

**Book Reviews**  
**and**  
**Book Briefs**



## Book Reviews

The *Journal* uses the standard abbreviation ‘hc’ to denote hard cover. The International Standard Book Number (ISBN) has been included with all books when available. We begin this section with “**Book Reviews**”, organized according to the four divisions of theology.

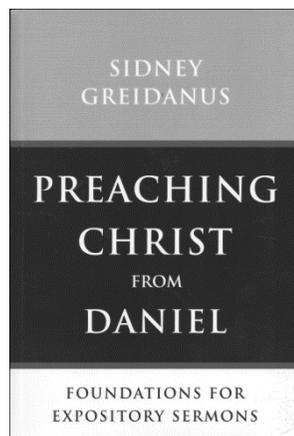
### Biblical Theology

***Preaching Christ from Daniel: Foundations for Expository Sermons.* Sydney Greidanus. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012, 440 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8028-6787-2**

A quick scan through the table of contents reveals immediately that the emphasis in the title on “preaching” and on “sermons” is not in name only. Right from the start, the detailed breakdown of the introduction shows that Greidanus intends to provide practical guidelines for preaching that is Christ-centred and relevant to the Church today. In addition, the four appendices are all sermon-orientated and include actual sermon examples.

The author outlines his purpose very clearly in the preface. His intention is to enable “busy preachers and Bible teachers . . . to uncover rather quickly the important building blocks for producing sermons and lessons on Daniel” (p. x). This is the third book by the author which applies the principles of “the redemptive-historical Christocentric method” developed in his foundational book *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (1999). In fact, Greidanus is also applying the “hermeneutical-homiletical approach to the biblical text” that he developed for first-year seminary students. Consequently, the book is geared towards taking students through eleven lessons on the exposition of Daniel.

The full complement of select bibliography, subject index, and select Scripture index ensures that the usefulness of the book as a study resource is not diminished. Greidanus’ style of communication is non-technical making it accessible to most readers. He also makes extensive use of footnotes so



that the main text is not cluttered but more advanced information is still readily available.

Greidanus covers all the usual introductory matters with clarity and with particularly helpful insight on apocalyptic literature. Concerning how to preach the book of Daniel, he suggests a series of six sermons on the six narratives and then five sermons on the four visions, since the last vision (chapters 10-12) is especially long. Greidanus argues that a narrative-sermon form is the most effective for both the narrative and apocalyptic sections since both have a narrative structure. Finally, he advises preachers to use an oral style readily understood by those who hear rather than read their sermons.

The main chapters of the book are each focused on the discussion of a literary unit (preaching text) which corresponds with a chapter of Daniel except in the case of the last vision. Greidanus' procedure begins with clarifying where the literary units break and how they relate to one another. He then offers clear description and insight on the literary features of each passage.

From chapter 7 onwards, Greidanus introduces a section on the interpretation of specific images that is vital to the whole book. He offers clear and convincing interpretations that will help preachers avoid both confusion and incorrect focus in their sermons. Following this, under the heading "Theocentric Interpretation", Greidanus' most helpful insight is recognizing the importance of divine passives which indicate God's implicit role.

Greidanus then carefully formulates the textual theme and goal so as to be textually specific and not so general that other chapters could be preached with the same theme. The next vital step in Greidanus' procedure is that he works through his seven ways to preach Christ (Redemptive-historical progression; Promise-fulfillment; Typology; Analogy; Longitudinal themes; New Testament references; Contrast) as developed in *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament* (1999). Considering that this step is the essential distinctive of this book, these sections did not produce the kind of fresh insight that I had expected. Nevertheless, his warnings against "obvious" but misguided ways to preach Christ are wise. Finally, Greidanus reformulates the textual theme and goal as "sermon theme" and "goal applicable to the Church today". This is certainly a very helpful check point for the busy preacher.

Greidanus' "Sermon Expositions" at the end of each chapter are worth reading, not just to see how he preaches the passages but also in order not to miss the extra insights not included in the preceding discussions. However, to my mind, too much of the exposition of the narrative passages (Dan. 1-6) is taken up with paraphrasing and too little with convincing the audience of the interpretation and message of the passage. On the other hand, Greidanus' expositions of the apocalyptic visions of Daniel tend to be too long, complicated and difficult to follow. Nevertheless, his sermon on Daniel 10:1-12:4 is excellent.

Regarding application, the sermon expositions for the narrative sections tend to remain too general and repeat the same idea that the suffering people of God should be comforted by the knowledge that God is still sovereign and

will be victorious. Thus, although Greidanus works hard to produce textually specific sermon themes, he does not always achieve this in actual practice. Another point of criticism of Greidanus' application is that it is always applied to believers and never to non-Christians. This is surprising considering that the aim is to preach Christ from Daniel.

One danger of a book like this is that the busy pastor will use it as a direct shortcut to the sermon resulting in shallow preaching. Another danger is that it becomes difficult for the reader to think outside of the tracks already laid by Greidanus. And yet, the clear benefit of the sermons on Daniel 1 and 9 by Ryan Faber, included as Appendices 3 and 4, is that they demonstrate that a pastor can be guided by Greidanus and yet produce sermons with his own style, insights, and emphases.

Overall, I think Greidanus has achieved his purpose. The fact that he consistently follows a planned procedure for each preaching text means that the whole book is well organized and easy to read. Greidanus' systematic approach and use of clear headings also makes it possible for the reader to "jump in" wherever necessary and find information quickly without having to use every aspect of the procedure. Thus, I would certainly recommend *Preaching Christ from Daniel* as a valuable aid for preachers, teachers, and students of every level of experience.

*Reviewed by Dr. Greg Phillips, a Zimbabwean who is lecturer in Bible and Theology at Dumisani Theological Institute, King William's Town, Eastern Cape, South Africa.*



***The Message of Malachi.* Peter Adam. *The Bible Speaks Today.* Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 2013, 124 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8308-2437-3**

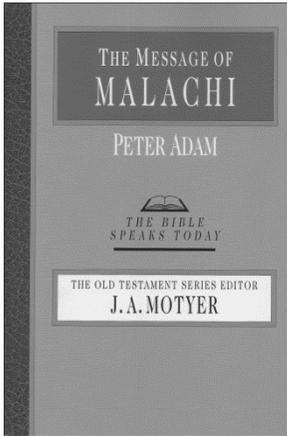
Peter Adam is Vicar Emeritus of St Jude's Carleton, Canon of St Paul's Cathedral, and currently serves as principal of Ridley College in Melbourne Australia. Adam presents this short volume as the latest contribution in the IVP series *The Bible Speaks Today*.

For those unfamiliar with the series, it attempts, as the title suggests, to let the books of the Bible speak to a modern audience: to expound the biblical text with accuracy, to relate it to contemporary life, and to be readable (p. 9). It seeks to apply the central themes of each book in a contemporary way. Certainly Adam succeeds in that purpose.

Adam gives the reader from the very first sentence the reasons as to why this short book occupies such a pivotal position at the end of the Old Testament. He says, ". . . it looks back to the Old Testament and assumes, summarizes and applies its message. But it also looks forward to the New Testa-

ment, with its promises of the coming reign of God” (p. 13).

Since Adam sees this as the central focus of the Book of Malachi, he makes liberal use of both Old Testament quotations and themes (especially those from the Books of Moses) and the New Testament, insuring that Malachi is seen for what it is: a bridge between the age past and the one to come.



Adam sees it set in a corporate context. “This means”, he says, “that if we read or preach Malachi and apply it to us as individuals only, we will miss important elements of the message.” He continues, “Our first question should be what is God saying to us?” (p. 18) – not to the individual.

One of the chief challenges of the book, and one that the contemporary church is faced with, is the fact that, “. . . God’s people appear to be reluctantly serving God, in a half-hearted kind of way. They are neither energetic to serve him wholeheartedly, nor to engage in blatant disobedience. It is hardly satisfactory for them; it is hardly satisfactory for God” (p. 14).

Adam does a brilliant job of articulating the fact that the gospel of grace is the same in all ages. What is to be the motivation for repentance and change in the people of God? It lies in the fact that God deeply loves His people and has shown it in astounding ways. “‘I have loved you,’ says the Lord. But you say, ‘How have you loved us? ‘Is not Esau Jacob’s brother?’ declares the Lord. ‘Yet I have loved Jacob but Esau I have hated’” (1:2-3).

In his introductory remarks, he states that God’s love for Jacob and hatred for Esau dominates the rest of the book and makes their sins in the light of this love particularly heinous. Looking forward to the cross, when we are able to see that love supremely manifested, it gives us even less reason for unbelief.

It is clear Adam is writing with a very high view of Scripture. The first chapter is dedicated to establishing the fact that what they and we are dealing with is nothing short of the Word of God and we must respond accordingly. “It is the word of the Lord. To fail to respond to the word of the prophet is to fail to respond to God” (p. 26).

Adam integrates the commentary with a heavy dose of biblical theology due to the fact that Malachi draws heavily upon the thematic elements of the covenant as he very consciously looks to the age of the gospel for the ultimate resolutions to these problems.

Adam highlights the language of temple, sacrifice and family as the key areas where the people were sinning against God. And because the theme of the priesthood of God’s people is a component in the New Testament teaching, he draws out many practical applications for us, which will be very helpful for the preacher. Their contemptuous response to God through blemished sacrifices spoke of the fact that they esteemed lightly the redemption that

God provided. Ultimately, this is a despising of the cross itself to which these pointed. “If God’s people despised the temple and sacrifices they would unlikely welcome the coming Messiah” (p. 64).

This fall from grace with God then issues in a lack of faithfulness with one another. Thus, as went the worship and love toward God, so went their faithfulness to one another. What a glorious response Paul gives to this in Ephesians, which similarly begins with the eternal love of God (1:4), a right understanding of the satisfaction of Christ (2:14) and the resulting healing that it brings to families and other relationship (4-6).

What is God’s response to this post-exilic malaise? In a word: Christ. “John the Baptist prepared the way for the Lord Jesus Christ, who did come to his temple, and who was the mediator of a new covenant. And Jesus not only visited his temple, he also came to replace it and its sacrifices” (p. 99).

Over all, this short commentary is surprisingly rich with many helps in not only how to approach the book of Malachi but as a gateway into many of the key issues the post-exilic prophets engaged with and how those issues come to resolution in Christ. Warmly recommended!

*Reviewed by Kent I. Compton, the minister of the Western Charge of the Free Church of Scotland, Prince Edward Island and a trustee of Haddington House.*

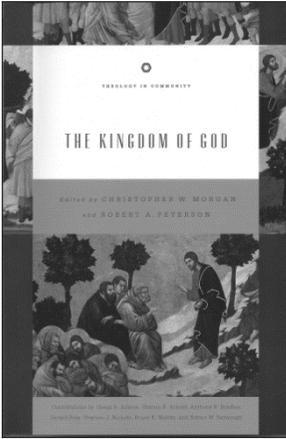


***The Kingdom of God.* Eds., Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson. Theology in Community. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012, 272 pp., paper. ISBN 978-1-4335-0918-6**

Morgan and Peterson edit this volume as part of the Theology in Community series, whose stated intent is to “...write for the good of the church to strengthen its leaders”. A volume on the Kingdom of God could not be more important in view of their goal, as the term has been a thrall in the service of numerous ideological masters and remains for many believers an empty theological box. To remedy this situation, the editors have assembled not only an impressive team of scholars to the task but have organised the material in such a manner that the reader is led through a progressive unfolding of the term’s historical use, especially as found in the biblical record. The logical outline and conversational writing style of the volume make it an enjoyable and informative read.

Morgan and Peterson introduce the volume with a brief overview of how the term “Kingdom of God” (KOG) has been (and is being!) variously construed and limited within Christian thought. Rather than opting for any one view, the editors suggest that careful diachronic study of the term will be helpful in arriving at a more accurate rendering of the term’s full meaning. In

chapter 1, Stephen J. Nichols provides the reader with a brief yet insightful survey of the church's understanding of the KOG from the earliest centuries, with an emphasis upon the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>-century developments. He encour-



ages the reader to note the similarities as well as the remarkable differences and begin the critical task of evaluating each era's wisdom and myopathy. His conclusion is sound: a critical assessment is what our age needs as well.

The editors then turn to the biblical text, dedicating the remaining chapters, 2-9, to the writings and major themes in both testaments. Bruce Waltke opens the analysis of the Old Testament by demonstrating how there exists an emerging kingdom, initiated by God and expressing His will, which advances in conflict with the world's kingdom. The chosen servants of God are not only called but enter into covenant with Him, thus join-

ing in the unfolding of His kingdom and its conflicts. Waltke points out how the expressions of the kingdom and its covenants may change, but they remain centered on the Person and plan of I Am, culminating in the New Covenant.

Robert W. Yarbrough follows Waltke's pattern and illustrates in no uncertain terms that the kingdom is a central theme, not only in the ministry of Christ but throughout the New Testament text. Although limited as a survey, his work lends nuance to the term.

Having established the centrality and general nature of the KOG in both testaments, the succeeding chapters treat important themes which touch up the nature of the KOG: the role of the supernatural and demonic, the shape of the church, the hope of the eschaton, and finally, the face of the kingdom today. The book ends, then, on a very praxis-oriented note, in keeping with the editors' intended purposes. Their ambitious project has, in my mind, met with success.

*Reviewed by Dr. James P. Hering, Donalds, South Carolina, an adjunct in New Testament Greek and Literature and a preacher in a rural charge in South Carolina.*



***Human Responsibility Under God: The Dominion Mandate.***  
**Kenneth D. MacLeod. NP: Create Space, 2013, 224 pp., paper.**  
**ISBN 978-1-4701-9228-0<sup>1</sup>**

One of the big questions facing interpreters of the Bible is to identify the common thread that runs through Scripture. What is the big story that binds all the little stories together? What is it that is common to Genesis and Revelation as well as the sixty-four books in between?

