just; and Wenham's approach seems to me lacking in a necessary historical depth. We may ask, too, how he conceives of the relationship between anthropological and theological modes of explanation, which is surely a quite fundamental question. But perhaps this is to ask for too much: Wenham stresses the tentative character of his work in this area, and we may be grateful for the material he offers. Indeed, we already begin to touch here on the most potent reason for the neglect of Numbers: How shall we interpret it as Scripture? How shall we appropriate Christianly what it has to say?

Wenham, for his part, is clear: 'Our guide in relating the teaching of Numbers to the new covenant situation must be the New Testament... God's ideals of holiness for Israel, the priests or Moses will prefigure the only one who ever embodied those ideals perfectly, while the actual performance of Israel or her leaders will anticipate the real experience of the church and the ministers of the Gospel in every age' (pp.50, 51f.). Attention is, therefore, frequently drawn to NT passages and themes directly or indirectly linked with the content of Numbers. I am bound to say that I find a certain alarming naivety about much of this. It is in any case no substitute for the theological exposition of Numbers itself, and ought not to be confused with it. For the latter, Wenham has much important raw material to offer, and I hope his commentary will be widely, and critically, used to that end.

NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY Donald Guthrie

IVP 1981 1064pp. £14.95

ISBN 0 85111 742 2

This is a magnificent production. Those who are familiar with the *New Testament Introduction* by the same author, who for more than three decades has taught NT at the London Bible College, will be expecting a similarly thorough and exhaustive treatment of the subject. They will not be disappointed. Dr Guthrie combines careful consideration of the views of a wide range of other writers on the various subjects (his bibliography in itself is a catalogue of twentieth-century NT scholarship) with loyalty to a conservative view of Scripture.

This means that the writer expects to find a basic unity in the treatment of the various subjects by the different authors: this standpoint is never blandly assumed but made the subject of careful argument in a most stimulating opening chapter. Here the reader is given a review of the debate and the various approaches and contributors to it since the formative days of F. C. Baur and W. Wrede. In fact this chapter in itself (of some fifty-four pages) is an excellent essay on the whole question of the place of an NT theology, and the methodology appropriate for it.

Dr Guthrie rejects the methodology of Bultmann after a careful examination of his presuppositions (pp.32, 42-8) and argues that instead of needing reinterpreting in every age (as Bultmann maintains), NT theology is authoritative, and therefore normative (not descriptive) in the essentially spiritual area with which it deals (p.33). At the end of the book this issue is taken up again in the section on Scripture, which concludes: 'Since the testimony of the NT is backed by an authoritative and inspired text, its teachings must have more than a descriptive function, and must form the basis of the doctrinal position of the ongoing Christian church' (p.982). There is also a useful essay on the variety and unity within the NT (pp.49-59), in concluding which the writer's aim (competently fulfilled in the rest of the book) is stated to be to 'bring out the rich variety of NT thought, but... also hope to demonstrate in a substantial way the unity of NT thought' (p.59).

In the subsequent nine chapters, Dr Guthrie examines the NT teaching on God, man and his world, Christology, the mission of Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church, the future, the NT approach to ethics, and Scripture. Each subject is systematically treated, with an analysis of the teaching under review in the synoptics, John (gospel and letters), the Acts, Paul's letters, Hebrews and the rest of the NT, and then concludes with a useful summary. Helpfully, each right-hand page has a subreference at the top to indicate which section of the NT is being considered on the page in question.

The section on the church will be found helpful in all quarters, but it would have been valuable to have had a fuller treatment than is found on pp.471-3 and 779-81 of the question of the heavenly session and present activity of the Lord Jesus, especially in the light of current discussions between Catholics and Protestants on the nature of the Lord's Supper. Anyone wishing to pursue a particular theological interest will be helped by the bibliography (pp.983-1019) and three detailed indices (of references, authors and subjects).

Dr Guthrie has just retired from his teaching work, and it is to be hoped that in the next few years he will produce more of the fruits of a lifetime of scholarship and teaching for the wider public in this way. Author and publisher

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are to be congratulated on an excellent publication, which many PCCs could put on their shopping list for a Christmas present for the clergy or readers!

Oak Hill College, London

DAVID H. WHEATON

ESSAYS ON JOHN C. K. Barrett

SPCK 1982 168pp. £10.50

ISBN 0 281 03834 1

This collection of ten essays makes available to the serious student of the NT, work on John by Professor C. K. Barrett which is perhaps not as widely known as it deserves to be. One study, for example, has been previously published only in German, and four will eventually appear in Italian. All the papers pick up themes in Barrett's magisterial commentary on the fourth gospel, but none can be said to reduplicate the work of that book. Eight deal directly with specific aspects of John's gospel. One (originally a Festschrift article, as are three others in this volume) investigates the related thought of Ignatius, with reference to the thorny problem of the nature of the 'Jews and Judaizers' in his letters. A sermon, based on John 21 and preached before the University of Oxford in 1979, is added for good measure, to symbolize Barrett's conviction that NT theology is a practical exercise, and 'the only foundation for Christian proclamation' (p.viii).

The first two essays in this *mélange*, arguably the most important in the book, consider John's Christology; and both are highly significant in the light of current debate about the person of Christ in general and contemporary understanding of Johannine theology in particular. Barrett concludes that the theological method of the fourth evangelist is more theocentric than Christocentric (for John, 'Jesus is central; yet he is not final', p.8), and that the subordinationism of his gospel (cf. John 14:28) is real (the fourth gospel, like the NT as a whole, 'is in the end about God', p.34). In these two treatments Barrett supports his case strongly, although I am still not personally convinced that John's estimate of Christ's person is unbalanced in the direction of his humanity (John 10:30 quite apart).

A third study argues (against Bultmann and others) for the unity of John 6, and for the synoptic tradition as a primary source for John's teaching about the Son of Man (Barrett is unrepentantly committed throughout to the 'older look' on the fourth gospel, and assumes John's dependence to some extent on the other NT gospels); and a fourth probes, fairly inconclusively, the relationship between the gospel of John and the gnostic world of the gospel of truth. The following four essays form a sequence, and examine symbolism (where Barrett introduces the idea of 'complementation', which in the context of the Father-Son relationship becomes extremely seminal); sacraments (where John's sacramental *principle* might have received more attention); paradox and dualism ('the distinguishing feature of John's dualism is its mobility; it is dualism in motion, in becoming', p.106); and history (because Barrett rejects the possibility of John's independence from the synoptic writers, he is able to espouse the view of Hoskyns that John's record is non-historical, but 'makes sense of history', p.131). Again, the balance between history and theology in John need not, perhaps, be disturbed quite so easily as it is in this particular article.

Professor Barrett wears his considerable scholarship lightly, and (as always)

combines creatively exegetical skill and illuminating theological exposition. Despite the technical nature of these discussions, their style is pellucid. (Since translation into English is a feature of the collection, however, it is unfortunate that so much of the text which is in other languages remains untranslated; especially when works cited in the original, for example by Bultmann, Cullmann and Käsemann, have already been translated.) Together, these essays are a further impressive witness to the writer's expertise and weighty contribution to NT scholarship in the area of John; just as Barrett's companion volume, *Essays on Paul*, underlines his major contribution in the field of Paul. On his retirement from the chair of divinity at Durham, we salute this doyen of NT study with the sincere wish, *ad multos annos!*

Coventry Cathedral

STEPHEN S. SMALLEY

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PARABLES OF JESUS

Robert H. Stein

Westminster Press, USA 1981

Paternoster Press 1981 180pp. £6.60

ISBN 0 664 24390 8

In this guide to the parables, the author discusses 'What is a parable?' and 'Why the parables?' (considering at length the difficult saying of Mark 4:11,12). He shows that the parables go back to Jesus, and he surveys the history of parable interpretation, drawing out four lessons: 1) Seek the main point of the parable; 2) Seek to understand the *Sitz im Leben* in which the parable was uttered; 3) Seek to understand how the evangelist interpreted the parable; 4) Seek what God is saying to us today through the parable. He then proceeds to look at major themes in the parables: the present kingdom of God, the call to decision, the God of the parables, and the final judgement.

The book will prove very useful both for its lucid and untechnical discussion of critical theories about parables, and for its detailed exposition of particular ones (e.g. the unjust steward, the sheep and the goats, etc.). The author argues sanely and persuasively against those who question the authenticity of the parables and/or the evangelists' interpretation of them. On the other hand, he concedes that the tradition of the parables has been developed and re-expressed in the gospels. Some of his concessions seem unnecessary, and the author is perhaps too uncritical an admirer of the great Jeremias, who regularly fixed a gulf between the original meaning of a parable and the evangelists' interpretation. Stein recognizes the weakness of Jeremias's view of the parable of the sower, but appears more persuaded on the parable of the tares (not mentioning J. A. Baird's different view). Jeremias's arguments on the targumic origin and meaning of Mark 4:11,12 should also have been treated more cautiously, though Jeremias's view of the verses as being inserted in the context by Mark might have been explored further. Generally Stein may be a little over-confident in his identifying and distinguishing of the original intention of Jesus and of the evangelists, and he could have taken more note of the views of those recent interpreters who see interpretation as a process of ongoing dialogue with the text, rather than as a matter of identifying an original meaning and then applying it.

The most surprising apparent error in the book is the author's statement that

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the RSV translation of Mark 4:12 implies result, not purpose. But this is a small flaw in a book that will prove very helpful to students and others.

Tyndale House, Cambridge

DAVID WENHAM

HOW THE CRITICS CAN HELP: A Guide to the Practical Use of the Gospels Eric Franklin

SCM Press 180pp. £4.95

ISBN 0 334 02058 1

The author of this book believes that the gospels are of doubtful historical value and that we must recognize the fallibility of the evangelists and of Jesus himself. He realizes that such beliefs can cause hurt to congregations and difficulty to pastors and preachers; but he believes that honesty requires them. In this book he guides us through the ideas of radical gospel criticism, and seeks to explain how these ideas can be coped with in Christian ministry.

His thesis is essentially that, in the gospels, we have not so much the record of facts about the historical Jesus, but more the record of faith in the risen Christ; and in preaching the gospels we invite people not to see Jesus as he was in history, but to understand the faith of the gospel writers in the risen Christ—a faith expressed in first-century thought-forms and in some ways deficient, and yet a faith continuous with our experience of the risen Christ today. To offer people miracles and historical evidence on which to base their faith, would in fact be a denial of the cross (though there must be some historical basis to Christian faith).

Franklin makes out an impressive case. But readers need to ask themselves two important questions. 1) Is his radical view of the gospels justified? His views, though persuasively presented, are not to be taken for granted: for example, that the evangelists were not very interested in history, that the early Christians felt free to create stories and sayings of Jesus, that Paul implies that the resurrection appearances were visionary, that the first-century world was glibly 'miracle-happy', that incarnation must have involved Jesus in error about the time of the end (must it also have involved him in sin?), and that incarnation tells against the idea of scriptural revelation.

2) Is the Christian faith, to which this approach leads, really the faith of the gospels and of the NT? If Jesus was a fallible man who did nothing that we would call a miracle and who did not rise physically from the dead, who is the risen Christ of present-day experience? The interpretation of Christianity that glories in the hiddenness and undemonstrability of Christ and that takes the cross as a symbol of this, sounds rather like the voice of twentieth-century agnosticism: not like NT faith. It is true that the NT recognizes the possibility of unbelief and the stumbling block of the cross; but it considers unbelief as sinful, and it shows the revelation of God in Jesus to have been attested by prophecy, miracle, authoritative teaching and action, and supremely by the resurrection. Even the cross, perplexing though it was, is not a symbol of unresolved ambiguity, but is in accordance with the Scriptures and was answered by the resurrection.

Tyndale House, Cambridge

DAVID WENHAM

AN EXPANDED PARAPHRASE OF THE EPISTLES OF PAUL**F. F. Bruce**

first published by Paternoster Press in 1965

Ronald Haynes, USA 1981 323pp. £7.80

ISBN 0 88021 016 X

distributed by Paternoster Press in the UK

I am very enthusiastic about this book, which seems to me to be a first-class Bible-study aid for use in pastoral ministry and personal study. The dust-jacket subtitle describes the essential features: 'In chronological order with a connecting narrative, printed in parallel with the text of the Revised Version with marginal notes and the Fuller References'. The 'Fuller References' are a set of cross-references prepared for use with the RV by F. H. A. Scrivener, W. F. and J. H. Moulton, and A. J. Greenup, and included here in the belief that the best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself. They, and the possibility of immediate comparison between the stolid literalism of the RV and Bruce's paraphrase, together with his brief footnoted comments and introductions to each epistle, make the whole work a marvellous aid to Bible study, whether in groups or individually. I am so glad that it is now available again from this American publisher (it was originally published by Paternoster in 1965).

The chronological order of the epistles is, of course, uncertain, and F. F. is willing to admit that the order he favours is only tentative. His main deviations from consensus are that he makes Galatians the earliest, and associates Philipians with the Corinthian correspondence under the heading, 'The Middle Years'. He has bound the whole corpus together with running historical commentary which is brief but incredibly lucid, providing exactly sufficient to let each epistle speak for itself out of its real-life setting. His paraphrase itself is what they used to call 'limpid': it avoids the horrid chattiness of some (which make Paul read as though addressing a class of children), and uses language with great precision. His aim was 'to make the course of Paul's argument as clear as possible', and this has led to an interesting balance between explaining things *more* than Paul does (e.g. 'righteousness of God' in Rom. 3:21='a way to get right with God') and leaving him ambiguous (e.g. his version of Col. 1:24, 'whatever of Christ's afflictions still remains to be accomplished I myself make up', does not go beyond the RV). He seems to me to have rightly understood the art of paraphrasing: which is to present the text in such a way that what was taken for granted by the original readers, but is foreign to readers of a different time, is clearly 'added', but what puzzled the original readers is left puzzling. Paul knew it was puzzling, and paraphrase does him no reverence if it suggests he should have expressed himself more clearly. I'd like someone to explain to me what 'God's gift of grace is not on all fours with the original fall' (Rom. 5:15a) means, but apart from *this* puzzle (!) I find his paraphrase illuminating at point after point. An *excellent* buy.

Oak Hill College, London

STEPHEN MOTYER

CHRIST ABOVE ALL: The Message of Hebrews**Raymond Brown** The Bible Speaks Today Series

IVP 1982 272pp. £4.75

ISBN 0 85110 702 8

Bible students have by now learned to expect great things of 'The Bible Speaks

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Today's series of expository commentaries, and they will not be disappointed with the latest addition to the series. The letter to the Hebrews is a key document of Scripture for the Christian to master if he or she is to 'go on to maturity', and the principal of Spurgeon's College, London, applies its contents most helpfully to the twentieth-century Christian.

Here are helpful headings, setting out in simple terms the main thrust of each section, while the message of the letter as a whole is seen in the two main themes of 'What God has said to us' and 'What Christ has done for us'. In common with other authors in this series, the writer's approach is telescopic rather than microscopic. So while there is no verse-by-verse exegesis, with attention paid to every word, the main themes of each section are carefully considered and the reader thus given a clearer grasp of the various issues being considered and the contribution each point makes to the argument as a whole. This is Bible analysis of the pattern in which the late Alan Stibbs used to encourage his students, and which will be invaluable source material for the preacher or teacher. Take the summary of 3:7-4:13, which Dr Brown outlines as God's Word from the past—a serious warning (3:7-11); God's Word in the present—an earnest appeal (3:12-19); God's Word for the future—a dependable promise (4:1-13).

As would be expected, modern issues (e.g. liberal and liberation theology) are considered in the application of the epistle's teaching, and conservative conclusions upheld: 'Any theology which ignores or dismisses the primary question of Biblical authority is not merely suspect but misleading and dangerous' (p.157). Again, 'The religious pluralism of contemporary society, with its competitive ideas of salvation, must not be allowed to obscure the distinctiveness and assurance of the Christian gospel. New life for all is in Christ alone...' (p.176).

Here is a book to be warmly welcomed, carefully studied (with close reference to the text, which is helpfully printed section by section in the volume) and then diligently applied in teaching and living.

Oak Hill College, London

DAVID H. WHEATON

THE END OF THE LINE?: The Development of Christian Theology in the Last Two Centuries John H. S. Kent

first published by T. & T. Clark in 1978

SCM Press 1982 134pp. £4.50

ISBN 0 334 01936 2

This work was first published in 1978 as the last chapter of *A History of Christian Doctrine*, ed. H. Cunliffe-Jones (T. & T. Clark), and unfortunately it retains cross-references to the pages of that volume, while on p.1 a now unintelligible reference is made to what 'this book has already described'. Otherwise, however, it stands up well as an independent work, and in fact is probably better appreciated as such. It is not very suitable for use as a basic introduction to the history of modern theology, for which it is often too allusive and interpretative; but as an interpretation of (rather more than) two centuries of theological history up to the present day, it is a remarkably stimulating and delightfully readable account.

One of its great strengths is its interpretation of the period *as a whole*, deftly

identifying the broad trends and recurrent themes amid the complex detail: stressing, for example, the eighteenth-century roots of nineteenth-century liberalism, or tracing the Tractarian inheritance in twentieth-century ecumenical ecclesiology. The overall interpretation may lead to one-sided treatment of some subjects, but surprisingly few are omitted altogether (process theology, implied in a footnote, is never actually mentioned). The interpretation is often provocative, but is also subtle and discriminating.

The historical interpretation leads to a diagnosis of the present theological situation. Two centuries of social and intellectual change have removed Christianity from a position of ascendancy to a marginal status in western society. The theological response to these changes is classified as orthodox and liberal, and essentially the verdict is that orthodoxy is incredible and liberalism has failed. Appeals to an absolute authority for a unique revelation are no longer credible—their credibility undermined by the whole trend of post-Enlightenment criticism—but on the whole orthodoxy remains the teaching and belief of the churches, as ecumenical statements, for example, show. Liberalism, despite its recent re-emergence from eclipse by Barthian neo-orthodoxy, has failed to replace orthodoxy. It has no institutional status in the churches, and the world outside the churches is no longer interested in theology. Thus the churches are an orthodox anachronism on the margins of society, while liberal Christianity remains, it seems, a reasonable but fragile non-ecclesiastical possibility. This situation raises at least the question whether Christianity has not reached 'the end of the line'—a question posed more sharply in the new preface than in the original text.

This diagnosis demands serious consideration, but it embodies some debatable assessments of 'orthodox' and 'liberal' theologies. Kent's complaint against twentieth-century 'orthodox' theologies is that they are theologies of 'nostalgia', harking back to the *ancien régime* of Christian cultural dominance in society and the theological certainties that went with this. This is a very odd way to view, for example, such a self-consciously post-Enlightenment theology as Pannenberg's (p.130), and, in general, Kent's classification and dismissal of recent German theology as 'continuing orthodoxies' seems a failure to recognize the vitality of 'orthodox' theology and its ability to interpret and respond creatively to the modern world. Probably it is true that western theology, orthodox and liberal, has yet to come fully to terms with the position of Christians as a minority in a pluralistic society. But the assumption that it is liberal, rather than orthodox, theology which can do this seems very questionable. Theology may need liberalism if it is to remain open to the secular world, but even more it needs orthodoxy if it is to retain its Christian identity in the secular world.