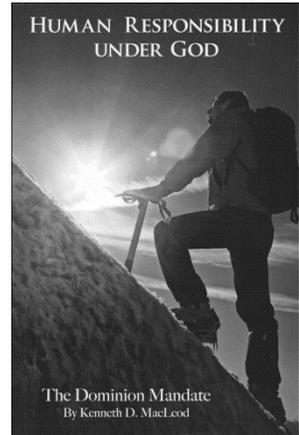
Several answers have been given to this question, and in this, his first book, Kenneth MacLeod, the Free Church of Scotland minister of Livonia, Detroit, supplies one answer. The Dominion Mandate, given to Adam in the Garden of Eden, is a programmatic for the whole course of revelation and marks the beginning of a trajectory that will run through the Bible and forward into history.

“The Dominion Mandate” arises out of the words spoken by God to Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” This represented the “blessing” with which God blessed our first parents in Genesis 1:28; they had responsibility under God for using the creation well. As a result, they could have what the author describes as “the abundant life which God has at his disposal and is so willing to distribute to his people” (p. 10).

Man’s responsibility was to have dominion over creation but not so as to give himself the glory. “God as the genius behind this tapestry was to get all the glory through mankind’s rule over the earth” (p. 15). This was not simply a suggestion on God’s part; it was the blueprint for spiritual blessing and fullness of life.

The fact that Adam disobeyed God meant that he lost much, but sin did not destroy the mandate and the responsibility God had placed upon him. Indeed, the covenant of grace is seen at its most indulgent when considered against the backdrop of man’s moral failure: God, in grace, fulfills the conditions necessary to enable man to live the life that God intended for him.

The rest of this book is a study of Scriptural examples of men and women of God who, by grace, fulfilled their responsibility, or, by sin, did not. In effect it is a study in biblical theology, tracing God’s intention and purpose



<sup>1</sup> This review was first published in *The Record: The Monthly Magazine of the Free Church of Scotland* (June 2013): 21, and is only slightly edited. Reprint by permission.

throughout the Bible and showing how everything that happened outside of the Garden of Eden was conditioned by what had taken place within it.

Some may quibble with Kenneth's approach to the mandate. After all, it has been taken in some theologies as the basis of a wealth and prosperity gospel, as if grace promised that God was making the physical wealth of the universe available to His people. In fact, that was never the intention of the first commission God gave to those whom he created; the promise was one of spiritual blessing and advancement in the theatre of a created world and on the stage of a garden.

The coming of Jesus Christ, considered in this light, was to be the only hope for fallen man: "it is in the person of Christ . . . that the believer has any hope of truly having dominion both in the spiritual and in the natural" (p. 113). What that means is carefully considered throughout the book.

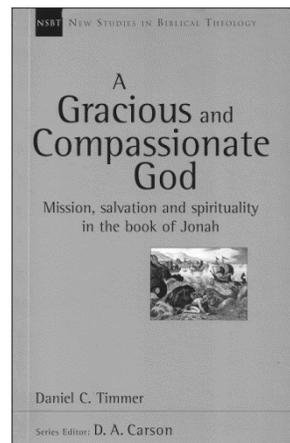
The author promises that this is the first of three books around this theme, and we congratulate him on the publication of the first as we await with interest the development of the theme in subsequent books. At the very least, we hope that this study will enable people to see the foundational characteristic of all that appears in the early chapters of Genesis for the rest of the revelation of Scripture; and we hope it will help us to see that, under God, and in Christ, it is possible for us to have life in all its fullness.

*Reviewed by Iain D. Campbell, the minister at Point Free Church of Scotland, Isle of Lewis, Scotland.*

***A Gracious and Compassionate God: Mission, salvation and spirituality in the book of Jonah.* D. C. Timmer. New Studies in Biblical Theology, Vol. 26, ed. D. A. Carson. Downers Grove, IL: IVP/Apollos, 2011, 200 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8308-2627-8**

Daniel Timmer has provided us with a scholarly study of the book of Jonah, a study which includes the historical background of Jonah, a survey of the biblical text, and a focus on its canonical context. Timmer begins with the issue of the nations and mission in Jonah and then goes on to discuss conversion and spirituality in Jonah and in biblical theology. Once he has expounded on these themes, he demonstrates how they exist within the book of Jonah. Timmer concludes with a challenge to the reader to consider his or her own contemporary situation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Throughout Timmer's presentation, he maintains a somewhat circumspect approach regularly acknowledging what others have penned and also supplying his own criti-



cism thereof. For example, on the question of mission in Jonah, Timmer shows that an element of God's mission is to bless the nations and declares that "Jonah's efforts do indeed merit the term 'mission'" (p. 100). Elsewhere he states: "God's involvement in the Ninevites' deliverance (not to mention that of the sailors), and the partial revelation of his character and will to them through Jonah, corroborate my earlier conclusion that there is indeed mission in Jonah" (p. 41).

Furthermore, Timmer reflects on the role that God's chosen people play among the nations. Israel's centripetal role and her centrifugal role are highlighted here, and Timmer provides clear evidence of these, particularly as Jonah delivers God's message to Gentiles in Assyria. This is what God's people are commanded to do, whether the nations witness God's people living holy lives or whether God's people witness to the nations. Timmer's work ties in well with Beale's *The Temple and the Church's Mission* (no. 17 in this series).

The length to which Timmer goes regarding the historical background of the events in Jonah is commendable. For instance, the detail concerning Assyria's detestable exploits, the expectations of kings at that time (Jonah chapter 3), and the way Timmer highlights Assyria's sinful ways prior to Jonah's visit and her subsequent return to such wickedness provide the reader with a better understanding of the events recorded in Jonah. From such detail, one can almost understand why Jonah would be reluctant to take God's message to Nineveh.

Timmer regularly reviews the book from a holistic angle thus helping the reader to keep the bigger picture in mind. For example, he focuses on the responses of the various characters (sailors, Ninevites, Jonah himself); he reflects on the canonical context of the book; and he looks at the relationship between Israel and the nations. This wider angle helps the reader to appreciate the full thrust of the message in Jonah.

Timmer also presents his findings from a biblical-theological approach, and his support from numerous texts within the Old and New Testament alike highlights this fact. He states that "the account of Nineveh's repentance and God's merciful response to it is a wonderful encouragement to throw oneself on God's mercy, which is offered in full accord with his justice on the basis of Christ's cross-work" (pp. 114-115). Further than that, Timmer notes that "the book of Jonah . . . was written to facilitate spiritual change in its readers, and our study of the book is not complete until we have wrestled with it on those terms" (p. 19).

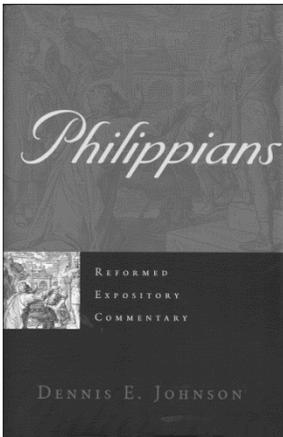
Besides his careful presentation of the detail, Timmer writes in such a manner where one can quite easily follow his intended train of thought in each chapter. Almost similar to Jonah's being swept away by the sea, one can be swept away by Timmer's effective writing and presentation. Also, where some writers have failed on focusing too much attention on Christology, Timmer strikes a clear Trinitarian balance and maintains God as the central

character. This book would be most useful to missiologists and to advanced theological students. A useful study indeed.

*Reviewed by Wayne Grätz, marketing and recruitment manager and junior lecturer at Dumisani Theological Institute, King William's Town, Eastern Cape, South Africa.*



**Philippians. Dennis E. Johnson. Reformed Expository Commentary, eds. Richard D. Phillips and Philip Graham Ryken. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2013, 341 pp. ISBN 978-1-59638-200-8**



This volume on Philippians is the sixteenth offering from the editors of the Reformed Expository Commentary series. Dennis Johnson provides a collection of fine expositions which he first preached then “converted ... into a print form more conducive to reading” (p. ix). The intended recipients of this commentary, according to series editors Richard D. Phillips and Philip Graham Ryken, are pastors, lay teachers, and more generally, all Christians. The purposes intended for each audience were fulfilled masterfully and thus will provide a fitting outline for this review.

The first intended audience of this commentary is pastors (p. xiii), but it should be immediately noted that this is not an exegetical commentary and thus should not be considered as a resource for technical information in sermon preparation. Instead, Johnson’s work will benefit pastors by serving as an excellent model of how to preach expositionally. Two examples of elements of Johnson’s exposition that preachers can learn from are his ability to transition between explanation, illustration, and application of the text and his commitment to constantly provide context for the text he is addressing at every level (i.e. the letter to Philippi, Paul’s other letters, the New Testament, and the whole Bible). Pastors would be wise to learn from this experienced pastor-scholar and in so doing will be encouraged in their own ministry of the Word of God.

The second intended audience is lay teachers, and the specific purpose is that this commentary might serve as a resource to assist Sunday school teachers and Bible study leaders in “understanding and presenting the text of the Bible” (p. xiii). While the commentary is not divided in such a way as to make it especially easy to find comments or insights on a specific verse, if lay teachers were to read any given chapter on a selected text from Philippians, they would find a wealth of helpful information to assist them in their task. Johnson includes just enough information on the original language, both

in the text as well as in footnotes for the individual who is willing to dig a little deeper. Johnson also makes wise and helpful choices concerning debated pericopes, just touching down on the concern when necessary and other times including a full discussion of the different views. Lay teachers who plan to teach on Paul's letter to the Philippians would benefit from adding this commentary to their resource library.

The final audience is all Christians (p. xiii), and it is the contention of this Christian, who has been a lay teacher in the past and is a pastor in the present, that this commentary would serve as an excellent companion to the biblical text for those working through Philippians in their daily devotions. The first reason for this assessment is Johnson's efforts to help the reader understand the biblical text. Second, Johnson provides incredibly edifying applications both for the individual as well as for the church as a whole. Christians reading this commentary devotionally would be hard-pressed to get through it and not have a better understanding of the God they serve and a renewed resolve to worship Him in spirit and in truth, both throughout the week and when gathered with the church.

*Reviewed by Sean Crowe, originally from Vancouver, British Columbia, presently serving as senior pastor of Gospel Light Baptist Church, Halifax, Nova Scotia.*

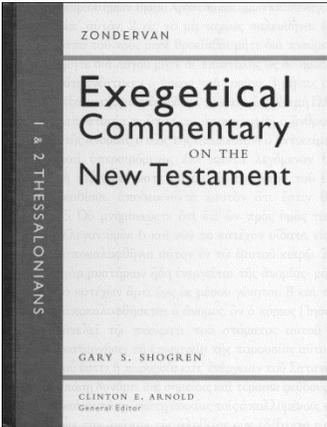


**1 & 2 Thessalonians. Gary S. Shogren. Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, gen. ed. Clinton E. Arnold. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012, 375 pp., hc. ISBN 978-0-310-24396-0**

This volume forms part of a series which has already established itself with several excellent volumes and a very helpful format. The author, Dr. Gary S. Shogren, gained his Ph.D. at the University of Aberdeen and has taught at ESEPA Bible College and Seminary in San José, Costa Rica, since 1998.

There are several features which help to make this series particularly valuable to theological students and pastors. The introductory material takes up just over twenty pages and addresses the main issues effectively but not exhaustively (and so not exhaustingly either!). An outline of each letter is provided (one page each), highlighting the main sections of the letters. More detailed sub-divisions are identified in the main commentary. The seven-page select bibliography includes mainly works in English (although a few works in German and French are also included) and is reasonably up to date. Several works from the Early Church and the Reformation are also included.

The main commentary works through the text chapter by chapter. Each chapter begins with discussion of the literary context, followed by a little “snapshot” of the outline of the letter in question, with the particular passage being considered highlighted in bold type. This helps to keep in mind how any given passage fits into the whole. Then the “main idea” is identified in a short summary of the chapter. The translation is laid out following a simple “diagramming” or “phrasing” method (similar to that used by Bill Mounce, who is one of the members of the editorial board) which shows the relationships between clauses and phrases by their location on the page with respect to each other and also a brief description of the function on the left hand side of the page. This is an exceptionally helpful approach which, hopefully, will encourage readers to adopt a similar method for themselves. It will certainly be very beneficial to me as a teacher to be able to show worked examples of such simplified diagramming from this commentary series. Then follows a section on the structure of the passage and a more detailed outline of the passage in question. Following these introductory comments on the passage, the verses are explained one by one, based on the Greek text. There are occasional “in depth” boxes which give more extended attention to



important questions.

Finally, there is a section on “theology in application” which includes more biblical-theological reflection on the issues raised in the passage and also application for the church today. The format of this series is one of the most helpful I have used, being both clear and comprehensive.

Coming to the specific content of this particular commentary, Shogren leads the reader through the commentary with clear and well-structured prose. He devotes a significant proportion of his introduction (around one third) to the eschatology of the Christian community of Thessalonica and of the letters Paul wrote to them. There is a good discussion of the links between the Gospel of Matthew and 1 & 2 Thessalonians.

Shogren’s comments on the biblical text are clear and concise. The Greek text of each verse is cited in full (which is very helpful to students and pastors who wish to keep up their Greek skills) but always with English translation. Likewise, the Greek text of important words and phrases is usually provided at the appropriate place in the comments. Transliteration is not used for Greek but when Hebrew text is cited only transliteration is used. Shogren makes frequent reference to the grammatical features of the text without getting bogged down in technicalities. He makes frequent reference to non-canonical literature as context for the language and ideas of the biblical text and often provides a short citation to illustrate his point, which is much more

helpful than a string of bare references which the reader may not be able to check easily.

Shogren is disciplined in his use of footnotes, which are generally relatively brief and do not attempt to be encyclopaedic. He draws mainly on standard commentaries and reference works but also on recent monographs and on writings of significant authors from the history of the church. On the other hand, where an exegetical issue is contested, he provides a significant discussion of the option, including a fairly detailed survey of important literature. A few examples are: whether the Thessalonians were actively engaged in evangelism (he believes that they were, pp. 70-71); the meaning of *skeuos* (“vessel”) in 1 Thess. 4:4 (he favours the view that this refers to the human body of both males and females, pp. 161-164); the significance of the believers welcoming the Lord in the air in 1 Thess. 4:17 (he understands this to be analogous to the welcoming of a dignitary by the people of a city who then accompany him back into his domain – cf. Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem in Matthew 21 – except that the direction of meeting is vertical rather than horizontal, pp. 188-90).