University of Manchester

RICHARD BAUCKHAM

AELRED OF RIEVAULX: A Study **Aelred Squire OP**

first published in 1969

SPCK 1981 177pp. £7.50

ISBN 0 87907 950 9

It is good to have a reprint of this unusual little book. It first appeared in 1969 and a paperback version was published in 1973; this version, intended for the

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American market but available in this country, would have sold better had it been in paperback and cheaper.

It deserves to sell better, for it is a valuable study of what the French historians would call the *mentalité* of a leading monastic figure during the twelfth-century renaissance in Britain. The author has built up an extraordinarily intimate life of Aelred, abbot of Rievaulx (1110–67), Cistercian monk, author, administrator and adviser of kings. Deeply versed in the Scriptures, ‘the fount of all learning’, he was nevertheless a man of his time, a monk of monks and a man of deep personal piety. ‘Whatever wisdom, whatever virtue, whatever grace is found in the sacred page will all be discovered in Him in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells corporeally, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge lie hid, to whom God does not give the Spirit by measure, of whose fulness we have all received.’ ‘The role of the scriptures in the life of the monk is the frequent burden of Aelred’s preaching and he repeatedly makes it clear that his insistence upon their primacy is due to the fact that they are the gateway to that personal experience of God in every life, which establishes a personal bond that temptation and difficulty cannot break, and which ultimately solves all problems of discipline and asceticism from within. The scriptures are the star that leads us to Jesus, the tomb we must approach like the women on the morning of the resurrection, expectantly carrying our spices of faith, devotion and love.’ To read this book is to enter a different world of devotion and deep Christian commitment.

New University of Ulster

ALAN ROGERS

QUEST FOR THE HIGHEST: An Autobiographical Account of the East African Revival J. E. Church

Paternoster Press 1981 284pp. £4.80

ISBN 0 85364 328 8

Joe Church’s autobiographical account of the East African Revival is not history but the stuff of which history is made—its raw material. Its publication is a timely reminder that an attempt at writing a comprehensive history of an important movement which germinated in the 1920s, came to fruition in the ’30s, spread in the ’40s and flourished in the ’50s and ’60s, is long overdue. The material comes from many and varied primary sources, and has been arranged chronologically and organized in journal-entry form by the author. The end result makes disjointed and repetitious reading, fortunately compensated for on the whole by infectious enthusiasms.

Nurtured in CICCUC and greatly influenced by the Keswick convention for the deepening of spiritual life, Joe Church left for what was then Ruanda-Urundi as a medical missionary with the newly-formed Ruanda Mission in 1927. No sooner had he arrived than he sensed the ‘deadness’ of the church and began to pray for revival. And it came, after small beginnings in shared prayer in 1928, with mighty force in the 1930s. It was to be largely an indigenous movement, as from the beginning African Christians were involved. From Ruanda it spread outwards to Uganda, Kenya and what was then Tanganyika, and indirectly into all the world.

Central to the teaching of the revival movement (for that is what it became) is cleansing in the blood of Jesus, brokenness at the foot of the cross, the infilling

of the Holy Spirit, open confession of sin or 'walking in the light' in the fellowship of believers, witness to others, and separation from the world. All these aspects, together with the criticisms and opposition encountered by the 'brethren' (or *balokole*, 'saved ones') are aptly illustrated and fully documented by Dr Church. So too are the movement's shortcomings and divisions.

My own unease with the movement focuses on its tendency towards legalism, perfectionism and intolerance. But that said, I would want to stress the significance of the revival for Christian witness in East Africa. It has its martyrs such as Janani Luwum; and its evangelists such as Festo Kivengere, who comes 'from Uganda with love'.

Trinity College, Bristol

MYRTLE S. LANGLEY

THREE WORLDS : ONE WORD Account of a Mission

Leslie Brown

Rex Collings 1981 267pp. £10.50

ISBN 0 86036 146 2

I write this review still smarting from the news that the General Synod of the Church of England, by a shortfall of ten votes in the House of Clergy, has rejected the proposals for a covenant. I cannot help but wonder how Leslie Brown, the committed ecumenist (of the grass-roots kind), feels about it all. Perhaps he has been tempted to quote yet again Metropolitan Lakdasa de Mel who, at the Lambeth Conference of 1968, greatly offended some bishops belonging to the Church of England when he uttered words to the effect that 'when the Church of England was actually confronted with the possibility of union, they scuttled like rabbits into a hedge'. Twice already the Metropolitan's words have been proved only too true.

Leslie Brown's three worlds are Kerala, South India (1938–52), where he participated in the inauguration of the Church of South India and drafted its now famous liturgy; Uganda, East Africa (1953–65), where he was sent as bishop, encouraged the mission of the church, survived the storms which blew up between church and state in the years immediately preceding and following independence, oversaw the making of the Province of Uganda, became its first archbishop and before too long handed it over to an African; and Suffolk, East Anglia (1966–78), where he reorganized the diocese in preparation for synodical government, introduced confirmation into the setting of parish worship, became one of the first Church of England representatives on the newly-formed Anglican Consultative Council, engaged in the various talks on church unity, and of course revisited East Africa and India. Significantly, as is so often the case with influential twentieth-century churchmen, the life of the man is marked by two distinctive experiences: an initial conversion experience under the auspices of IVP or CSSM; and a deepening of spirituality, together with a broadening of sympathies and a development of ecumenical vision through missionary service overseas.

The story is told simply and vividly, if at times somewhat tersely, and often with a delightful sense of humour and a full complement of anecdotes. The overwhelming impression left with the reader is one of meeting through the pages of a book an imaginative and practical theologian, a good administrator, a sensitive and caring pastor, a loyal friend, and a modest, pervasively spiritual

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person—a Christian for our time.

In the course of the narrative, and against the background of the three worlds, some matters of immense importance for the future of the church are refreshingly and penetratingly discussed: viz., church unity, the tensions in Anglicanism between synodical government and episcopacy (highlighted in the recent covenanting debate), training for ministry (with a welcome plea for a forward strategic look), the relationship between gospel and culture, liturgy, the relationship between church and state, and many more.

Trinity College, Bristol

MYRTLE S. LANGLEY

THE SOUTH AFRICAN CHURCHES IN A REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION

Marjorie Hope and James Young

Orbis Books, USA 1981 268pp. £8.60
distributed by Paternoster Press in the UK

ISBN 0 88344 466 6

Marjorie Hope and James Young are two American observers of the South African situation who write from a sociological perspective on the importance of theology for understanding apartheid society. Part one is an historical survey of South Africa until 1960. This is a readable pot-pourri, mainly of quotations from authoritative writers like Peter Hinchcliff, Monica Wilson, John de Gruchy and W. A. de Klerk. It is neither striking nor boring in its analysis of the theological backcloth to national events in South Africa. There are much better commentaries by each of the four writers just mentioned. The most readable and moving account of the conflict between Christian churches and the nationalist government over apartheid is Alan Paton's biography of Geoffrey Clayton, former archbishop of Cape Town, entitled *Apartheid and the Archbishop*.

The strength of part two, which describes the relationship between the state and the churches from 1960, is contained in vivid cameos of South African life presented by interviews with key individuals at the heart of the struggle. The authors give brief descriptions of the Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Lutherans, Quakers, Roman Catholics, Dutch Reformed Churches and African Independent Churches. The final three chapters attempt to look into the future, with particular reference to the issue of violence and non-violence as Christian options.

The overall impression of the book is that it contributes nothing new to our understanding of South Africa. The endless quotations, either from other writers or from conversations with individuals, inevitably lay the book open to the charge of mere copying, if not plagiarism. It looks very like an attempt to teach Americans wisdom about South Africa from the perspective of two outside observers. It is therefore superficial and undistinctive. It contains none of the insight of John de Gruchy's recent book, *The Church Struggle in South Africa* (Eerdmans, 1979).

St Aldates, Oxford

DAVID PRIOR

A COLLEGE REMEMBERED: St John's CollegeDurham 1909–1979 **T. E. Yates**

St John's College, Durham 1982 88pp. £2.75

This attractively written book tells us much of St John's College, the University of Durham of which the college is a part, and the trends in evangelicalism during seventy years. St John's Hall was founded in 1909 with a small body of students reading for university degrees and training for ordination. It became a full college of the university in 1919. We are told of the very able leadership of the first two principals, Rostron and Dawson-Walker. In the 1920s we read of the 'deep rifts' in evangelicism, between the traditionalists who were happier with BCMS than with CMS, and the liberal evangelicals who moved towards AEGM and might even be found in SCM rather than DICCUC. Charles Wallis, principal from 1919 to 1945, a strong Protestant, held the college happily together as a place where concern for social service in years of depression was emphasized as well as mission and conversion, and his lovable personality is vividly recalled.

In 1945 Wallis was followed by Ronald Williams. He brought to the college what seemed to be a new liberality of outlook. Known as a liberal evangelical, he wished that the two theological colleges in Durham should together present 'the whole spectrum of Anglicanism'. Candles appeared on the holy table. He had a larger part in the work of the university's theological faculty at a time when it was strong and growing. Looking towards the future, he was concerned that the double role of the college, catering both for undergraduates of many kinds and for graduates in training for ordination, would survive and develop only if the latter were separated in a distinctive spiritual discipline. He began to make provision for this and prophetically prepared the way for what was to be Cranmer Hall.