Shogren’s application sections are thoughtful and tend to emphasise biblical theology. Sections headed “message of this passage for the church today” are often written quite personally and with less academic language. For example, in discussing the relationship between prayer and election, Shogren writes, “Now and again I have been struck with a sudden realization that God wanted me to pray for or share my faith with a specific individual. But I can hardly exegete my experience to mean that I should pray for a person only if and when the Holy Spirit tips me off that they are fair game for evangelism” (p. 312). Even in the main comment section, while most of the comment is strictly exegetical, Shogren does not shy away from commenting on issues of importance for the modern reader, such as his comments on the need for committed and persevering prayer (p. 58).

In summary, this is a very helpful commentary for readers who have some foundations in Greek (although it could still be used with profit by those who don’t). This volume will enable readers to grasp the historical, literary, and theological issues raised by the text and to come to informed decisions. It also provides helpful guidance for biblical-theological reflection and for contemporary application. These qualities are more important than that a reviewer should agree with every exegetical decision or application, but, in general, I found myself agreeing with Shogren’s views and regard him as a reliable guide. Broadly, one might compare the level and tone of this commentary with Gordon Fee’s excellent contribution to the NICNT series. I commend this commentary enthusiastically.

*Reviewed by Dr. Alistair I. Wilson, principal of Dumisani Theological Institute, King William’s Town, and extraordinary professor of NT at North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa.*



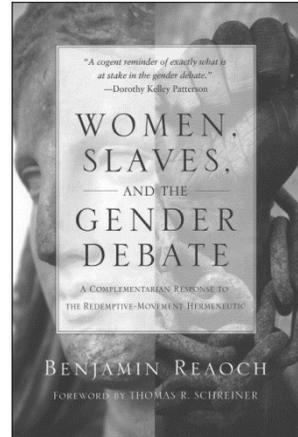
***Women, Slaves, and the Gender Debate: A Complementarian Response to the Redemptive-Movement Hermeneutic.* Benjamin Reaoch. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2012, 193 pp., paper. ISBN 978-1-59638-401-9**

Benjamin Reaoch's *Women, Slaves and the Gender Debate* is a response to William Webb's redemptive-movement hermeneutic, sometimes called a trajectory hermeneutic, as outlined in his book *Slaves, Women, and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*, published in 2001. A trajectory hermeneutic has been employed by a number of evangelical scholars to argue that the Scriptures teach an egalitarian understanding of the role of women in the home and the church. Reaoch has chosen to interact with Webb because his redemptive-movement hermeneutic provides the most detailed and thorough argumentation of this kind of approach to understanding and applying the Scriptures.

In his interaction with Webb's book, Reaoch limits himself to examining the exegetical and hermeneutical issues related to slavery and the role of women. His aim is to demonstrate the failure of the redemptive-movement hermeneutic to satisfactorily address the slavery issue; to expose the failure of the redemptive-movement hermeneutic to provide biblical support for an egalitarian understanding of the role of woman; to affirm the Bible teaches a complementarian relationship between men and women in church and home. He does not address Webb's discussion of homosexuality as Webb argues his hermeneutic supports the traditional understanding of homosexual behaviour as sinful – a conclusion with which Reaoch agrees.

In chapter 1, Reaoch begins with a brief history of the application of the trajectory hermeneutic to the close parallel between slavery and the role of women by such egalitarian advocates as, Krister Stendahl, R. T. France, Richard Longenecker, David Thompson, William Webb, and Kevin Giles along with the complementarian response by Wayne Grudem, Thomas Schreiner, and Robert Yarborough. He then examines the pro-slavery and anti-slavery arguments of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century slavery debate in the United States in relation to the question, "Can the redemptive-movement hermeneutic be traced back to the abolitionist arguments of the nineteenth century?" (p. 13)

The way Webb draws the analogy between slaves and women is foundational to his hermeneutic and provides considerable persuasive force to his argument. Webb argues that although the Bible in commanding slaves to submit to their masters condones the institution of slavery, there are indica-



tions in the Scriptures that point beyond the Bible to an ultimate ethic that condemns slavery and calls for its abolition. Similarly, although there are New Testament passages that understood in their historical and cultural context place limitations on the role of women, there are indications in the Bible that point to an ultimate ethic beyond the Bible that demands their complete liberation and equality.

Reaoch begins his response with an examination of all the relevant New Testament passages related to slavery followed by suggestions for why the New Testament does not condemn the institution of slavery. Mobilizing the usual evangelical arguments, he concludes the Bible never condones or legitimates slavery as a divine institution. The New Testament writers work with the reality of slavery in the context of which the church exists, and instruct slaves and masters how they should behave in their respective roles for the honour of Christ and the advance of the gospel. The Bible's approach to slavery is similar to that of the Old Testament's approach to divorce and polygamy, namely, accommodated and regulated but never approved. At the risk of revealing my membership in the flat earth society, it is not clear to me the Bible does not legitimize the master-slave relationship under some conditions. However, if it is true the Bible simply regulates slavery, a more detailed and thorough argument is required than the one Reaoch presents if those who feel the weight of Webb's position are to be convinced.

Reaoch then moves to an examination of seven New Testament texts that relate to the role of women: 1 Tim. 2:9-15, 1 Cor. 11:2-16, 1 Cor. 14:33-35, Eph. 5:22-33, Col. 3:18, 1 Pet. 3:1, Titus 2:5. His exegesis of these texts focuses on the way they are employed in the redemptive-movement hermeneutic. He then compares the slavery passages with the women's passages followed by two chapters examining the eight of Webb's eighteen hermeneutical criteria relevant to the slavery and women's issues for determining whether a text is cultural or transcultural.

Reaoch argues there are fundamental differences between the slavery and women's passages that undermine the analogy between slaves and women foundational to Webb's redemptive-movement hermeneutic. The instructions to women are grounded in creation whereas those to slaves are not, which prevents a move beyond the Bible to an egalitarian understanding of the relationship between men and women. Also, the Christological and theological analogies of Eph. 5:22-33 and 1 Cor. 11:3 cannot be trivialized by relating them to Webb's theological analogies concerning slavery, monarchy, primogeniture, and right-handedness. Rather, the Ephesian and Corinthian passages are saying something profound about God's design for those created in His image that sets the pattern for male-female roles, namely, a complementarian relationship in home and church.

Reaoch draws together much helpful material in his exegesis of the women's texts, including his comments on the knotty problem involved in Paul's statement "it was the woman who was deceived" (1 Tim. 2:14b NIV). Also,

the material he mobilizes in support of understanding “the Law” in 1 Cor. 14:33 as a reference to the creation narratives is persuasive. His argument in 1 Cor. 11:2-16, however, would have been strengthened by demonstrating that head coverings are cultural rather than simply assuming they are cultural.

In the two chapters where he examines Webb’s hermeneutical criteria, Reaoch gives a detailed and insightful critique, exposing the subtleties and weaknesses of Webb’s arguments and demonstrating their superficial appeal does not stand up to careful and rigorous analysis. Concerning Webb’s pivotal criteria “preliminary movement” and “seed ideas,” Reaoch concludes that with respect to slavery, “we can detect in the ethic of the New Testament a movement beyond the institution of slavery. On the other hand, though, we must not move beyond biblical gender roles, for the New Testament pre-scribes them” (p. 157).

For those concerned with the gender debate as well as where William Webb’s increasingly popular redemptive-movement hermeneutic will lead the church, Reaoch’s book is a detailed and helpful resource.

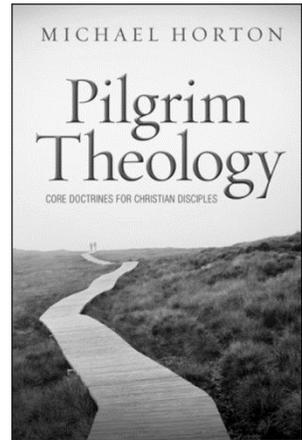
*Reviewed by Howard M. McPhee, the former pastor of the Springdale Christian Reformed Church, Bradford, Ontario, where he served for seventeen years.*



## Systematic Theology

***Pilgrim Theology: Core Doctrines for Christian Disciples.* Michael Horton. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013, 512 pp., hc. ISBN 978-0-310-33064-6**

Michael Horton is one of the pre-eminent Reformed theologians of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In 2011 Zondervan published his one-volume 1052-page book of systematic theology, *The Christian Faith*, a work clearly aimed at students in seminary or post-graduate studies.<sup>1</sup> His book, *Pilgrim Theology*, (released early in 2013) is a condensed and revised work of theology, written, as Horton states in his introductory chapter, “for an entirely new and wider audience” (p. 14). Its target audience appears to be laypeople desiring to deepen their theological knowledge and students studying theology at an undergraduate level.



Unfortunately, the attitude toward theology in much of contemporary Christianity in North America is either indifference or antagonism. With this in mind Horton’s concern, expressed in his introductory chapter, is that all Christians realize that they have a working theology that shapes how they think and live in the world. He also recognizes that theology has a reputation for being irrelevant for daily living, because it is often presented in dry and abstract ways. So, to make theology relevant, Horton unfolds theology in this work according to four coordinates: the redemptive *Drama* unfolded in Scripture; the *Doctrine* about God, the world, humanity, sin and salvation which God reveals in this drama; the *Doxology* that results from our embrace of biblical Drama and Doctrine; and the life of Christian *Discipleship* which flows from the first three.

In the introduction Horton also highlights what theologians have emphasized as the proper way to do theology, namely, that it cannot be done in a so-called neutral or detached manner. It requires a commitment to the gospel, since it is “a matter of life and death” (p. 13). In addition, theology must be a social activity, whereby one participates in the ongoing conversation within the community of faith, “together with the whole church in all times and places” (p. 14). The gospel – the good news of Jesus Christ – is central for

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<sup>1</sup> See review in *Haddington House Journal* 14 (2012): 78-81.

theology, both for the task of unfolding the content of theology, and for the perspective of theologians engaged in this task. Of course, these two foundational points also bear upon the four coordinates, especially Doxology and Discipleship.

Horton proceeds to unfold the specific doctrines by following the traditional order in some Reformed dogmatic works: Scripture, God, Creation, Providence, Man, the Fall, the person and work of Christ, the Spirit, the various parts of the order of salvation, the Sacraments, the Church, and Eschatology. His exposition of these doctrines is filled with references to Scripture, thereby arguing that the Reformed understanding of the Christian faith is most faithful to the biblical teaching. He draws heavily on traditional Reformed authorities, such as Calvin, Herman Bavinck, Louis Berkhof, and some contemporary Reformed theologians. But he also draws on the insights of other important theologians in the history of the church, such as Irenaeus, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, and Martin Luther. His interaction is not confined to Protestant theologians and those pre-Reformation theologians whom Protestants embrace; he also interacts with the perspectives of those in other traditions, especially Roman Catholic, Eastern, Orthodox, and Anabaptist/Evangelical. While he presents their views fairly, he argues that they fail to deal adequately with the biblical teaching. His discussion of the ideas of philosophers and contemporary theologians remains limited, presumably so as not to overwhelm lay readers and undergraduates with technical academic matters. Generally, he attempts to restrict his discussion to matters of significance for the theological matters at hand.

We can note two distinctive features of Horton's unfolding of Reformed theology. First, he does not follow the order of post-Reformation theologians in his discussion of the doctrine of election. Typically, predestination and election are unfolded as aspects of the decrees of God, which are presented immediately after the doctrine of God. Horton introduces election as the foundational doctrine for the *ordo salutis*, thereby tying it closely to the work of the Spirit in applying the redemption of Christ to believers. Election is accomplished in people through the work of the Spirit in their effectual (or inward) calling to union with Christ.

The second distinctive feature of Horton's theology is that he presents union with Christ as the primary result of effectual calling. In other words, Horton considers our union with Christ to be the foundational feature of the redemptive work of the Spirit within us, and so the basis of the work of salvation. This distinguishes his theology from those Reformed theologians who argue that justification by faith alone is the basis of the other aspects of salvation. Although there is some debate about this, it is clearly more consistent with the theology of Calvin and his successors to give the primacy of place to union with Christ.<sup>2</sup> It is through our union with Christ that we receive all the benefits of salvation that Christ has accomplished for His people. Horton

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<sup>2</sup> Richard Muller, *Calvin and the Reformed Tradition*, pp. 238-40.

does not consider union with Christ, either as the result of justification, or of completing all the steps of the *ordo salutis*. Rather, union is the basis for the sequence of salvation as outlined in the *ordo*. While there is some degree of fluidity in the formulation of salvation and in the use of terminology by early Reformed theologians, they are in essential agreement with Calvin about the priority of grace and the foundational nature of union with Christ. Horton is faithful to this tradition in his theology.

Let me note two areas of weakness in Horton's theology. First, Horton's identification with the "two Kingdoms" perspective, characteristic of many of the faculty of Westminster Seminary West, seems to result in his allergy to the use of any of the insights of theologians, biblical scholars, and philosophers from within the Kuyperian tradition of Reformed thought. Other than a passing reference to Abraham Kuyper in a footnote, one finds no references to Kuyperian theologians, philosophers, or biblical scholars. One also fails to find Kuyperian terms such as "worldview", "cultural mandate", or "transformation of culture" anywhere in Horton's work. While this is an unfortunate omission, it does not substantially detract from the significance of this work.

The second omission in the book is more serious. This is Horton's failure to interact with the plethora of missional writings produced by theologians and biblical scholars, either within Western Christianity or from around the world. Some biblical scholars, such as Christopher Wright and Craig Bartholomew, argue that the Bible must be read as essentially a narrative of the mission of God to redeem the world. Numerous missiologists have argued that all doctrinal formulation is contextual, that is, it arises from within a specific cultural situation and speaks to issues within that context. Many suggest that the biblical missional imperative in our global context demands some revision of theology. Horton's book ignores all this. One finds no references to "contextualization" or "missional theology" either in the body of the book or in the Glossary of terms. The implication is that systematic theology should continue in the pattern it has always followed in Western culture.

Surely it cannot be "business as usual" for theology in the current setting of Global Christianity, and in our Western cultural setting of pluralism and multi-culturalism. Even as there is a "good deposit" of the faith (2 Tim. 1:14) that must be maintained, theology normed by Scripture should be shaped by its missional imperative and the current cultural and global context. At the very least, systematic theology should address the importance of these challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Horton fails even to recognize the importance of this task.

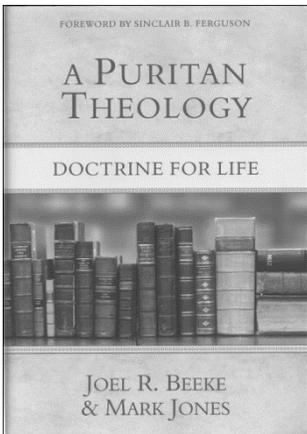
In conclusion, *Pilgrim Theology* is, in my view, the best one-volume work of systematic Reformed theology rooted in a Western cultural context for laypeople and for undergraduate education. Even with the deficiencies noted above, Horton does interact with matters raised by contemporary theologians, philosophers and Christian traditions. The book has helpful pedagogical

tools: at the end of each chapter, Horton indicates the “Key Terms”, “Key Distinctions”, and “Key Questions” in the chapter. There are also helpful aids in the end of the book: a summary of all the key distinctions made in the book, a Glossary of important terms, and a chart which applies the four coordinates (Drama, Doctrine, Doxology, and Discipleship) to all the key doctrines. In my view, the book should be supplemented with a work that missionally engages with the issues of modern multicultural Western society and with the global Christian church. A work of Reformed systematic theology that incorporates the latter is yet to be written.

*Reviewed by Dr. Guenther (“Gene”) H. Haas, Professor of Religion and Theology, Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario and a minister of the Presbyterian Church in America.*



***A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life.* Joel R. Beeke and Mark Jones. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2012, 1054 pp., hc. ISBN 978-1-60178-166-6**



This book is over 1,000 pages long. A standard review, giving a description and evaluation of its contents, would be a proportionately lengthy piece of writing. Given the space at hand, the intention here is to review the recommendations which take up the first two pages of the book. That should give the prospective purchaser a reasonably accurate idea of what the book is. An evaluation of the contents will be restricted to answering the question, “Did the authors write the book that they describe in their introduction?”

All of the book endorsers state that this book is the result of a tremendous effort on the part of its authors. That is beyond contradiction. They are agreed on its usefulness. Again, that cannot be denied. Whether or not this book is the book that the prospective purchaser would wish it to be, this book is worth having as it stands.

Nevertheless, what is it? Derek Thomas and Michael Horton call it a systematic theology. However, if an interested party were thinking that this book would be like, say, Charles Hodge’s *Systematic Theology*, only reflecting the Puritan consensus, or that the authors had done for the Puritans what Heppel and Bizer did for the Continental Reformed Scholastics, he might be disappointed. While it is, as Iain D. Campbell says, “a systemization of the *loci* and topics of Puritan theology”, it is not a systemization of all the *loci*; there

are bits, rather important bits, missing. Even if qualifiers like “the main *loci* of doctrine” (Derek Thomas) or “most major *loci*” (Willem J. Van Asselt) are introduced, Michael A. G. Haykin’s somewhat wistful “nearly as exhaustive as one might wish for” is the most accurate description.

The book is also described as “a comprehensive introduction” (Carl Trueman) and “an indispensable guidebook” (Michael A. G. Haykin) to Puritan thought. Its authors are said to have made “an enormous contribution to our understanding of Puritan theology” (Steven J. Lawson). All that is true; and it has been done by “setting forth in modern scholarly essays an examination of a full body of seventeenth century divinity” (Richard A. Muller). There are three essays on Prolegomena, nine on Theology Proper, seven on Anthropology and Covenant Theology, seven on Christology, twelve on Soteriology, nine on Ecclesiology, four on Eschatology, and eight on Theology in Practice. This book is a “collection of studies” (Campbell): not a whole body scan, but fifty-nine sections taken from throughout that body of divinity for the reader to view.

A collection of studies like this is usually the work of a number of writers under an editor. In this case, the essays have been written or co-authored by either Joel Beeke or Mark Jones. (Both acknowledge the help of others, pp. xiii-xiv.) Even though the essays are on different topics and the way in which the topics are handled is not always the same, there is a continuity of style and voice flowing through this volume which is missing in a collection of essays by a number of writers or even the collected essays covering the career of one writer. This means that this book is not only an enduring scholarly reference (Trueman, Horton, Joseph A. Pipa), but one which can be read through “*seriatim*” (Pipa). While “the richness of its historical detail and theological insight” (Van Asselt) make this book far more than a mere introduction or guidebook, the authors have made their research accessible. The reader will be grappling with the subject matter, not with what the authors are trying to say.

Drs. Beeke and Jones state that they have tried to be fairly comprehensive, but acknowledge that they have not covered all areas of Puritan theology. Agreed. That said, however, in the areas which they have covered, they have done the responsible historical theology that was their aim.

The authors also say in their introduction that some of the essays give the Puritan consensus on a topic, some compare and contrast the views of two, or more, Puritan writers on a topic, and some outline one particular Puritan’s opinion on a topic. In many ways, that becomes the case just by the nature of things. A discussion on the Attributes of God, for example, will be dominated by Stephen Charnock. On the subject of the Covenant of Redemption, the discussion goes north and David Dickson, Samuel Rutherford, and Patrick Gillespie are the speakers. Even so, Thomas Goodwin and John Owen do appear to be the authors’ representative Puritans – whether their views on a topic are statements of the consensus or a little eccentric.

Returning to the thought of Michael Haykin's wish list, this reviewer wishes that there had been an essay on the extent of the atonement, dealing especially with Puritan hypothetical universalism. He would like to have seen James Ussher given more prominence. Not that he agrees with Ussher's views on the extent of the atonement or on his formulation of primitive episcopacy; but an examination of the truth of Richard Baxter's claim that Ussher was the unnamed influence behind the silent majority of Westminster Divines would have contributed greatly to this book.

One last caveat: many of those contributing recommendations and the authors themselves speak of Puritan piety and state the desire, or the fact, that this book will stimulate the reader's personal devotion. Undoubtedly. However, this is no pre-digested Puritan devotional. That which warms the heart here will have to be felled, split, and corded in the mind first. The reader will have to put some effort into it – like a Puritan.

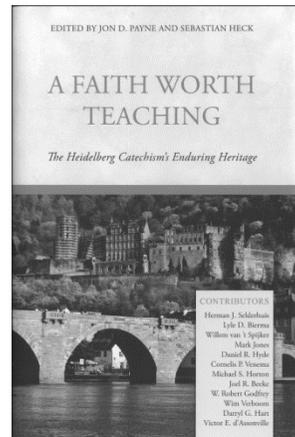
In conclusion, Drs. Beeke and Jones wrote the book that they said they wrote. Some of the advertising may leave itself open to the accusation of giving a false impression. Nevertheless, this book is the “amazing achievement” that Carl Trueman and others contributing recommendations say it is.

*Reviewed by D. Douglas Gebbie.*

***A Faith Worth Teaching: The Heidelberg Catechism's Enduring Heritage.* Eds., Jon D. Payne and Sebastian Heck. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2013, 272 pp., hc. ISBN 978-1-60178-218-2**

Here is a book commemorating the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2013 of the Heidelberg Catechism that is worthy of being kept for years in your library. It has an eye-appealing jacket cover and is a nicely bound hardback and properly lists the editors and all contributors on the front of the jacket. The work is neatly organized into four parts with a total of fourteen essays.

“Part 1: The History and Background of the Heidelberg Catechism” has two essays, one by Lyle D. Bierma and one by D. G. Hart. Bierma gives a concise three-part essay on the history and people “behind the Heidelberg Catechism”. It is very well done and reflects a scholar who knows the subject well and writes most warmly. I was disappointed with Hart's essay on “The Heidelberg Catechism in the United States”. It seemed repetitive to me and could have explored other aspects such as the best commentaries



produced in America on the Heidelberg Catechism rather than commemorative celebrations and works and the lack of such for some time. Here I will raise another thought – could a third essay have been included in part one on, for example, the Heidelberg Catechism in Africa? The 19<sup>th</sup>-century disputes over the theology of the Heidelberg Catechism in South Africa is a fascinating theological debate which would have provided depth to the dogmatic nature of certain *loci* in the Catechism and to ecclesiastical controversies and divisions and could also have helped the reader to see the wider global framework rather than singling out America here.

“Part 2: The Heidelberg Catechism and the Means of Grace” is a more substantial section with four essays (over ninety pages here) and the longest of the four sections in the volume. However, I do think it could have been edited down to allow for another essay in part two. Sebastian Heck’s essay, “‘Washed from All My Sins’: The Doctrine of Baptism in the Heidelberg Catechism” (pp. 79-109) is the longest essay in the book and is quite an outstanding essay with much contemporary application for the church. Heck demonstrates a good understanding of his subject and walks carefully through it. Other contributions in this section are Joel Beeke’s essay on catechism preaching and Jon D. Payne’s essay on the Lord’s Supper and the Heidelberg.

“Part 3: Christian Doctrine and the Heidelberg Catechism” is concerned with specific doctrines as formulated in the Heidelberg Catechism. Here there are five essays bringing together a fuller treatment of themes than in part two. Doctrines explored are: the Church, justification, sanctification, Christology, Jesus as Priest and Prophet, and the Holy Spirit. Again, all are written by very capable scholars – Michael S. Horton, Cornelis P. Venema, Mark Jones, Victor E. d’Assonville, and Daniel R. Hyde. Some may feel on occasion these expositions go beyond just commenting on or interpreting the way the Heidelberg Catechism presents the subject. Horton’s essay on the doctrine of the Church certainly takes the issue into the contemporary foray of missional thought; but given the complexities and nuances here, perhaps it was too much to bite off. I questioned some of the rigid categorizations in this essay which leave little room for nuance of thought. Daniel Hyde’s essay is a substantive reprint of an earlier article from a 2006 journal. It certainly mines the Heidelberg Catechism for all references to the person and work of the Holy Spirit and presents a solid thesis that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is not minimized in the Catechism.

Finally, “Part 4: The Heidelberg Catechism As Catechetical Tool” has three essays by Robert Godfrey, Willem Verboom, and Willem van’t Spijker respectively. I particularly was drawn to Godfrey’s article, which explored “The Heidelberg Catechism among the Reformed Catechisms” (pp. 215-229). Godfrey focuses upon five catechisms to find agreement, consistency, and differences – historical, pedagogical, or theological. Verboom’s article on using the Heidelberg Catechism as a catechetical tool is at first contextual

to the Palatinate; he then moves in the second half of the essay to the Netherlands. No doubt some will have wished the range had been broadened perhaps to explore how the Heidelberg Catechism was used in ministerial training in Scotland. This would have helped again to show a more global thrust to the book.

The work concludes with a selected English bibliography divided into two parts – a chronological list of sermons/commentaries and a list of primary and secondary sources.

*A Faith Worth Teaching* is a fine contribution for the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Heidelberg Catechism. I trust it will be a standard work for use in college/seminary classes for many years to come and by all who see value in this remarkable catechism.

*Reviewed by Jack C. Whytock*

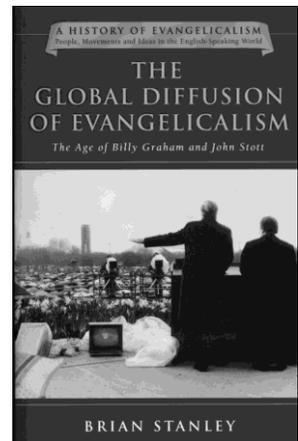
## Historical Theology

***The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Billy Graham and John Stott.* Brian Stanley. A History of Evangelicalism. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2013, 288 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8308-2585-1**

This is a superb book and well on its way already to becoming a classic. This past summer I spied a hardcover edition piled high on the book table at All Souls, Langham Place, London when I worshipped there. Stanley is professor of world Christianity at the University of Edinburgh and director of the School of Divinity's Centre for the Study of World Christianity. Covering a vast and almost encyclopaedic quantity of material, his writing style is clear and crisp. And for a Canadian he includes the often ignored land north of the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel with understanding and insight. His judgments are uniformly shrewd and insightful. He is at all times fair. As one who has witnessed over the last sixty years first hand much what he chronicles, I can attest to its fairness and charity. He never caricatures a position or takes a cheap shot, tempting as it might be.

Covering the post-war period from 1950 to 2000, the material is organized under seven rubrics: a definition of evangelicalism and how the word shifted meaning during the period; the immediate post-Second World War development of missionary and evangelical networks; the development of reputable scholarship and evangelicalism's emergence from anti-intellectualism, particularly in the US; a brilliant summary of eight evangelical faith-defenders (surprised to see Lesslie Newbigin among them) along with a charitable debunking of the C. S. Lewis mythology; a succinct description of what went on before and after Lausanne I in 1974, a watershed for evangelicalism; a dizzying portrayal of the charismatic movement during the period; and finally the hermeneutical debate about women's ordination and homosexuality.

One of the things that stands out in these chapters is the havoc created on



8 October, 1966 when Martyn Lloyd-Jones and John Stott had their famous showdown. Stanley does not deal with ecclesiology, a matter that bedevilled evangelical cooperation increasingly during the period. But the parting of the way between evangelical separatists, many if not most of them Reformed, and the “stay in at almost any cost and remain in the conversation” evangelicals was tragic for both. Stanley cites (p. 112) my biography of Stacey Woods, founder of IVCF USA and IFES, for the influence of “the Doctor” on the evangelical world student movement. Stott, for all his gracious and godly pragmatism, lacked the same rigor, a feature of his class and personality. The incoherence of worldwide Anglicanism today – as well as the too frequent ghettoization of Reformed influence – is the tragic result.