When Williams left in 1953 to become bishop of Leicester, there followed the leadership of Jim Hickinbotham (1954–70), a time of vigorous statesmanship with the increase of buildings, students and teaching staff, with care for scholarship, mission and devotion. Cranmer Hall began in the jubilee year 1959. It appears that, in the Williams period, evangelicals had begun to lose confidence in the college, and to restore confidence the evangelical flag was now flown again more self-consciously. This was at a time when a scholarly renewal was happening amongst the conservatives, who now had a larger place within a united college.

When Hickinbotham left for Oxford in 1970 there followed the years of John Cockerton, a happy time in which things old and new were blended together. Nothing might have startled the founders more than the presence of women in both halls of the college and the fraternising between Cranmer Hall and the Roman Catholic Seminary at Ushaw, an age of new things in which the values of the old are not forgotten.

A few errors are noted. Alan Richardson was never a teacher in the theology department of the university. Ramsay left the department in 1950, not for the see of Durham but for a chair in Cambridge. In the excellent bibliographies, mention should be made of R. R. Williams' *Authority in the New Testament*, an admirable work of his Durham years.

CHRISTIANS IN ULSTER 1968—1980

Eric Gallagher and Stanley Worrell

OUP 1982 241pp. £10.00

ISBN 0 19 213237 7

Two Methodists from Northern Ireland—one a minister, the other a headmaster—have given us a well-documented and balanced guide to the churches' response to the situation during the present round of 'troubles' in Ulster.

The word 'response' perhaps describes well how the churches have fared overall. Rarely, as institutions, have they been in the forefront, but on the whole the leadership has generally made fair responses to the situation as it has escalated and deepened by turns over the last twelve years. Often the church seems to have been just a little too late to affect the situation—never prophetic in advance of the situation. The authors show well how ecumenism had begun to move forward in the mid-sixties, but had needed another ten years. As it was, the troubles found churches still too unused to working together to make a major impact.

There is an atmosphere of 'If only...' as one sees the churches' record written down. This became very obvious in 1974 at the time of the failure of the power-sharing executive. It was here 'that the churches and churchmen made their most dramatic moves to promote reconciliation; but the political tide had already set very strongly against the kind of structures which reconciliation might entail... If the churches could have acted in 1972 as vigorously... they might have prepared a state of mind in their members that would have given Mr Whitelaw's programme a chance of success' (p.86).

The authors face squarely the general lack of radical and prophetic witness by the majority of parish clergy and laity. It is largely the leadership that holds to a strong ecumenical position. Most local churches are for 'business as usual'.

We are given a first-hand account of the meeting of Provisional IRA leaders and Protestant churchmen in December 1974—both authors were there. They see this attempt (perhaps, not surprisingly) as one of the most significant initiatives for peace, and believe that the view 'you don't talk to terrorists' is a barrier to meaningful efforts at reconciliation. Their criticism of most other initiatives or movements is that they 'wanted peace, but too many thought, and still think, of peace on their terms only. There was still too little attempt to involve people either in the attempt to understand the conditions that make for peace or strife, or in the willingness to make the necessary compromises' (p.187).

It is on the authors' understanding of the concept of peace and reconciliation that the book is at its weakest. There is no real discussion of the meaning and content of reconciliation from a biblical and theological perspective—is 'making the necessary compromises' an adequate description? Furthermore, whatever the authors' understanding of the inner dynamic and reconciling power of the gospel, we are given very little hint of it in their book. There is a telling phrase when the authors gently chide the media because 'they seemed to think that the churches could work miracles of which the secular world was incapable' (p.203). Were the media not right to have such expectations? It is on this yardstick that the credibility of the church is judged.

The book deals well with the acts of the church as a human religious institution (which, in part, it is) and its general verdict is 'fair, but could have

been more adventurous at parish level'. It is no necessary criticism of the book that it omits to deal with the church as the body of Christ empowered by the Spirit—but it is at this level that the final judgements must be made. Perhaps another book from our two authors will enter this realm.

St Hugh's Vicarage, Luton

DAVID K. GILLETT

**PILGRIMAGE IN PARTNERSHIP: The Memoirs of
Martin Parsons** **Martin Parsons**

Grove Books 1982 92pp. £4.25

ISBN 0 907536 16 6

Those who have sat under Martin Parson's ministry, or have read any of his previous books, will not need any encouragement to read his memoirs. A simple biblical teacher and a diligent pastor—with an open mind and the pen of a ready writer, whose varied labours in England, Ireland and Poland have spanned more than fifty years—he and his wife have won themselves friends wherever they have ministered, and his books have extended that ministry more widely still. The affection they have evoked by their devoted service to the gospel is certainly not on one side only, for the memoirs are as much about other people as about the author, and his title *Pilgrimage in Partnership* expresses the debt he feels he owes to the many Christians whom he has known throughout his life. Born into the family of an evangelical clergyman, his book teems with well-known and not so well-known names in evangelical and related circles since the early years of the present century. Nor is it personal names alone that one finds here, but details of places and dates, leading one to conclude that the author must, over much of his life, have kept a diary which he has now put to good use. The picture he gives of home life, school life, university life and life in a theological college, during the first world war and between the wars, is illuminating to those who cannot remember that vanished world, and the picture he gives of work among Polish Jews before the German invasion will be familiar to even fewer. He mentions throughout his narrative the lessons he has learned and would like to pass on to others. They are lessons worth learning.

Latimer House, Oxford

ROGER BECKWITH

**ROME AND REFORMATION TODAY: How Luther Speaks to the
New Situation** **James Atkinson** Latimer Studies 12

Latimer House 1982 36pp. £1.00

This is a welcome and timely addition (No. 12) to the Latimer Studies series. It represents an expansion of an essay published by the author in 1967, the newly added material being intended to bring out the relevance of the Reformation—and particularly Luther—to the ecumenical situation faced by the Anglican church today, especially in the light of the recent papal visit.

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The bulk of the study deals with the sixteenth-century Reformation in general, and Luther in particular. Atkinson then moves on to consider the signs of a new Reformation within both Protestantism and Catholicism which have appeared during the present century. His basic thesis is that the *ecclesia reformata* must be *semper reformanda*: in other words, that reformation is 'a continuing discipline within the true Church'. Hence he emphasizes the need to appreciate that the Protestantism and Catholicism which faced each other in the sixteenth century are greatly different from the Protestantism and Catholicism which face each other today. Thus he points to the renewal movements within Catholicism which have brought about its inward change, and the 'liberal' movements within Protestantism which have advocated existentialist or humanist theologies, as examples of change within both camps. Atkinson's final chapter is a passionate plea for the development of a fresh theology founded on the Word of God, a 'spiritual ecumenism' which combines the 'meat of Catholicism with the salt of Protestantism'. He points to the need to re-form what is being de-formed, to reassert the Word of God in the face of the secular world—and in all these matters, finds in Martin Luther an example worthy to be followed.

This study will not be welcomed by those who see in the Reformation of the sixteenth century a definitive and timeless statement of the truth of the gospel. As Atkinson makes clear, the idea of reformation involves continuing self-examination and change, continually asking what the gospel truly is and truly means. The study *will* be welcomed by those who are concerned with the working out of the principles of the Reformation to the situation we now face in the Church of England, and in this study we have a scholarly and committed guide to this question in Professor Atkinson. Some irritating typographical errors in no way detract from the value of the study.

Wollaton, Nottingham

ALISTER McGRATH

CONFESSING THE FAITH IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND TODAY R. T. Beckwith Latimer Studies 9
Latimer House 1981 36pp. £1.00

A KIND OF NOAH'S ARK?: The Anglican Commitment to Comprehensiveness J. I. Packer Latimer Studies 10
Latimer House 1981 39pp. £1.00

All the Protestant churches of Western Europe have experienced a very profound movement of deconfessionalization in the last two hundred years; and it could be argued that, after the Lambeth Conference of 1968 (which accepted with truly remarkable haste the results of Bishop Ian Ramsay's Commission on *Subscription and Assent*), Anglicanism is the least 'confessional' of the non-Roman churches. Both Mr Beckwith's and Dr Packer's essays confront this situation. Beckwith argues for reconfessionalization. The Apostles' Creed must be restored to the *ASB* Baptism Service; the Athanasian Creed ought to be part of church worship (and a translation is appended); the new form of subscription is said (with all too little evidence) to be no relaxation

of the terms of assent; clergy are exhorted to continue the practice of reading the Articles, voluntarily, on taking office; and, above all, disciplinary measures ought to be taken against heretics (including private actions of avoiding their company, shunning their preaching, withholding invitations and withdrawing from their congregations).

Packer, by contrast, has both a different analysis of, and a different prescription for this situation. Addressing himself specifically to the fact of internal Anglican diversity, he helpfully identifies four brands of comprehensiveness, those of calculated inclusion (the original Elizabethan variety), of integrative practice (F. D. Maurice), of inner tension leading to higher synthesis, and of theological relativism. Brief discussion of the last three reveals that Packer's sympathies are only securely with the first, a type of comprehensiveness based on common acceptance of the creed.

How then does Packer recommend that evangelicals live with what Anglican comprehensiveness has recently become? He accepts it, reluctantly and with sorrow, 'as the unavoidable result of one of Anglicanism's other qualities, namely its desire to rule out no questions and clamp down on no discussions, but to give every viewpoint which claims, however freakishly, to be in line with Scripture and reason, opportunity to make its claim good' (p.35). There follows an argument in favour of experimentation in the restatement of the gospel, a willingness to allow the whole Christian community, informed by biblical study, to participate in discussion, acceptance of the risks of pluralism, and a firm affirmation of the benefits of conviction matured by the examination of arguments.