Stanley does not have too much to say about the Reformed brand of evangelicalism, though there is the occasional reference; and in the chapter on apologetics, the influence of Cornelius Van Til is given its due recognition. Some of the most powerful contemporary evangelical leaders – none revealingly with the celebrity of a Graham or Stott as this is a different era – are out of the Reformed stable. One has only to cite Don Carson, John Piper, and Tim Keller.

Indeed the “Keller-ization” in today’s evangelical dialogue is a reminder that much contemporary buzz among evangelicals is centred on the local faith community and how it can be “missional”. The question being asked is how an evangelical church on Main St. can regain the initiative in a day in which the emptying of historic main-line churches right across North America and the UK is everywhere evident. In the next decade or two this can only accelerate. What is not said here, perhaps out of courtesy from an observer across the Atlantic, is that the frequent popular identification of American evangelicals with right-wing politics could likewise spell their death knell. God is not a member of the Tea Party.

Stanley has a fascinating penultimate chapter about the contemporary hermeneutical challenge to evangelicalism, focussing on issues of gender and sexuality. He is much more sympathetic than I would be to Paul King Jewett’s 1975 *Man as Male and Female: A Study in Sexual Relationships from a Theological Point of View*, which he rightly regards as a seminal book. My father taught at Boston’s Gordon Divinity School, as it was then, in 1947-8 to enable Jewett to complete studies under Karl Barth at Basle. Jewett’s 1954 book on Brunner flagged the influence of neo-orthodoxy on his thinking (and on Fuller Seminary). Stanley deals with Barthianism, but its influence on contemporary evangelicalism cannot be underestimated. One could quibble, as Michael Griffiths (then Chairman of the IVF Central Committee) certainly would, with the reasons for the deregistration of the Edinburgh Christian Union (p. 99) under the influence of Tom Torrance, but the shadow of Karl Barth is writ large over much of evangelicalism in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, not to its strengthening. Here again Cornelius Van Til still shapes the debate as the 2007 conference at Princeton Seminary demon-

strates (recently published as *Karl Barth and American Evangelicalism*, Bruce McCormack, editor).

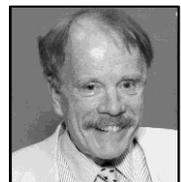
Stanley highlights the question as to how the changing position of many evangelicals on the question of women in ministry shaped the subsequent debate on homosexuality. Did openness to the one, and the erosion of what had been until recently considered an evangelical consensus, lead to an increasing ambiguity on the part of former evangelicals such as Peggy Campo and “post-evangelicals” such as Brian McLaren and the emerging church on gay inclusion (“gay rights”)? Fifty-one years ago Ralph Blair, whom he cites (p. 232), an early leader in the evangelical gay movement, arrived at Westminster Seminary with three other students, transferring from Dallas Seminary. Their story could make interesting reading in retrospect. I can still see Blair picketing Urbana 1971 for his homosexual agenda. Then it was shocking; today pansexuality reigns and there is little tolerance among some evangelicals for variant views on women’s ordination or increasingly on homosexuality.

He cites the increasing appeal to evangelicals of Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches. When Francis Beckwith, philosophy professor at Baylor University, a Southern Baptist school, announced his reconversion back to Catholicism in 2007, it sent shock waves through the Evangelical Theological Society of which he was at the time president.

In a closing chapter titled “Evangelicalism: diffusion or disintegration?” Stanley highlights the contemporary dilemma facing evangelicalism. One is sympathetic with his final statement when he says, “The battle for the integrity of the gospel in the opening years of the twenty-first century is being fought not primarily in the lecture rooms of North American seminaries but in the shanty towns, urban slums and villages of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.” Surely, however, it is not an either/or. Yes, the battle will be fought in the reality of Christian life and witness wherever evangelicals are to be found. But the faith of evangelicals in the majority world, if it is to stand the growing threats of economic privation, persecution, and martyrdom, will only endure because it is grounded in a theologically knowledgeable biblical faith centred in the cross and the resurrection.

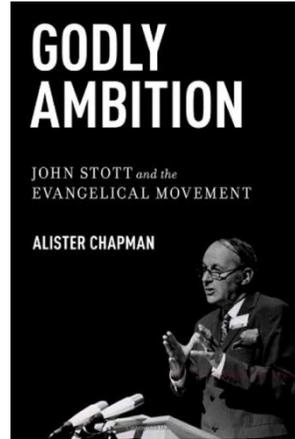
The lesson I took from this book is that much of that grounding is today under threat among evangelicals in the developed world. The balkanization of western evangelicalism has come at a loss of its commitment to “the faith once for all delivered to the saints”, using that hoary but biblical word loved by evangelicals of a previous generation. If evangelicalism has a future for the next half century it will be in that confidence and hope.

*Reviewed by Dr. A. Donald MacLeod, research professor of Church History at Tyndale Seminary, Toronto. He is a widely published writer and biographer.*



***Godly Ambition: John Stott and the Evangelical Movement.* Alister Chapman. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012, 222 pp., hc. ISBN 978-0-19-977397-8**

The broad sweep of the life and ministry of John Stott (1921-2011) began to be set out by biographers in 1984. Beginning with a chapter in Christopher Catherwood's *Five Evangelical Leaders*, there followed the weighty two-volume work by close friend, Bishop Timothy Dudley-Smith, *John Stott: The Making of a Leader* (1999) and *John Stott: A Global Ministry* (2001). Almost on the eve of Stott's passing, there appeared the breezier treatment of Roger Steer, *Basic Christian: The Inside Story of John Stott* (2010). And in the year of Stott's passing appeared a volume of vignettes by life-long associates, Chris Wright, ed., *John Stott: A Portrait by His Friends*. With so much biographical material readily available, how could yet another biographical treatment be warranted? The question can be answered at more than one level.



For one, the author, Alister Chapman, a modern historian (of Westmont College, California) wrote a doctoral dissertation on Stott while at Cambridge. Thus we might expect to find things ferretted out that had earlier escaped attention. For another, Chapman's orientation to the study of the modern world made him especially attuned to questions such as how Stott's career in post-Second World War Britain stood in relation to Britain's then rapidly-diminishing role as an imperial power, to the USA's post-war ascendancy as a superpower, and to the aspirations of the many countries in the non-Western world which were in process of gaining political independence. This work is therefore strong on interpretation and context. Finally, while taking nothing away from what had been published earlier regarding Stott, it needs to be admitted that this had been composed by evangelical Protestants through evangelical publishing houses for evangelical Protestant readers. Chapman's work, while written out of evident admiration for Stott, is clearly offered by its publisher to a more diverse readership. No doubt Oxford was convinced that a wider readership existed for this study of Stott: after all, the *New York Times'* David Brooks (a thoughtful social commentator of Jewish heritage) had identified Stott in 2004 as the type of evangelical more public intellectuals needed to notice.

The trajectory followed by Chapman is disclosed in the title: *Godly Ambition*. The author perceives that Stott, son to a London surgeon, who desired a diplomatic career for him, and the recipient of a very privileged education at Rugby school and at Cambridge University, was always groomed with a

view to leading in some capacity. In 1930s Britain, the Empire still stood and the sons of the privileged classes were expected to take their places in the professions or in government service at home or abroad. While John Stott's conversion to Christ in the late 1930s and determination to train for the ministry of the Church of England ran counter to parental ambition and their ideal of a career of public service, Chapman's aim is to convince the reader that Stott – never repudiating the grooming for leadership which he had received – quite systematically became the leader of every cause he would associate himself with in subsequent decades.

He rose to the leadership of the evangelical summer camping ministry in which he involved himself in his late teens. He similarly rose to prominence while at Cambridge, both in the university Christian Union (evangelical student ministry) and in his studies (initially in languages; then in theology). Upon graduation and ordination, he was straightaway the dynamo curate (assistant) in the evangelical Anglican parish near his London childhood home; soon he was catapulted into the senior pastoral role by the untimely demise of the senior minister. By the early 1950s he was also establishing himself as a persuasive evangelist to students, taking up invitations from various British and North American university Christian Unions (in North America, Inter-Varsity chapters) to explain and urge faith in Jesus Christ. In those same 1950s, as if not busy enough, Stott took measures to set up and lead initiatives aimed at the encouragement of evangelicalism within his Church of England – even though there were in existence other organizations (in his view, moribund) with similar aims.

And yet, in the critical decade of the 1950s the cultural context was changing drastically. The Empire – which Stott's generation had been trained to lead and serve – was being dismantled. The social conservatism which followed in the wake of world war was giving way to a pronounced secularizing of the fabric of British life: churches and clergy counted for less, universities were no longer expected to maintain a Christian ethos, public standards of morality diverged much more drastically from Christian standards. In face of such changes, Stott found as the 1960s advanced that there was less scope for him to function as a university evangelist and as a leader of evangelical forces within his denomination, where things were deteriorating from the standpoint of evangelicalism. Yet Stott was no social reactionary; in the same decade he grew sideburns and worked hard at relating to a student generation very different from the one he had known a decade before. He took on board new ideas (such as environmentalism), some of which were broader than he had supported earlier.

Thus, by ongoing adaptation, Stott would still lead – the very thing that he was groomed to do. Many have heard or read of his 1966 toe-to-toe confrontation with Martyn Lloyd-Jones over the question of whether British evangelicalism's future lay outside or within the historic denominations; this was for Stott again (as much as for Lloyd-Jones) an attempt to “take the helm”. After

1970 (and with Britain's role in the world still contracting), Stott's skills and gifts were increasingly focused outside the U.K. From this time on he was a regular presenter at InterVarsity's "Urbana" conferences and in American theological colleges (Calvin Seminary among them). He became the theological advisor to Billy Graham and the Lausanne Congress on Evangelism (1974); in the follow-up (1975) he showed himself ready to openly disagree with Graham when he believed that the evangelist and his closest allies were shirking the need to twin the proclamation of the gospel with the pursuit of social justice. Once more, it was Stott attempting to lead. Chapman insightfully portrays Stott, in this period, as a not untypical example of the U.K. intellectual leader who could still give direction to the wider Christian movement even though his nation's global role was diminishing.

The closing decades of Stott's long career (he only discontinued public ministry at age 86) were spent in travelling to provide instruction in biblical exposition to pastors in the developing world. The royalties from his many popular books were plowed into financing these travels, as well as into providing theological literature to the developing world and doctoral scholarships for future theological teachers drawn from such countries. Always accompanied by one of a long succession of student assistants, Stott the octogenarian globe-trotter was, in effect, a roving evangelical bishop at the service of evangelical Christians in multiple continents. And yet, shows Chapman, Stott in the home stretch of his long ministry was functioning now not so much as a roving Anglican, but as a roving pan-evangelical at the head of a parachurch enterprise. And yes, he was grooming others for leadership as he himself had been groomed sixty years before.

Chapman aptly raises the question, as to when the ambition to lead – so evident in Stott – ceases to be a Christian virtue and passes over into self-absorption. Did Stott discern the difference between godly ambition (i.e. ambition subjected to the advancement of the kingdom) and selfish ambition? Chapman's answer is that Stott did recognize this, did distinguish this, and did consciously pursue godly ambition. May the Lord send more such leaders to His church!

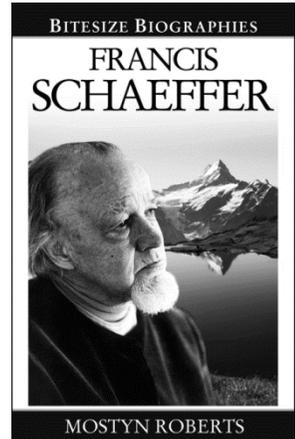
*Reviewed by Dr. Kenneth J. Stewart*

**Francis Schaeffer. Mostyn Roberts. Bitesize Biographies Series. Darlington, England: EP Books, 2012, 144 pp., paper. ISBN 978-085234-792-8**

I began this book wondering whether the world needs a new biography of Francis Schaeffer.<sup>1</sup> However, as I read, I began to appreciate this effort by Mostyn Roberts more and more. It combines a thoughtful perspective and a readable style in a short, “bite-size” book and as such makes an excellent introduction to the life and thought of Francis Schaeffer.

Though this biography is brief, it is not a dry overview of Schaeffer’s life. Roberts draws mainly from Edith Schaeffer’s *The Tapestry*<sup>2</sup> and *L’Abri*,<sup>3</sup> as well as Colin Duriez’s recent biography and Jerram Barrs’ Covenant Seminary lectures on Schaeffer<sup>4</sup> to craft an interesting and highly readable biography. He begins with Schaeffer’s birth in 1912, including the fact that the attending doctor was “rip-roaringly drunk” and forgot to register his birth. While he doesn’t go into anywhere near Edith Schaeffer’s level of detail in *The Tapestry*, Roberts does reflect the Schaeffers’ own view of God’s providential weaving together of individual lives in a rich tapestry of history. Roberts emphasizes the significance of Schaeffer’s rethinking of his faith in 1951, quoting Schaeffer himself: “This was and is the real basis of L’Abri” (p. 69). From it, Schaeffer emerged with a new joy, a new understanding of the implications of Christ’s finished work for his life, a strong commitment to prayer, and a Christ-like compassion for people searching for answers.

Roberts himself was blessed by the Schaeffers’ ministry at L’Abri, and so he brings a warmth to the subject. Still, he does not romanticize the work there. There was a cost, perhaps especially for their family life. Roberts briefly addresses son Frank Schaeffer’s rejection of his parents’ faith, wisely saying of his books that they “need to be read in the context of the life of



<sup>1</sup> See recent biography, *Francis Schaeffer: an Authentic Life*, Colin Duriez (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), reviewed in *Haddington House Journal* 11 (2009): 83-86, as well as others.

<sup>2</sup> Edith Schaeffer. *The Tapestry* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1981).

<sup>3</sup> Edith Schaeffer. *L’Abri* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1969).

<sup>4</sup> Jerram Barrs. “Francis A. Schaeffer: The Early Years” and “Francis A. Schaeffer: The Later Years”. Audio series available for free in the iTunes store: <https://itunes.apple.com/institution/covenant-theological-seminary/id418582037>

Schaeffer as thousands knew him, including those who were very close to him and Edith” (p. 140).

The chapters dealing with Schaeffer’s teachings are sometimes a little drier, and yet I appreciated Roberts’ perspective. He devotes a chapter each to Schaeffer’s teachings, his apologetics, and his more controversial political activism. I felt he reflected well what Schaeffer’s own motivations and priorities were. Schaeffer was an evangelist first and foremost, and his concern was to reach people for Christ. Roberts advises, “To get close to the heart of Schaeffer, read [*True Spirituality*], his sermons...and his *Letters*” (p. 72). Roberts’ analysis of Schaeffer’s approach to apologetics in context of the conflict between evidentialism and presuppositionalism follows the same lines.

Schaeffer was never interested in rigidly following a particular apologetic method, or worried about being consistent with a certain school, or being an academic apologist. “When we have the opportunity to talk to the non-Christian, what . . . should be the dominant consideration? I think this should be love. . . . Thus, we meet the person where he or she is” (p. 61).

All in all, this is an excellent introduction to Francis Schaeffer’s life and thought. I would especially recommend it to young people or people who have not heard of Schaeffer before. Roberts will inspire you to learn more about Schaeffer and will steer you in the right direction as to what to read next. This book has also piqued my interest in reading other biographies from this series, which contains quite an interesting variety of Christians, including Festo Kivengere (lived in Uganda under Idi Amin), Renée of France (correspondent of Calvin), and some more well-known figures such as Matthew Henry and John Newton.

*Reviewed by Nelleke Plouffe. Nelleke and her husband, Stephen, are the parents of three young sons. They live in Donagh, Prince Edward Island.*



***The Heroic Boldness of Martin Luther.* Steven J. Lawson. A Long Line of Godly Men Profiles. Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust, 2013, 154 pp., hc. ISBN 978-1-56769-321-8**

This is the fifth book in Steven J. Lawson’s Long Line of Godly Men Profile series. These books are not biographies, though they each include biographical sketches. Rather, their aim is to highlight specific aspects of the character of “giants of the Christian faith” in order to inspire a new generation to serve God in the same way. This book focuses on Luther’s boldness in preaching.

Lawson begins the book with a short twenty-five-page biography of Martin Luther. His purpose is to lay the foundation for the rest of the book, where he provides a very detailed overview of Luther’s beliefs, motivations, and

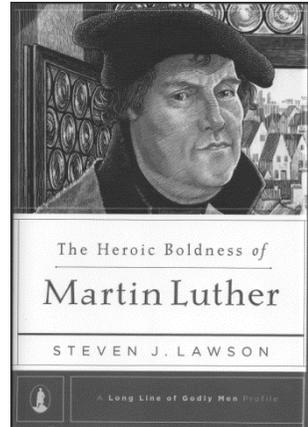
practices in preaching. He speaks of Luther's belief in *Sola Scriptura*, his preparation for preaching, the content of his preaching, his delivery style, and his courageous stand for the truth. Lawson closes the book with a fervent call for men today to emulate Luther's boldness in preaching.

Lawson really draws out Luther's heart for preaching. Luther loved the Word of God, and he believed in preaching the whole counsel of God, expositing the Word verse by verse. He preached so that the common people could understand him. Pastors will be edified by studying what Luther has to say about preaching. The best thing about this book is its many quotations from Luther himself.

Unfortunately, Lawson's writing style is very repetitive and formulaic, to the point that it may annoy some readers. Almost every paragraph in the book was constructed in a "sandwich" style, in which Lawson introduces what Luther says about something, gives a quotation from Luther himself, and finally summarizes that quotation in his own words. This sometimes made me feel Lawson was talking down to me, as though I couldn't understand the quotation without him explaining it. I also felt his summaries took away from the originality and sheer colourfulness of Luther's own words. I believe that the content of this book could have been written in one-third of its 122 pages.

Second, the Luther you are left with by the end of the book is someone who was never anything but heroically bold. While I understand that this book is not intended as a complete biography, this depiction of Luther is not the truth. Luther had some very human failings. He struggled with depression. He was not always courageous. I do appreciate what Lawson is trying to do in highlighting a praiseworthy aspect of Luther's life for a new generation to emulate, and yet I think the result comes uncomfortably close to hagiography. I believe Lawson could have done better to imitate the honesty of Scripture, which commends the faith of Abraham (Gen. 15:6, Heb. 11:8-19) and yet does not hide the fact that he twice called Sarah his sister because of fear (Gen. 12:10-20, Gen. 20).

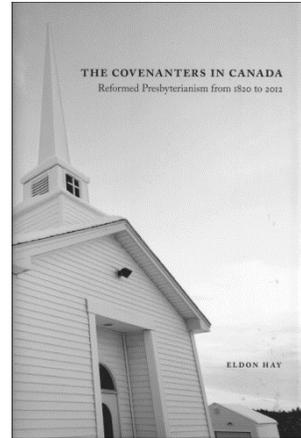
I recommend this work with reservations. Luther was indeed a good model to follow in preaching, and this book clearly outlines the specific ways pastors today can learn from him. If you can overlook the author's repetitive style, you may indeed be instructed and inspired. Just don't make this the only work you read about Luther. Thankfully, this book also has an extensive bibliography, where you may find a more complete biography to read along with this and gain a fuller picture of who Luther was.



*Reviewed by Nelleke Plouffe*

***The Covenanters in Canada: Reformed Presbyterianism from 1820 to 2012.* Eldon Hay. McGill-Queen's Studies in the History of Religion, Series Two: 59. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012. 397 pp., hc. ISBN 978-0-7735-4100-9**

Eldon Hay has given us, in the much anticipated volume, a meticulously researched history of a Presbyterian branch in Canada that sheds light on a neglected denomination of the Reformed community in Canada. The Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America (RPCNA), known originally in Scotland as the Cameronians, represented a remnant of the Covenanting tradition which started in 1638 as a Solemn League and Covenant and was signed on the gravestones of Greyfriar's in Edinburgh. Their hope for a theocracy dashed following the 1688 Glorious Revolution, they continued a commitment to what appeared to most to be a lost cause. Emigrating first to Ireland and then subsequently to North America, Reformed Presbyterians or Covenanters as they became known, continued to have an influence on a small but committed group of loyalists. Refusing to take the oath of allegiance to the Crown because it was a violation of their principles, they were also firmly rooted in the regulative principle of worship and allowed nothing but the Bible, as they understood it, into their assemblies.



As a history professor at Mount Allison for over thirty years, Eldon Hay first became interested in an early Covenanter migrant cemetery in New Brunswick and from there his fascination, one might even say obsession, grew, including the famous Covenanter church of Grand Pre in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley. His research took him from the Maritimes to Glengarry in Upper Canada and onto the Prairies – all places where small Covenanter churches were planted and most declined and died. It is a story of swimming against the tide, of maintaining a witness against insuperable odds, of a commitment to principle rather than expediency. There is much to admire in this doughty band of Calvinist contenders. In the increasing theological vacuities of other so-called Reformed and Presbyterian communities, there was no ambiguity as to where the Reformed Presbyterians stood.

There is something poignant about the planting of churches, many of them lost causes, across a country which the Reformed Presbyterians refused to call a Dominion out of theological and political scruples. Nor would they take the oath of allegiance and yet, come the Great War, a young Irish RPCNA church planter in Winnipeg died at Vimy Ridge fighting for King and

country. An American denomination, most of his church was not even at war at this point. Indeed, so much of the initiative, personnel, and financing seem to have been from the United States. Until 1967 the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America appeared almost a misnomer: Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, was the true centre of a denomination that was more American than North American.

Occasionally Reformed Presbyterians could be energized by someone coming from outside their ranks. Two ministers in the Winnipeg provided lustre for their reputation: the American Frank Emmett Allen, who wrote on evolution, and Frederick Francis Reade, whose background as a teetotaling English Methodist split the congregation there which subsequently died. Johannes Vos was another. Vos was the son of Geerhardus the Princeton Seminary professor, a classmate of my father at the seminary, who like him went to China in 1929. His *Blue Banner Faith and Life* magazine proved highly influential, not least among Reformed Presbyterians whom, as Hay rightly acknowledges, were reintroduced by it to the Reformed faith. Vos' influence on the burgeoning Chinese Church through Reformation Translation Fellowship has, if anything, had an even greater impact on the Chinese Church through his partner Charles Chao and son Jonathan and now Samuel.

It was an extraordinary outsider to RPCNA circles that revolutionized the church in Canada and Hay tells the story well. Richard Ganz, an orthodox Jew from New York, was converted while at L'Abri Switzerland with Francis Schaeffer, baptized, and ultimately ordained through the ministry of Syracuse RPCNA minister Ed Robson, one of my classmates at Westminster Seminary, where Ganz also studied. From a base in Kanata, later Ottawa, Ganz mobilised the new RPCNA congregation there for evangelism and outreach with astonishing effectiveness, culminating in the development of a theological hall as a part of their building which would hopefully ensure that RPCNA candidates for ministry would not have to go to the United States to be trained for ministry and then decide to remain there. A string of congregations were established, some successful, some stillborn. For any church planter the story is a familiar one.

The challenge for this new growth continues to be to provide stability in leadership: since the book was written the dynamic Quebec outreach at St. Lazare has lost its minister. This gives me personal concern as one of the families with three young children of the church I pastored had joyfully connected with it on their transfer to Montreal. Can this witness, and others like it, be maintained without strong leadership in an era of economic turbulence?

Meanwhile, from its Ottawa base, the renewed RPCNA continues to address political issues in a way unthinkable a generation ago. The son of a cousin of my wife, a member of the new Russell RPCNA, who works on Parliament Hill, was a candidate for a seat in Parliament in the 2004 election, as Hay notes. The number of political issues to which the RPCNA in Canada responds is narrow and predictable, but a conscious commitment to a Re-

formed world and life view gives hope for a broader understanding of political engagement.

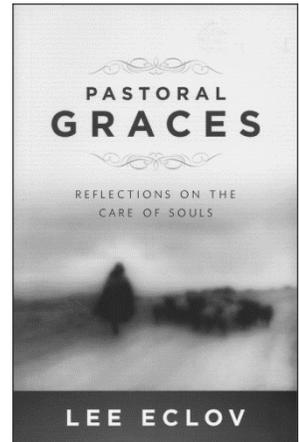
There are several anomalies in this book, not the least of which is that the author, a United Church of Canada minister, has been for years a vocal and persistent advocate for homosexual inclusion and ordination, a stand for which (as he states) the Reformed Presbyterian Church is unalterably opposed. It also does not provide much theological analysis, particularly of the recent Ottawa renaissance of the denomination and what Canadian mainline churches, now in serious decline, could learn from it about theological education, church planting, and evangelism. However, the book is fair, balanced, sympathetic, and thoroughly researched. We can be thankful, as Canadians who love the Reformed faith, for Eldon Hay shedding light on a little known part of our national heritage. And it is not without lessons for the wider Reformed constituency about what it means to take a costly stand for the gospel, how an ingrown Calvinist denomination can be transformed by a wider vision, and the sacrifice inherent in maintaining a gospel ministry in an increasingly inhospitable environment such as Canada today.

*Reviewed by Dr. A. Donald MacLeod*

## Applied Theology

***Pastoral Graces: Reflections on the Care of Souls.* Lee Eclov. Chicago: Moody, 2012, 171 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8024-0567-8**

“DOCTORS ENTER the practice of medicine. Lawyers, the practice of law. Pastors enter the practice of grace. Grace is our stock in trade” (p. 11). So Lee Eclov begins this gem of a book on what it means to care for the souls of people as pastors. He wants us to understand that the soul has its own spiritual anatomy and that if we as pastors do not treat the souls of our people then we have failed. Eclov writes as a pastor with some thirty-five plus years of experience in order to encourage fellow pastors in their work as shepherds of God’s people. He recognizes that defining a pastor as a shepherd may not be a word that suits contemporary culture or resonates with the pastoral models that are pushed in many books, yet he argues biblically and cogently that it is the only word that will do. His purpose is to strengthen the work of pastors as shepherds for he writes, “This book is intended to take some wobble out of our shepherding and to give us confidence in this supernatural instinct for grace that God conferred upon us when he gave us our shepherd’s heart” (p. 14).



In this book you encounter biblical truth wrapped with the practical wisdom of a man who believes with all his heart that, “It is the pastor’s highest privilege to be an agent of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God’s grace in Christ is our calling, our work, our stock-in-trade. . . Pastors should dispense grace every chance we get” (p. 42-43). And grace is what Lee Eclov dispenses throughout his book with warmth and honesty that refreshes one’s soul and excites one to be about the work of shepherding the flock under our care. But beyond encouraging disheartened shepherds, this book also provides many practical insights on various ways pastors can dispense grace within their congregations and among their communities. The author does not give us the one special “method” we must all adopt, but he sows seed-thoughts of how we may dispense Christ’s multifaceted grace in accord to our unique callings and gifts.

His insights from Scripture about the practice of grace are powerful. His personal experiences in the practice of grace as a shepherd of God's people possess the ring of truth, and one could not help but agree with one reviewer who wrote, "Lee Eclov is the kind of pastor I want to have as my pastor. He is the sort of pastor I would like to be."<sup>1</sup> The author summarizes the ministry of pastors in a spirit of holy awe with these words:

Our work really is unique, a mystery even. Pastors are Christ's Wordworkers. We are in the practice of grace. The people we serve are the flock of God and Jesus has drafted us out from among them to be their shepherds. . . . For such an earthly job as shepherding, it is amazing what sacred things we handle and what holy people we lead. It is a wonder that our hands and hearts are not singed. (p. 161)

I would recommend every pastor to read this text slowly savouring the grace of God practised within its pages. I would encourage that this book be given to every person who aspires to the work of shepherding God's people. I would challenge all who pastor to embrace the practice of grace in your care and cure of the souls of our people, and this book will help in your ministry.