Packer affirms, again rightly in my view, the important fact that conflict over central questions of doctrine occurred in the apostolic church. He might have referred here to the writings of a distinguished group of younger NT scholars on the internal variety of the early church. If there is a weakness in his admirable prescription for evangelicals troubled by internal disputes in the Church of England, it is a certain unwillingness to admit that the situation has genuinely changed since the Elizabethan settlement, especially in respect of biblical study.

We have, I believe, to ask the painful question whether the traditional Anglican apologia for 'the fundamentals' or 'essentials' or 'essence' (Hooker's word) of the gospel is tenable in precisely the form it was propounded. What Hooker meant by 'the essence' was, in effect, the Apostles' Creed. But the *regula fidei* never existed in merely one form; it was an informal *aide memoire* to provide a context or horizon in which the internal variety of Scripture might be allowed to operate. It excluded some positions: for example, certain forms of Gnosticism; but it included many more. And no matter what the Reformers did or did not intend to include in their confessions, modern evangelicals do not need to be more restrictive of variety than modern biblical research shows the compilers of the canon to have been.

It saddens me to think that, in Oxford, Mr Beckwith presumably thinks it his Christian duty to avoid Professor Wiles' company and shun his preaching. But as a scholar, when he wishes to accuse him of heresy, he should do so openly and with evidence: not on the basis of unverified reports.

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WORSHIP IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

D. E. W. Harrison and M. C. Sansom

first published in 1946

SPCK 1982 181pp. £3.95

ISBN 0 281 03843 0

The late Douglas Harrison's history and exposition of the *Book of Common Prayer* first appeared in 1946, and stood in the tradition of Protestant evangelical manuals on the Prayer Book going back to Drury's *How we got our Prayer Book* and beyond. Dean Harrison afterwards became vice-chairman of the Church of England Liturgical Commission and chairman of the 'ecumenical' Joint Liturgical Group; so when he reissued his book in 1969 as *Common Prayer in the Church of England*, he included a sympathetic account of the alternative services as they had appeared to date. Now, with the appearance of the *Alternative Service Book*—incorporating those of the alternative services which are judged to have some future—a further edition has been published, dealing with the new book in detail, while continuing to deal with the *Book of Common Prayer* as well. Dean Harrison having in the meantime died, the addition of this new section and the revision of the earlier material has been entrusted to the vice-principal of Ridley Hall.

In many ways the new co-author seems to have been well chosen. Someone was needed who shared the outlook of his predecessor and could write with appreciation of one and contempt of the other. Also, for a popular manual, a readable style was needed and a pastoral touch, and all these conditions have been fulfilled. Added to which, the publishers have provided a much more pleasant type-face than in earlier editions. The paper is whiter and the type larger and blacker. Moreover, the price seems reasonable.

The popular character of the work places limitations upon its usefulness, and one is bound to wonder whether the new co-author is as much on his home ground as Dean Harrison was. His statements are sometimes inaccurate or open to question, and statements by the original author have sometimes been reproduced unaltered when they should have been brought into line with more recent research. Defects in the original, such as lack of information on Jewish worship in the chapters of background history, have not been made good in any satisfactory way. It may be hard to credit, but in the section on the Prayer Book there is not a single reference to Cuming's *History of Anglican Liturgy* (1969) or to his other writings on Prayer Book history. Almost equally surprising is the fact that, in the section on the *ASB*, there is not a single reference to the Liturgical Commission's *Commentary on the ASB*, which is unique among such commentaries in that it comes out of the horse's mouth, and contains far more factual information than any of the rest. The questionable doctrinal characteristics of the *ASB* and its constituent services are passed over in discreet silence, presumably for irenic reasons.

Latimer House, Oxford

ROGER BECKWITH

PICTURING GOD Norman Pittenger

SCM Press 1982 147pp. £4.50

ISBN 0 334 01260 0

The Westminster Shorter Catechism asks, 'What is God?'. Modern theologians and philosophers are more inclined to ask, 'What is meant by "God"?'.

questions are pretty much the same. In the latest of a lengthening line of books, Norman Pittenger offers an answer to the question from the standpoint of 'process theology' so fashionable in North America but practically unknown here.

Pittenger cannot argue for the *truth* of process theology. He holds that all thought of God is inevitably pictorial (i.e. non-literal), process thought included. But, he thinks, process models are helpful, more so than the classical model of God as timeless, immutable, sovereign. This model has failed us, for it conjures up the concept of a static, remote, terrible God. (One nice howler here is the misascription of the words 'Thou God seest me'. Hagar's recognition of God's mercy [Gen. 16:13] becomes, for Pittenger, a terrible invention of St Augustine.)

While models of God must be biblical—at least in the sense that they cohere with modern critical reconstructions of the Bible—they must above all cohere with modern scientific knowledge, which is evolutionary, and with the awareness we have of ourselves as *becoming*, not *being*. God is not a being, for to be a being is to be static, or at least to picture God as a being is to give way to thoughts of God as static. God is not self-sufficient, not uniquely incarnate in Jesus, not the immaculate judge of all, not the ordainer of evil for a greater good. Rather, he is to be pictured as being in time, developing, restricted by the evil around him, and the gross physical universe (that he has created?).

What emerges is a totally unsatisfactory dualism of opposing cosmic energies. But more important than this is the method by which it is achieved: an eclectic mixture of biblical studies, philosophical speculation, scientific theorizing and an appeal to 'feeling tones'. What the rules are that govern such reflection is something that Pittenger, for all his chatty and engaging style, leaves totally unclear.

University of Liverpool

PAUL HELM

BEYOND IDEOLOGY: Religion and the Future of Western Civilization **Ninian Smart**

Collins 1981 350pp. £9.95

ISBN 0 00 215846 9

This book brings together a distinguished authority on the subject of contemporary religions and a distinguished series of lectures (The Gifford Lectures, 1979-80). The thesis which Ninian Smart develops is, beyond doubt, original. He attempts to create a fresh world-view of substantial relevance to actual, secular political life out of an amalgam of certain traditions peculiar to Christianity and Buddhism.

Because the argument is long and often quite involved, it is important to have a clear idea of the book's purpose. Smart believes that our present age is marked by universal ideologies (particularly Marxism and Islam) which aggressively compete for domination of the world. He also sees that the western ideal of pluralism of belief and expression could easily disintegrate because of the increasing absence of a spirituality to sustain it. This could lead to the imposition of an authoritarian 'religion' which despises and prohibits creativity and individuality. The book is a sustained, passionately argued and intricate polemic for a view of life which will at the same time produce tolerance without encouraging

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indifference. Smart calls this view a Pacific culture (both geographical and literal), a new transcendental ideology which will be truly universal and the only way of surviving the encroaching dark waves of resurgent, irrational nationalisms.

How Smart maps out the contours of this world-view and its relationship to the secular politics of the market-place, conference-table, and, if need be, battlefields of the global city is set out in nine chapters. It would be invidious to try to summarize the content. Suffice it to say that in general terms it is a prolonged and revolving conversation between aspects of Buddhist and Christian self-understanding that picks out the main coincidences as these seem to speak most directly to the threat of ethnic, ideological or religious self-righteousness and intolerance.

Of course, many assumptions are being made: in particular, that genuine comparisons can be made between Christian revelation and Buddhist teaching. However, is not their understanding of the place of human beings in the universe starkly different? So much so, that to say that 'they are different ways of going towards the Beyond' is already to have adopted a non-Christian framework of reference to talking about religious experience.

This book is only for those prepared to stretch their minds and horizons. It requires a good deal of hard concentration. Smart's approach is anything but superficial. Seeking to grasp his argument will challenge any vestiges of Eurocentric thinking on our part and any simplistic conclusions we may have reached about other world-views.

Though his treatise tends to be highly discursive and, I feel, unnecessarily repetitive, his treatment of the subject is genuinely universal. This is the scope of the crisis which our generation faces. Smart shows that a parochial form of Christian faith in today's one world is an anachronism. He challenges us to discover the universal implications of the message of Christ in a way that truly meets the current dominant forces at work among the nations. To say that there is a more orthodox, and therefore more realistic way of doing it, is to acknowledge that we have learnt from his own personal achievement.

London Institute of Contemporary Christianity

ANDREW KIRK

THE GURU IN SIKHISM W. Owen Cole

Darton, Longman & Todd 1982 115pp. £3.95

ISBN 0 232 51509 3

'They have started at some places to wrap the Holy Granth in warm clothes during winter and switch on the fan in summer', complained a Sikh writer in 1974, seeing the characteristic Hindu treatment of idols creeping into his own faith. The Sikh stand against idolatry is unmistakable. 'The faults are endless which come from singing lullabies to stone gods', says the *Guru Granth Sahib*. Sikhs insist that they do not worship their scriptures, yet these 1,430 pages of Punjabi verse were installed as *guru*, leader of the community, by the last of the ten human gurus in 1708. The cover of Cole's books shows a *granthi* waving the traditional fan over the *Granth* as a sign of respect—the custom of ancient Indian courts transferred to temperate, democratic Britain.

Sikhism emerged from the North Indian *bhakti* tradition of Hinduism, and

retains its basic religious assumptions while protesting against idolatry and religious formalism. God's initiative, the 'grace of the Guru', is continually upheld: 'Good actions may procure a good life, but liberation comes only from his grace.' Only so is the 'world ocean' crossed in safety. Christians should examine with interest the development of Guru Nanak's protest movement into the highly disciplined and distinctive ethnic faith of today, and view with sympathy its struggle against caste and institutional rigidity. Cole's book lacks a really adequate glossary, but should stimulate interest in his longer *Sikhism and its Indian Context*.

Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society, London

CHRISTOPHER LAMB

THE SOCIAL GOD Kenneth Leech

Sheldon Press 1981 167pp. £4.95

ISBN 0 85969 342 2

This important book is a collection of papers given on various occasions and showing the familiar marks of the author's abrasive speaking style. Not surprisingly, it lacks an overall unity of presentation and there is some repetition.

There is no mistaking the main arguments:

- 1) God himself as a social Trinity, and his incarnation, are emphatic grounds for a church which must be concerned for social and political change. There must be an end to our present-day privatizing of religion and acquiescence in an unjust social order, treating God as if he were not involved in the social and material order of things.
- 2) In the incarnation, manhood has been taken into God. This makes explicit the glory and unity of mankind, the importance of materiality and sensuality, and hope of mankind moving towards the wholeness of God.
- 3) Christian contemplation is essential if the real points of conflict in society for the kingdom of God are to be perceived, and the church is to recover its prophetic role. Far from bringing about personal tranquility, true contemplation takes one to the heart of the spiritual battle. Regular spiritual direction rather than problem-solving should be the norm in our churches.
- 4) The charismatic movement has allowed exorcism to be over-concerned with 'possession' of individuals, instead of following the Pauline concern with evil forces in the world order.
- 5) We are moving towards fascism, that is a more repressive society, aided by 'other worldly' theology and religious fundamentalism.

These are arguments which we desperately need to hear and they are not, in my judgement, inconsistent with biblical theology.

It is also easy to criticize this book, but to do so too readily is to miss its force. Nevertheless, Leech is dismissive of the Reformed tradition and an emphasis upon individual salvation. He takes no account of the necessity of personal regeneration in Christ. This is stangely inconsistent with his awareness of demonic forces for evil in society. The materiality of the incarnation and the materiality of the eucharist have become confused as one truth. Although sharply critical of much on the present-day Christian scene, Leech makes uncritical use of much from the Catholic mystical tradition, such as 'the dark night of the soul', knowing God through descending deeper into yourself, and Merton's love of Zen. Strongly critical of tendencies of the political right, he

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has little criticism of the tendencies of the left. Strongly critical of spiritual élitism, he smuggles it in again as true contemplation. Strongly critical of intolerance, he writes off Coggan on three occasions, as well as the Festival of Light.

But those who love what Leech hates would be foolish to shun this book, for the truths emphasized must be taken account of. There is no doubt in my mind that its author is a prophet, and prophets have never been balanced in their presentation.

Holy Trinity Vicarage, Coventry

GRAHAM DOW

EVANGELICALS AND DEVELOPMENT: Towards a Theology of Social Change edited Ronald Sider
Contemporary Issues in Social Ethics Vol. 2
Paternoster Press 1981 123pp. £3.40 ISBN 0 85364 329 6

This book is another sign of the increasing interest in social questions amongst evangelicals around the world. Ronald Sider, in his general preface to the series, puts it this way: 'In all parts of the world, evangelical Christians in growing numbers are rediscovering the biblical summons to serve the poor, minister to the needy, correct injustices and seek societal shalom.' The papers that we have in this book arose from the consultation which was held in England at Hoddesdon in March 1980. This consultation issued a statement of intent, which is published at the beginning of the book and contains a number of points registering concern about issues of development, together with recognitions and resolutions. Further consultations are planned, and two main goals have been set by a steering committee which the 1981 consultation established. The first is to 'promote theological reflection on attempts to meet human need in concrete local development situations'; the second to 'seek further clarification of theological issues related to development'. These goals are interestingly orientated towards the theological task of identifying issues, thinking about them, and trying to articulate what the Christian gospel means in this context of development. It is interesting in that while not denying or seeking any way to denigrate the activism of evangelical relief agencies, this group wants actually to engage in a theological task. That undoubtedly augers well but could be very explosive within evangelicalism. The discussion of ethical issues, particularly when that discussion is conducted in an international framework, will raise sharp questions about the essential theological character of evangelicalism.

All the papers are most stimulating and interesting. Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden have written two on development, the first being a guide to the theology of development and the second entitled 'Towards a Theology of Social Change'. The first is a very interesting and useful guide to the discussion. It is very brief, and does not contain the detailed listing of literature and interaction with that literature that a written contribution to the book might have provided. In this respect it reflects its origins as a presentation at a conference. There is, however, some very good thumbnail sketching in both papers, drawing attention to the considerable diversity which many in the

European context may perhaps be unaware of within the developing countries. Tom Sine provides in chapter 4 a programmatic discussion of development, and in the last paper Ron Matthews looks at implications of western theologies of development for Third World countries. This in many ways is one of the most interesting papers in the book. It touches on issues which will undoubtedly hurt, as we try and think about the questions that are involved here. How far is it to be expected that a development programme which originates from a Christianity which enjoys a particular social position in the European or First World, is going to achieve, or can be reasonably expected to achieve, social change in the Third World? Not just social change, but social change which is itself critical of the social situation in the First World. It ought not to surprise Ron Matthews as much as it seems to, that First-World Christian thinking and action reflects the social ambience of the Christianity of the First World. When he looks to those aid programmes and Christian thinking from the First World, and hopes for some acute insight into the social consequences of the programme in a very different social structure in the Third World, then he perhaps is being a little too optimistic. The transposition of thinking about aid and development from one context to another raises not only the questions of dependence and independence, of dignity and paternalism, of integrity and honesty in that transaction, but also the question of social status and position of the giving agencies in their world in comparison with the social standing and status of Christians in the receiving situation. That, as Ron Matthews illustrates with a number of case studies, raises further interesting, sharp and difficult questions—not only for Third World countries in the way which they receive aid and think about development, but also by reflex about First World countries who wish to offer help.

A very valuable collection of papers with the promise of more to come.

St John's College, Durham

BRUCE KAYE

WEEP FOR THE CITY Colin Bedford

Lion Publishing 1982 127pp. £1.50

Albatross Books, Australia 1982 A\$3.95

ISBN 0 85648 396 6

ISBN 0 86760 344 5

Here is a reaction to the Toxteth riots of Liverpool from the Rector of Toxteth. It is a remarkably objective assessment of the causes of the troubles, written with a deep empathy with those who suffered on both sides of the divide between young people and the police. Most of his points are familiar, but none the less valuable for being brought together in one book written by an evangelical minister. He warns us that 'Even in these days of economic recession and cut-backs, the cost of doing nothing will be far higher in the long term as human reaction against injustice and inequality explodes into riots in other areas of urban deprivation.' It is almost incredible to read that there is in Toxteth an average of 500 assaults by the public on the police in one year. No wonder that people were claiming that relationships with the police had broken down.

There is no attempt at facile solutions. For example, Mr Bedford quotes these words in relation to what is called reverse discrimination: 'We feel strongly that to advocate such a step, suggesting to unemployed white youngsters

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that less qualified blacks might be given preference over them in getting jobs, could inflict serious injury to the cause of good race relations.' And yet something has to be done to set right the massive disadvantage of black teenagers.

This book repays serious thought. Action will be more difficult, but the book will save us from easy answers.

St Barnabas Vicarage, London E9

JOHN PEARCE

ONE OF THE RICHEST GIFTS: An Introductory Study of the Arts from a Christian World-View John Wilson

The Handsel Press 1981 125pp. £5.00

ISBN 0 905312 17 1

John Wilson has written a book that the Christian market has been in need of for a very long time. His basic premise is that art is a gift from God, given at creation. The author explores this concept as he tells his reader what art is, what its *raison d'être* is, and whether or not there can be such a thing as 'Christian art'. It is in this last statement that the argument is least tenable. The Judaeo/Christian theological position is that the Infinite Creator God, who is personal, created a material universe with personalness in it. This Creator God took on finite flesh in order to communicate with, and redeem his creation. The Christian, like the Buddhist or Marxist, has a way of seeing and knowing the world. This does not mean that the Christian who has artistic gifts will necessarily make clear and precise Christian statements with these same gifts.

One of the Richest Gifts is a well-argued and sharply presented book which erases forever the commonly held Christian myth that John Calvin was anti-art. This myth has been largely supported by evangelicals who have misread Calvin because of their fear and ignorance of the role for the arts in society. In his *Institutes*, Calvin deals with the arts, which he loved, but what he wanted for them was that they should have a proper servitude. Wilson explains that the arts of Calvin's day had become icons, which were themselves objects of adoration rather than aids to and for worship.

Personally I wished that this excellent book might have been given a more quality 'feel', as it is dealing with subject matter so concerned with aesthetics. I have no hesitation whatsoever in recommending it to all Christian people whose desire is to understand both the role for the arts in their own personal lives and the wider implications the arts may have for their church. The Christian engaged in a career in the professional arts world will find the book a very valuable study guide to clear comprehension of his or her own Christian calling.

John Wilson argues acutely for a clear Christian calling—a calling to think and to act differently. He suggests that all our talents and gifts are for God's service; that all of creation is for the Christian artist, just as much as the scientist, to open up and explore, and, in every activity, to work for the Lord Christ.

Genesis Arts Trust, London

NIGEL GOODWIN

STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR MINISTERS Charles L. Rassieur
 The Westminster Press, USA 1982 168pp. \$8.95 ISBN 0 664 24397 5

Most readers of this review will live in a city or large town. They will be subject to noise, dirt, speed, overcrowding and, possibly, violence. All this takes its physical and emotional toll. If they are also ministers of the gospel engaged in pastoral ministry, they will know what it is to bear and absorb the fears and sufferings, the depressions and anxieties, of other people. For some this could well add up to an unbearable level of stress, especially if the day-to-day cares and concerns of leading a local congregation are also very demanding.