*Reviewed by Warren Charlton, currently chair of the Pastoral Studies Department at Peace River Bible Institute in Sexsmith, Alberta.*



***What Every Christians Needs to Know About the Qur'an.* James R. White. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2013, 311 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-7642-0976-5**

For many Christians today, our understanding of the Qur'an may be little more than what we hear about in the news. Thus, James R. White has done the Church a great service through this book, which may serve to help many Christians overcome their ignorance of what their Muslims neighbors believe and be equipped "to bring the glorious message of salvation through Jesus Christ to the precious Muslim people who honor the Qur'an" (p. 11). James White is a Christian apologist with Alpha and Omega Ministries and has engaged in numerous debates with Islamic scholars from around the world.

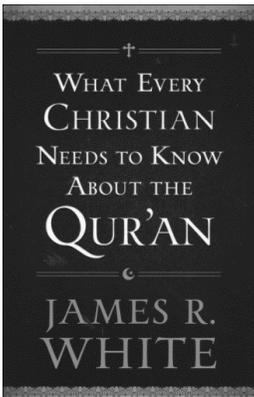
In the opening chapters of the book, White provides an introduction to Muhammad and the Qur'an. In addition to the explanation of key terms, there is a helpful glossary of fifty terms for quick reference. White ends this

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<sup>1</sup> John Koessler, as found in the foreword of the book entitled, "Praise for *Pastoral Graces*".

opening section by addressing the common question of whether Muslims and Christians worship the same God by saying, "... if worship is an act of truth, then Muslims and Christians are not worshipping the same object. We do not worship the same God" (p. 72).

Chapter 4 is entitled, "'Say Not Three': The Qur'an and the Trinity". Throughout this chapter, White drives home the point that the Qur'an fails to accurately depict the Christian understanding of the Trinity. Instead, the Qur'an implies that the relationship exists between Allah, Mary, and Jesus (Surah 5:116). While it is understandable how a person living in Mecca could be confused on the subject, a misunderstanding of what Christians actually believe challenges the divine inspiration of their holy book.



Chapters 5 through 7 focus on Christology and Soteriology. The book highlights how the Qur'an's denial of Christ's crucifixion stands against the testimony of the New Testament, early Christians and non-Christians alike. Furthermore, if the forty Arabic words of Surah 4:157 were not found in the Qur'an, there would be no question about the Qur'an's own view that Jesus did die (p. 141). This section also highlights the differences between Islam and Christianity over the way of salvation and the justice of God.

Chapters 8 and 9 deal with two Islamic claims concerning the Bible. First, there is the claim that Christians have corrupted the gospel and second, that Muhammad is prophesied in the Bible (Deut. 18:15-19; John 14-16). White dismantles both these claims but points out that this may be an appropriate place for Muslims and Christians to talk.

The reader will appreciate the numerous citations found throughout the book, not only to the Qur'an, but also to the hadith (the teachings of Muhammad and his companions which serves as the primary lens by which the Qur'an is interpreted) and the tafsir (a commentary and explanation of the meaning of the Qur'an). These citations will provide a gateway for the interested reader to pursue their studies further as well as provide a point of reference when speaking with a Muslim.

The final two chapters focus on the technical issues of sources that the Qur'an depended upon and the transmission of the text in history. These two final chapters appear to be outside the scope of the intended audience of addressing every Christian. Regardless, this book deserves to be read by many and would be best suited for pastors, Bible colleges, and adult Sunday classes that can selectively work through the material.

*Reviewed by Peter K. Aiken, who recently completed his M.Div. Studies at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary and is now stated supply for the Free Church of Scotland, Charlottetown.*



***For the Fame of God's Name: Essays in Honor of John Piper.***  
**Eds., Sam Storms and Justin Taylor. Wheaton, IL: Crossway,**  
**2010, 542 pp, hc. ISBN 978-1-4335-0492-1**

Here is a collection of essays designed to honour a faithful pastor and one of the most influential preachers of our day, John Piper, now retired pastor of the Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Each essay is intended to highlight a facet of Piper's extraordinary ministry and contribution to North American Christianity. Not many of the essays critically interact with Piper, which is a shame, but that does not mitigate the book's significance.

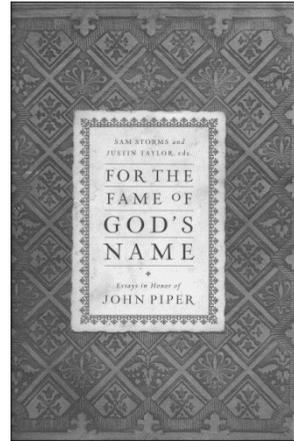
The book is organized into seven parts, the first being reflections on Piper's personal history and legacy by three ministry associates at Bethlehem Baptist Church.

The second part deals with signature Piper, namely, "Christian Hedonism". Sam Storms provides a very sympathetic overview of the concept and cites Piper's most important mentors, C. S. Lewis and Jonathan Edwards. What follows is a delightful chapter by Mark Talbot which critically interacts with Piper's thesis and offers some possible correctives. This is one of the best chapters in the volume, which offers the reader a respectful critique and viable tweak to Piper's life's work.

Part 3, "The Sovereignty of God", contains two chapters: one on the theology of Jonathan Edwards (Donald J. Westblade) and the other on the relationship between the sovereignty of God and prayer (Bruce Ware). Westblade's chapter is helpful as it traces the development of Edwards' thinking that so decisively impacted Piper.

Part 4 takes up the subject of the gospel, the cross, and the resurrection of Christ. The chapter "What is the Gospel – Revisited" is by Carson and bears the marks of his careful scholarship. Sinclair Ferguson handles Christ's death as substitute and victor. As always, Ferguson is helpful and stimulating. He traces the concept in church history and provides a fly-over of the biblical data.

The longest section of the book, part 5, as one might expect, is called, "The Supremacy of God in All Things" – a phrase popularized by Piper. Essays by prominent evangelical leaders cover the distinctive themes of Piper's ministry and his attempts to apply the supremacy of God to the issues of the day. In effect, it is Piper's ethic that results from a contemplation of the supremacy of God in all things. There are essays on abortion, race relations, marriage, and money. Tom Schreiner has authored a helpful essay on a biblical theology of the glory of God. He demonstrates that the glory of God is



“...the heartbeat of all of biblical revelation” (p. 233) and the fuel for all of missions. Other notable essays include Thabiti Anyabwile’s rather penetrating analysis of the inadequate attempts made in the evangelical community regarding the issue of race relations (Piper is a “brilliant exception”, p. 293) and R. Albert Mohler’s chapter on worldview, which seeks to make much of God in the face of the chaos of sin.

Part 6 contains essays that touch on the various roles and responsibilities of the local church pastor. Stephen J. Nichols highlights the legacy of Jonathan Edwards and its ability to inspire the modern day preacher of the gospel. The section contains chapters dealing with the pastor as worshiper, counselor, shepherd leader, and student. Practical and sound advice awaits the pastor hungry to conform his pastoral responsibilities to the dictates of Scripture. Very helpful!

Part 7 contains essays that highlight two of Piper’s most particular legacies: “Desiring God Ministries” and “The Bethlehem Institute”, which are presented as an outgrowth of Piper’s long tenure at Bethlehem Baptist Church.

This helpful collection of essays will greatly aid those on the front lines of pastoral ministry. It is not a textbook on pastoral theology, yet it could be utilized as supplemental reading in classes dealing with that important theme. Highly recommended.

*Reviewed by William Emberley; originally from Newfoundland, he is presently the pastor at Grace Baptist Church in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.*

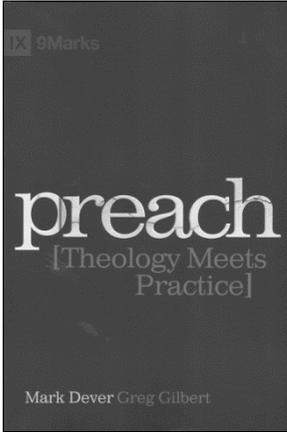


***Preach [Theology Meets Practice].* Mark Dever and Greg Gilbert. Nashville, TN: B & H, 2012, 210 pp., paper. ISBN 978-1-4336-7317-7**

*Preach* by Mark Dever and Greg Gilbert is stated to be a collective work with input from the 9Marks Ministry and staff of the Capital Hill Baptist and Third Avenue Baptist churches. Dever, the president of 9Marks, is a very well-known name in evangelical circles. The ministry of 9Marks is to support the churches with training and encouraging church leaders with various resources.

The first mark of a healthy church, identified by Dever, is expositional preaching. So it should come as no surprise that 9Marks ministry would put out a book on the need for and practice of expositional preaching.

Dever and Gilbert begin by setting the thesis of the book firmly before the reader. This is not a book for the seminarian nor is it mainly a book for the layperson. “We expect that most of the people who read this book are preachers” (p. 1). It is for this reason that the authors seek to be highly practical and specific. In other words, do not open this book expecting to read an in depth discourse on the process of crafting a sermon. Rather, the authors wanted to explain and defend expositional preaching. Preaching that is expositional seeks to “expose the Word of God to the listeners” (p.5).



In order to defend the use of this kind of preaching, the authors divide the book into three parts: “Theology”, “Practice”, and “Sermon Transcripts”. The first section, “Theology”, I believe was the strongest in this book. Dever and Gilbert begin by giving the reader a short review of the identity of God and His Word. The reader is drawn to see the grandeur of God and the beauty of the Word proclaimed. The Word of God is central and

primary to every relationship with God. It is at this point that the authors bring in preaching. In the sermon, God in His grace uses the preacher as a mouthpiece to reveal Himself. “Anytime God speaks in love to human beings it is an act of grace. We do not deserve it, and we contribute nothing to it. The act of preaching is a powerful symbol of that reality” (p.21). The authors give us an encouragement in the role of preaching by reminding preachers that the power in preaching does not rely on themselves. “God’s Word brings into existence things that are not and it gives life where there was no life” (p. 27).

In part two, “Practice”, the authors bring a few of the tools of the trade to the table. Upon opening this book and reading the introduction, I was not expecting much if any time to be spent on the nuts and bolts of preaching. But in chapter 6 on sermon preparation, I was pleasantly surprised. Dever and Gilbert give an overview, although very brief, on the process of moving from the original languages on to the outline and eventually coming to the application.

In beginning part 3, “Sermon Transcripts”, I was a little skeptical. In this section, both Dever and Gilbert put a few of their old sermon manuscripts on display. Not only do they pull up a few of their old works from the barrel, they also invited their co-author to insert his own ideas throughout. Although I understand that the authors were trying to give us, the reader, an insight into their dialogue, I found these interjections very disruptive. It would have been better to have the other co-author give a response at the end of the sermon manuscript so that the flow of the sermon would not be lost. It seemed that these comments lacked depth and could have been left out.

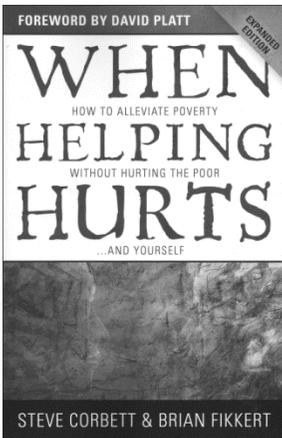
Upon reflection on this book, I appreciated the emphasis on and the defense of expositional preaching. It seems in the church world today that most of the so-called sermons heard are filled with stories and anecdotes so that little or nothing is said about the actual biblical text! Dever and Gilbert want to stem the tide and return to a confidence in the preaching of the Word of God. This book is a service to ministers looking to be refreshed in their reliance on the Lord in the gospel ministry and will likely have a broad reading since it comes from a popular source. Although nowhere near the same caliber and scope as *Preaching and Preachers* by Lloyd-Jones, if you keep in mind the limited nature of this book it will be an aid to most preachers.

*Reviewed by Nick Alons, originally from Iowa and a graduate of Dort College and Mid-America Seminary, is presently pastor of the United Reformed Church of Prince Edward Island.*



***When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor . . . and Yourself.* Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert. Chicago: Moody, 2012, 274 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8024-5706-6**

In *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor . . . and Yourself*, Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert have produced a work which ably fulfills the promise of the title – producing guidelines of tremendous practicality. The authors are eminently trained and equipped to address this subject; both are professors of economics and community development at Covenant College, Lookout Mountain, Georgia, and “have spent most of our adult lives trying to learn how to improve the lives of poor people” (p. 26) through research and in relief and development work.



The organization of the book is helpfully divided into four parts with three chapters in each. The authors begin by laying out a biblical foundation for all that follows in Part 1, “Foundational Concepts for Helping Without Hurting”. Central to this is the truth that the church must do as Jesus did: preach the good news of the kingdom in word *and* in deed and particularly to do so “where Jesus did it, among the blind, the lame, the sick and out-

cast, and the poor” (p. 41). The second central principle that underlies much of the book is that the root of poverty is in the Fall, where four vital relationships were broken for the individual: the relationship with God, with the rest of creation (poverty of stewardship), with others (poverty of community),

and with self (poverty of being, leading to both god-complexes and low self-esteem) (p. 58). As the authors so clearly point out, all of us are poor in these terms and in equal need of Christ, repentance, and gospel truth. They show that the cause of much of the harm done by those seeking to help the materially poor is that such individuals haven't faced their own poverty; therefore they come with attitudes of superiority, paternalism, and pride.

Part 2 is "General Principles for Helping Without Hurting". Here the authors lay out a major key in addressing poverty alleviation: to determine whether the need is for relief (immediate emergency material help), rehabilitation (working *with* the affected to recover and restore), or development ("promoting an empowering process in which all the people involved – both the 'helpers' and the 'helped' – become more of what God created them to be" [p. 100]). They point out repeatedly that much of the cause of ineffective or harmful attempts at poverty alleviation are due to a misunderstanding of the real need and therefore ineffective ways of addressing it.