Stress Management for Ministers is a timely addition to a small but growing number of books written to help clergy manage more satisfactorily the stress factors in their lives. Its thesis is that stress is best handled by those who do not neglect their personal needs but who give due attention to their own growth as persons. Hence the book's sub-title: 'Practical Help for Clergy who Deny Themselves the Care They Give to Others'.

Rassieur begins by analysing the stressful elements in ministerial life. Overwork, fear of failure, spiritual malaise, lack of measurable achievement, impoverished family life. These can so easily lead a man through frustration, fatigue, suspicion and emotional blunting on to a spectrum of recognizable physical symptoms which might so easily end in marriage breakdown or loss of faith.

The main theme of the book is that a minister's greatest need is a strong affirmation of his own 'self-identity'. This is basically a spiritual problem. The Holy Spirit is continually seeking to make us 'whole', but we resist his gracious ministry and fragment ourselves by working all hours, taking on every possible engagement, and giving more of ourselves to others than we can possibly spare. We can only begin to cope with life's overwhelming demands when we see ourselves afresh as children of God continually in need of his forgiving love. Our greatest need of forgiveness is for the sin of trying to cope in our own strength.

Jesus is the only Messiah. Far too many ministers of the Gospel regulate their lives as if they were messiahs! In parochial terms they love to be thought of as omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. Not only is this theologically impossible but is pastorally inexcusable—especially in these days of burgeoning shared ministry. Instead, there needs to be a sensible and realistic apportioning of responsibility in the life of a church. This is what the body of Christ is all about.

This is a practical book. There are helpful passages on the use of time, how to say 'no', coping with anger, and setting goals for personal and parochial life. Dr Rassieur writes from an exclusively American viewpoint and one needs to 'aim off' to take account of this. Some of the book consists of transcripts of tape-recorded interviews with pastors but set out in an unfortunate journalese style: 'Pastor Phil Myers was taking notes as we talked. Nervously he worked the pencil through his fingers back and forth from one hand to the other. Suddenly he tensed, snapped the pencil in half and flung both halves of the pencil over my head across the room.' This kind of thing hinders rather than helps—a pity. Otherwise it is easy to read, free from psychological jargon, and is very thought-provoking. A book that helped me.

COUNSELLING THE DYING Edgar Jackson *et al.*

first published in 1964

SCM Press 1982 180pp. £4.95

ISBN 0 334 01952 4

It is good that this excellent book is now printed in Britain and available in a paperback edition, as it should certainly be on the shelves of libraries in hospices, theological colleges and medical and nursing schools.

The authors write with the authority of real experience, theories being reinforced with practical examples, and the consecutive sequence of chapters provides a logical development of this difficult subject.

The opening chapter leads straight into the problems created by the conspiracy of silence surrounding dying people, and the lack of awareness of professionals of their techniques of avoidance. The goals set for counsellors are to bring peace, meaning and order to the lives of patients, and the partnership of physician and priest is emphasized: religious rites and sacraments are seen as therapeutic, and the importance of dignity, privacy and control of the situation by each individual as essential.

The second chapter describes impersonal, inter-personal and intra-personal death, the implications of each and the place of hope. There is interesting comment on predilection of death and each person's control of the time and manner of his death.

Chapter three highlights the feeling of the living about dying people and the protective mechanisms used by doctors and clergy in this situation. The need to examine our own attitudes and defences in the context of inter-professional dialogue is stressed.

Subsequent chapters explore the place of psycho-therapy and the moral implications of counselling, showing the need for honesty between counsellor and patient.

The difficulty of deciding whether or not to tell patients of their impending death is discussed, and we are reminded of the importance of touch and of identifying with the deep feelings created by this communication. The special needs of children are also considered, together with the philosophical implications of faith, education, life values and self-awareness. Life and its meaning are more important than death.

The final chapter describes the place of religion in this situation as giving each individual the courage to be and the power to become, so that physical, mental and spiritual wholeness are achieved.

St Christopher's Hospice, London

DOROTHY H. SUMMERS

LIVING THE TRINITY Peter Adam

Grove Spirituality Series No. 1

Grove Books 1982 20pp. 70p

ISBN 0 907536 17 4

The various series of Grove Booklets are widely appreciated in the church. This booklet by Peter Adam, formerly a tutor at St John's College, Durham, and now rector of a parish in Melbourne, marks the beginning of a new series under the title 'Grove Spirituality Series'. There are great riches in the spiritual writing of the evangelical tradition, and it is good to see that people well acquainted with that tradition are now addressing themselves in this public way

to current questions in the field of spirituality.

Dr Adam's booklet provides a promising start to the new series. He is concerned with the need to give full value in the church and in the devotion of Christian individuals to the trinitarian dimensions of the faith. He shows how the Jewish belief in the oneness of God was built upon by the NT Christians with their apprehension of the divine character of the Son and the Spirit, and he goes on to plead for a church today which is genuinely trinitarian in its consciousness, its worship and its whole activity. He describes three kinds of churches, each of which so concentrates upon one of the persons of the Trinity as virtually to neglect the other two, to the detriment of its worship and witness. He confesses that his descriptions are something of a parody 'in order to demonstrate their strengths and their weaknesses', but the reader will find some pointed material here to make him reflect on his own spiritual practice and on the spiritual life of the congregations he knows best. The booklet ends with some practical suggestions for correcting attitudes, where need be, in a trinitarian direction.

Altogether a thought-provoking piece which will be helpful to many people in the church.

Wheldrake Rectory, York

JOHN COCKERTON

DOES GOD ANSWER PRAYER? Peter Baelz

Darton, Longman & Todd 1982 55pp. £1.95

ISBN 0 232 51554 9

In this small book the Dean of Durham poses questions which often arise in the minds of praying people. He argues that the way to avoid unhelpful answers is to see the whole activity of prayer as occurring within a context of personal relationships—the relationship of human persons with a personal God (though the analogies drawn from human inter-personal relationships must not be pushed too far when divine-human relationship is being described). Awkward questions face us all in the area of petition and intercession. Both have their place, argues Dr Baelz, but they are not the most important things. Communion, sharing, conversation, awareness of God's presence, are the primary ingredients. It would be tempting, he says, to assert that all that happens is God's will and that therefore we should be resigned to it, good or bad. But God's government of the world is carried out by exercising power which is at the same time inexhaustible love; and love cannot browbeat, coerce or manipulate, but must accept the risk of rejection if it is to be true to itself. The best analogy is that of the influence of love within ordinary human relationships.

This emphasis upon the context of prayer as being that of a loving relationship, is the most helpful thing in the book. But the underlying problem of the concursive activity of God in governing the created order is present at every turn, and one wonders whether Dr Baelz has come down so heavily on the side of God's leaving room for his creatures to behave as free, responsible agents, that he has rather underplayed the aspect, so prominent in the traditional doctrine of divine providence, of divine teleological control in the physical as well as in the moral realm. But this is a stimulating book, written in a simple, popular style, with a wide readership in mind.

Wheldrake Rectory, York

JOHN COCKERTON

Churchman

GOOD NEWS DOWN THE STREET Michael Wooderson

Grove Pastoral Series No. 9

Grove Books 1982 25pp. 70p

ISBN 0 907536 18 2

Thank God for Colin Buchanan and Grove Books. Some of the publications are not my scene at all. Others are real gems—and this is one of them!

Evangelism is often associated with large, successful churches, with 'charismatic' (in the non-theological sense) clergy, and a small minority of the congregation who are that way inclined. Here is a book from a small parish which involved a large percentage of the congregation in evangelism—since I do not know Mr Wooderson, I cannot say whether he is 'charismatic' or not. But I am delighted that he has put pen to paper to outline his experience (no theory here!). I think for the first time in my life I have come across a method of evangelism which I would be happy to use. It avoids most of the manipulative techniques which seem to be such an important part of so many books on evangelism.

It all started because after a funeral (how important it is to realize that such occasions are evangelistic opportunities) one of the mourners asked how they could find out more about the Christian faith. He was not the sort of person who learned by reading books, nor the sort of person who would benefit from turning up to church. So Mr Wooderson evolved a scheme. Basically it involves *three*—and he tells you clearly why it is three—committed Christians going to visit a home to talk through the Christian faith in *six* sessions.

It is a scheme in which most, if not all, Christians can take part, with particular benefit to the new Christian. The clergy must make a point of keeping out of the way, except for training the visitors in the first place, and supporting them as time goes on.

My advice is to buy the book, adapt it, and try it out.

Blandford Forum, Dorset

JIMMY HAMILTON-BROWN

CELEBRATING HOLY WEEK: A Guide for Priest and People

David Austerberry

Mowbrays 1982 64pp. £1.75

ISBN 0 264 66844 8

One of the sad features of living in a post-Christian society is that year by year clergy report progressively fewer people attending Good Friday services. Various factors account for this, and it is interesting to note by contrast the increasing number of churches which hold Easter vigil services and find them gaining in support. The fact that the gospels between them give us the fullest picture of this final week in the earthly life of Jesus provides us with plenty of scriptural material for devotional reading and meditation by those who would thus daily follow the way of the cross.

The Church of Rome has followed the ancient tradition of the church in its observance of Holy Week, and in *Celebrating Holy Week* the Rev. David Austerberry suggests how an imaginative use of the *Alternative Service Book's* Rite A and other sources could provide a helpful pattern for members of the Church of England.

Not every parish may wish to base its observance on a daily communion, but

there is no reason why some of the excellent material included here (particularly the use of the Methodist Covenant service on Monday, the Litany of Jesus praying on Maundy Thursday, and the collection of Scriptures in the Meditation and the Reproaches on Good Friday) should not be used in other forms of service or an ante-communion.

These services are not a liturgist's pipe-dream, but represent a Black Country congregation's experiment, and clergy who are looking for imaginative ideas to involve their people in recalling vividly the events of this solemn week will find this book a useful source of material.

Oak Hill College, London

DAVID H. WHEATON

In brief

I BELIEVE Colin Day

Falcon: Kingsway Publications 1982 94pp. £1.25

ISBN 0 86239 004 4

Each week, thousands of Anglicans dutifully recite the Apostles' Creed. How many of them really comprehend what they are saying? How many are able to relate its content to everyday life? Colin Day has provided us with a splendid little guide to these basic Christian beliefs and their practical implications. Very readable, and enlivened by humorous but well-chosen illustrations, it is a book which should be on the church bookstall, recommended from the pulpit, and on hand when the next parishioner voices uncertainty about the Christian faith.

CONCERNING THE ETERNAL PREDESTINATION OF GOD

John Calvin

translated and introduced by J. K. S. Reid first published in 1961

James Clarke 1982 191pp. £5.95

ISBN 0 227 67853 2

This translation is now available for the first time in paperback.

SERVANT AND SON: Jesus in Parable and Gospel

J. Ramsey Michaels

John Knox Press, USA 322pp. £7.80

ISBN 0 8042 0409 8

distributed by Paternoster Press in the UK

Gordon-Conwell's professor of NT is engaged in the continuing quest for the historical Jesus. He approaches it by looking at Jesus' own faith and personal experience: '... in the Gospel drama he [Jesus] is not only actor but also in some sense spectator or observer. He makes things happen, but he also watches things happen.' A worthwhile contribution to the ongoing debate.

TO CORINTH WITH LOVE: The Vital Relevance Today of Paul's Advice to the Corinthian Church Michael Green

Hodder & Stoughton 1982 175pp. £1.50

ISBN 0 340 28226 6

The context changes: the issues are similar. Michael Green shows how Paul's letter to the church at Corinth offer clear guidance for dealing with many of

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today's problems. Sometimes controversial, often intriguing—as in his chapter on the place of women in the church—and always relevant, this book should prove to be very popular.

1 and 2 THESSALONIANS Geoffrey B. Wilson

Banner of Truth Trust 1982 128pp. £1.75 ISBN 0 85151 339 5

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES Geoffrey B. Wilson

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Title number one is a rewriting of the author's earlier study. The second is completely new. Together they almost complete the author's series of commentaries on Paul's letters—only Philippians has still to appear—under the general heading of 'A Digest of Reformed Comment'.

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The latest in Banner's series of Geneva Commentaries, this was first published in 1658.

JEWISH PRAYER AND WORSHIP: An Introduction for Christians

William W. Simpson first published in 1965

SCM Press 1982 128pp. £2.95 ISBN 0 334 02095 6

Out of print for a number of years, a first appearance in paperback should stimulate interest in this helpful book. Together with 'The Pattern of the Liturgy', the contents include an 'Anthology of Jewish Prayers' and 'Hymns of the Synagogue and Home'. For the Christian, blessed with the full revelation of God in Christ, there is an abundance of enriching thought. Required reading for anybody disposed to belittle the Jewish roots of our faith.

THE EARLY CHURCH: From the Beginnings to 461 W. H. C. Frend

first published by Hodder & Stoughton 1965

SCM Press 1982 273pp. £6.50 ISBN 0 334 01982 6

Long out of print, the present edition will be welcomed. Whilst acknowledging the advances which have been made in the study of early Christianity, Frend says that he has resisted the temptation to rewrite, and has contented himself with providing an updated bibliography.

FAIR SUNSHINE: Character Studies of the Scottish Covenanters

Jock Purves first published in this form in 1968

Banner of Truth Trust 1982 206pp. £2.45 ISBN 0 85151 136 8

The dreadful but splendid thirty-odd years of Scottish church history between the restoration of Charles II and the accession of William and Mary are familiar to many. These biographical studies, together with an outline of 'Covenant History', will refresh the memory of some, and spark off interest in others. The revised edition brings together two of the author's works: *Sweet Believing* (1948) and *Fair Sunshine* (1957).

LANCE BIDEWELL

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SCM Press 1982

These imaginatively produced books are a real incentive to study and read the Bible. It is hoped that full use will be made of this excellent background material. A certain amount of caution would, however, be advisable if treating parts of them as 'commentary'.

- WHO'S WHO IN THE OLD TESTAMENT** Together with the Apocrypha
Joan Comay
421pp. £5.95 ISBN 0 340 27176 0
- WHO'S WHO IN THE NEW TESTAMENT** Ronald Brownrigg
310pp. £5.95 ISBN 0 340 27177 9
first published in 1971 and 1972 by Weidenfeld & Nicolson
Hodder & Stoughton 1982

To have presented over 3,000 entries in each of these two volumes, and to have set them out and printed them so clearly is in itself a publisher's achievement worthy of note. The two well-qualified authors and their advisory editors are to be congratulated for having assembled such a wealth of information. May it be put to good use by a wide variety of information-seekers.

- RENEWAL IN WORSHIP** Michael Marshall
Marshall Morgan & Scott 1982 170pp. £1.95 ISBN 0 551 00961 6
- RISE UP AND BUILD** Nick Cuthbert
Kingsway Publications 1982 118pp. £1.35 ISBN 0 86065 189 4

Worship in its various forms, incorporating repentance, renewal and re-dedication, is described and explained from a non-charismatic position by Michael Marshall. The 'threefold cord', in which the main strands are sacramental, evangelical and experiential, are seen as combining to bring a richness to contemporary worship.

Excitement (that God is at work and that there is a sense of expectancy in many places) and concern (that the church in Britain is neither ready nor equipped for persecution or renewal) are two of the feelings in Nick Cuthbert's mind as, in *Rise up and Build*, he urges churches to listen to the Holy Spirit... and then to do something about it. This is written from the charismatic standpoint and is a book which is intended to disturb us.

- HINDS' FEET ON HIGH PLACES** Hannah Hurnard
first published by Christian Literature Crusade in 1955
Kingsway Publications 1982 158pp. £1.60 ISBN 0 86065 192 4

This allegory follows Much-Afraid as she escapes from her Fearing relatives, encounters the Shepherd, is protected by him as she passes through many dangers, and eventually reaches the High Places where perfect love casts out fear.

Churchman

WALKING ON WATER Madeleine L'Engle

first published in USA in 1980

Lion Publishing 1982 191pp. £1.75

Albatross Books, Australia 1982 A\$4.95

ISBN 0 85648 395 8

ISBN 0 86760 341 0

A book to dip into. The writer shares her personal reflections as she steps aside and finds time to *be*. She is American and has a sense of humour!

MY PATH OF PRAYER edited David Hanes, foreword David Pawson

Henry E. Walter 1981 115pp. £1.75

ISBN 0 85479 036 5

Eleven (well-known) Christians, including David Watson, Jim Packer and Michael Baughen, describe their personal experiences on their own 'path of prayer'. These illuminating glimpses behind the scenes are both humbling and encouraging in a practical way, as well as being extremely readable.

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- Almond Press** *Fullness of Humanity: Christ's Humanness and Ours*, T. E. Pollard, £5.95 (pb) £9.95 (hc), 1982; *Love Lyrics from the Bible: A Translation and Literary Study of the Song of Songs*, M. Falk, £5.95 (pb) £14.95 (hc), 1982
- T. and T. Clark** *The Way to Life: Sermons in a Time of World Crisis*, H. Gollwitzer, £4.95 (pb) £8.95 (hc), 1981 (translated from 1980 German edition)
- Cowley Publications** *Christian Uncertainties*, M. Furlong, US\$5.00, 1982 (first published in UK by Hodder & Stoughton, 1975)
- CUP** *Across the Abyss: Diary Entries for the Year 1939-1940*, P. Roubiczek, £15.00, 1982 (translated from 1978 German edition)
- Eerdmans** *Learning Jesus Christ through the Heidelberg Catechism*, K. Barth, £3.75, 1981 (first published in USA by John Knox Press, 1964)
- Epworth Press** *Seen God Lately?*, R. Adams, £2.50, 1982
- Hodder & Stoughton** *The Search for the Real Jesus*, D. Winter, £4.50, 1982; *The Soldier's Armoury Jan. to July 1983*, C. W. Kew, 95p, 1982 (published with the Salvation Army)
- IVP** *Growing into Love*, J. Huggett, £1.65, 1982
- Latimer House** *Rome and Canterbury—The Final ARCIC Report: A Study Guide*, R. Beckwith, n.p., 1982
- Marshall Morgan and Scott** *Break Open My World: Personal Renewal for Today*, F. Lees, £1.75, 1982
- Mowbrays** *A Handbook of Parish Preaching*, G. W. Ireson, £3.75, 1982; *Your Church*, K. Baker, £1.00, 1982; *Enquirer's Library*, (13 titles published so far) various authors, 60p each, 1982
- OUP** *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints*, D. H. Farmer, £3.50, 1982 (first published [hc] in 1978)
- Partnership in Mission Asia** *Evangelisation and the Poor: A Third-World Study Guide*, V. Samuel and C. Sugden, US\$3.00, 1982
- Penguin Books** *The Gnostic Gospels*, E. Pagels, £2.25, 1982
- SCM Press** *The Darkness of God: Theology after Hiroshima*, J. Garrison, £5.95, 1982
- Yale University Press** *The Divine Relativity: A Social Conception of God*, C. Hartshorne, £3.95, 1982 (first published in 1948)

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