Part 3 is "Practical Strategies for Helping Without Hurting". In this section, the authors devote a whole chapter to short-term missions – the benefits, the pitfalls, and direction. This chapter alone would be worth the price of the book for any individual or church involved in short-term missions and would prove a great blessing both to those who serve and, equally, to those served. It is so critically important to gain some understanding of how westerners are perceived and the effects they unconsciously have on Christians in the majority world.

Corbett and Fikkert conclude with Part 4, "Getting Started on Helping Without Hurting". As in the rest of the book, this section is replete with story illustrations, practical guidance, and suggestions for further reading.

Throughout the book the authors employ a very effective device. For every chapter there are pre-chapter questions. One then reads the chapter and at the end re-visits the questions. It is very self-revelatory as one finds his/her perspective changed chapter by chapter. Another very helpful part of the work is the many suggested resources, books, and websites mentioned, supplying access to so many tools to help implement the strategies being recommended or concepts given.

This book comes highly recommended by many qualified to comment, including David Platt (contributor of the foreword). Although aimed at a North American readership, this work will prove an incredibly helpful tool to any individual, church, or organization seeking to alleviate poverty in our broken world and thus be a great blessing to our materially poor (but often spiritually rich) brethren at home and abroad as well as to the wider community.

*Reviewed by Christina Lehmann. Christina serves as administrative assistant at Haddington House and has worked in immigrant ministry on PEI.*



***Weakness Is the Way: Life with Christ Our Strength.* J. I. Packer. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013, 128 pp., hc. ISBN 978-1-4335-3683-0**

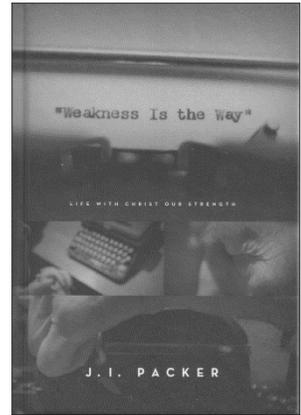
J. I. Packer, author of the modern classic *Knowing God*, has been one of the leading figures of evangelicalism for the past sixty years. In this short, Dr. Packer's work draws our attention to the principle that was characteristic of the Apostle Paul's ministry: weakness in the life of the Christian. Broadly speaking, Packer states that the Christian is to be consciously putting himself in the place of weakness that the grace and power of God might flow through him to those around him to the glory of God.

Packer experienced an accident as a child which limited his outdoor activities. This brought the principle of weakness into sharp focus from an early age (p. 22). That, coupled with age and ensuing weakness and limitations that come along with it, brings more pointedly to his mind not the limitations God is imposing upon him but rather the opportunities to show forth this most essential component of weakness. Packer points out that for the apostle weakness came in many forms, one of which was physical. He suggests that Paul's thorn in the flesh was indeed "in the flesh", that is physical, and that it was imposed upon him by a sovereign and wise God to further the purposes of his ministry.

Packer further suggests that this weakness is not a by-product of ministry or present despite ministry but vital to it. Therefore, the Christian ought to see these weaknesses in the Christian life as fundamental to how the Lord is calling a particular person to do ministry. Moreover, while many individual experiences regarding weakness are mysterious as to why one might experience it and not another, all Christians are called to actively put themselves in positions where their weaknesses are evident, where it is obviously necessary to lean on the grace of God for success.

Packer looks at "pursuing weakness" in the following three areas of the Christian life: Christ and the Christian's Calling, Christ and the Christian's Giving, and Christ and The Christian's Hopping.

Regarding Christian calling, Packer says that the many weaknesses that manifest themselves in our lives – whether physical, emotional, or spiritual – are opportunities for the Christian to make Christ known. This essentially forces us to redefine what "Christian calling" is. Is it a vocation such as a minister, missionary, or teacher? Or is the "Christian calling" making Christ known as we perhaps lie in the hospital bed, as we cope with raising a family, or again as we consciously put ourselves in vulnerable and awkward plac-



es for the sake of Christ? In other words, as our careers fall by the wayside, as Packer may feel his to be, does that mean the Christian calling does so as well? He would answer not at all!

The second area is the Christian and giving. Packer shows that the best way to free yourself from the deception of false security that money often brings, while at the same time acknowledging the sufficiency and provision of the Lord Jesus, is to deal generously with your money.

Regarding the last section, Packer sees Christian hope as a significant manifestation of the glorious work and power of Christ. It is even in the face of our final human weakness, death itself that the Christian can shine out. He says,

We are on our way home, and home will be glorious. And contemplating that glory, however inadequately we do it, will brace minds and hearts to resist the weakening effect, the down-drag into apathy and despair, that pain, hostility, discouragement, isolation, contempt, and being misunderstood might naturally have on us otherwise. (p. 102)

I found this to be an important little book. Weakness is not a space in which we live easily. No matter how we affirm intellectually that these things might be so, practically speaking the way of weakness is a difficult path to walk. It is encouraging to read how someone of Packer's stature is not only learning and embracing these lessons in his old age, but he is also showing us to move beyond coping to say with Paul, "Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor. 12:9).

*Reviewed by Kent I. Compton*

***Foundations for the Flock: Truths About the Church for All the Saints.* Conrad Mbewe. Hannibal, MO: Granted Ministries Press, 2011, 338 pp., hc. ISBN 978-0-9817321-9-0**

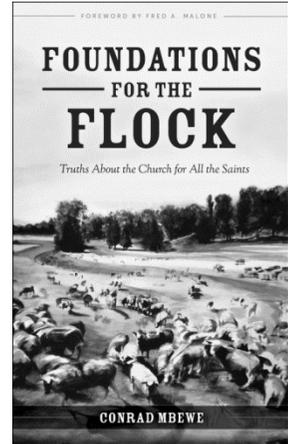
Conrad Mbewe is the long-time pastor of Kabwata Baptist Church in Lusaka, Zambia. This book is a compilation of essays that is the fruit of dealing with various theological, ecclesiological, and pastoral challenges. Though written with the pastor or church leader in mind, any church member will profit from this reliable guide to local church life.

Mbewe is a Reformed Baptist who affirms the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith. This obviously impacts his ecclesiology and yet he is not sectarian. He demonstrates his appreciation for other gospel-preaching communions. A few of his essays find their genesis in occasions where Mbewe was asked to address the broader Christian community.

The book is divided into ten sections: 1) Your Baptismal Class Notes, 2) Biblical Church Government, 3) The Lord's Supper, 4) The Role of Women in the Church, 5) Challenges in Today's Pastoral Ministry, 6) Worship in Spirit and Truth, 7) Relationship Between Church and State, 8) Biblical Inter-Church Associations, 9) Partners in the Harvest, and 10) Missions at Kabwata Baptist Church. It is a compilation of expanded class materials, sermons, and pastoral essays. Consequently, they are varied in depth and appeal. A few of the more important sections are highlighted below.

Facing the challenges of today's pastoral ministry is the subject of section 5, a series of essays delivered at the Theological College of Central Africa in 1999. Using the pastoral epistles as a touchstone, Mbewe deals with the pastor's role under the rubric of prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices historically ascribed to Christ. The "prophetic" role of the pastor is to preach the truth of the Word of God regardless of the consequences thus highly honouring the Word of God. He says, "Preach it out of a full heart, a clear mind, a strong conviction and a consistent life" (p. 137). The "priestly" role is summed up in 1 Timothy 6:13-14, where Paul solemnly charges Timothy "to keep this command without spot or blame"; a charge to pursue godliness. This godliness must be pursued by the pastor in his personal life, church life, and his relationship with the world. The "kingly" role whereby Paul engages Timothy is to fulfill a role of humble rule in the church. In his personal life the pastor is to be worthy of respect as he cultivates the grace of humility. In the congregation the pastor must embrace his responsibility as he learns to share authority by cultivating potential elders and leaders. Regarding his kingly role in relation to the world, the pastor is to lead in evangelistic enterprises. Here is sound and sage advice from a faithful pastor that ought to be enthusiastically engaged by all aspirants to pastoral ministry.

Section 6 deals with the thorny subject of worship. Mbewe engages with the regulative principle of worship. It is fair to suggest he embraces the regulative principle though that assessment will no doubt be gainsaid by some. He states, "To my mind, a rediscovery of the regulative principle of Scripture today is all-important" (p. 169). He roots biblical worship, theologically, in the first five of the Ten Commandments, after which he deals with the tabernacle and temple worship demonstrating that all was carefully prescribed and ends with a discussion of "diaspora" synagogue worship. He then suggests that worship was "liberated" in the New Testament with appeal to John 4:21-24, whereby Jesus indicates that worship would be different in the new Christian era. Jesus Christ, as the final sacrifice, renders the shadowy symbols and forms in the Old Testament fulfilled. What one is left with are the



forms specifically identified for use in the Christian Church. The closing paragraphs of the section effectively pay homage to the great Reformers who rescued worship that had been obscured by layers of form and set out principally how worship should proceed in Christ's Church.

Section 8, by far the longest in the book, at almost eighty pages, deals with biblical inter-church associations. This vital and sometimes tricky issue reveals Mbewe at his best, encouraging faithfulness to Scripture and love for the brethren. The Church is universal and a call to organic unity is real (Rom. 12:4-5; John 17:20-22; 1 Cor. 12:12-13). However, organizational unity must never precede organic unity. "There must be an experiential union before there can be a mechanical one" (pp. 219-220). A further consideration is the fact that the church has been called to fulfill the Great Commission and cannot do that alone. This is to shape the boundaries of inter-church associations. What follows is a consideration of the bonds of inter-church association (pp. 228-233), prayer concern (pp. 235-245), purposeful cooperation (pp. 250-269), and pastoral counsel (pp. 272-284). Emphasis is placed on a common doctrinal confession. Those holding deviant theology in the fundamental tenets of the Christian faith need evangelization and are not to be conscripted as fellow-workers in the gospel.

Reading this pastoral treatise is like sitting at the feet of a wise, gracious, yet indefatigable servant of Christ. He is the kind of model pastor every man new to ministry can learn from and emulate to great benefit.

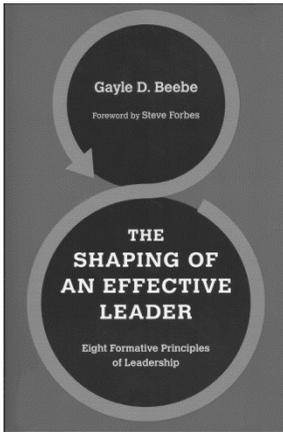
The formatting of the book is a little awkward and the absence of clear footnoting is frustrating. For the conscientious pastor, this is a serious limitation. Predictably, the text is uneven in writing style which is the inevitable consequence of leaving the various treatises in their original style. Having said that, inadvertently, Mbewe provides a window into the mind of a faithful pastor who seeks to inculcate biblical truth into the hearts of Christ's sheep. This turns a negative into a positive. It is a delight to recommend this work by a faithful, steady, and mature pastor. Get it and read it, for the sake of Christ's sheep and your ministerial effectiveness.

*Reviewed by William Emberley*

***The Shaping of an Effective Leader: Eight Formative Principles of Leadership.* Gayle D. Beebe. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2011, 208 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8308-3820-2**

*The Shaping of an Effective Leader* is much more than what it sounds like from its title; one would think of theories and principles and corporate strategies. Yet readers will be delightfully surprised at the nuggets of practical steps that can be applied directly to life's circumstances.

The book begins by introducing the game plan: identification and application of an effective leader. Gayle Beebe's job is stated simply, but it is the result of his life-quest for the keys to shaping effective leadership. His eight principles are: character, competence, chemistry, culture, compatibility, convictions, connections, and commitment. He is methodical but he succeeds at keeping it hidden, holding back just enough to keep you on the edge of your seat.



Each chapter is structured; each principle is built on the backs of the previous principles. It is a diligent process that requires each previous principle to create the next character trait of leadership. Likewise, each chapter begins with the stated principle and how he discovered it. Then Beebe analyzes the principle through the eyes of his long-time mentor, Peter Drukker, the “father of modern management” in America today. He adds validity to Drukker's theories with real-life examples from

Dr. Beebe's life that anyone can relate to, with a special note to one or two mentors who cultivated this principle in his mind and behaviour. Each chapter concludes with how the principle needs to be developed further including identification and application . . . deadly, but powerful.

On the surface this alliteration of principles seems empty and feels like just another frigid approach to a very elusive topic in our present culture where everyone thinks he is the alpha leader. Yet, Gayle leaves the door open for us to leap through when he says “leadership does not come to us all at once . . . there is more than one right way to lead . . . and, it is based on our own gifts, abilities and judgments.” Leadership is a live entity that shifts, changes, and grows depending on the person and the circumstance. This approach makes my mischievous nature – the “drummer who drums to his own beat” and still pursues excellence in leadership – want to jump at the opportunity.

For me, this book had a special value once I took the author's latent challenge of applying it to my own circumstances. I started replacing words like organization and employee with words like ministry, committee, and volunteer. I realized that I could “customize” this approach to both my mission and goals in ministry and focus on what it really means to effectively lead people. I also realized that I could create a parallel model of how this all plays out in any particular sphere of ministry. Thus, using this model will indicate how well I perform as a leader.

When applied appropriately, I believe that the principles contained in this book will have a cumulative effect. Here is a leader who wants to wrestle with self-development while keeping it realistic to individual circumstances. Do you have a longing to be a leader? Do you have the desire to make a dif-

ference? If so, you will enjoy this book immensely. It will provide the motivation you need, daily, to improve and make progress on your leadership skills and character.

*Reviewed by Albert Huizing IV, originally from New Jersey, presently director of youth ministries at the Charlottetown Christian Reformed Church, Prince Edward Island.*



## Book Briefs

In this section we acknowledge new books we have received over the last year for which we have not provided full book reviews. We have organized these into topical categories to help readers become aware of new books in specific areas. Unsigned book briefs are by the editor.

### Biblical

***The Later New Testament Writings and Scripture: The Old Testament in Acts, Hebrews, the Catholic Epistles and Revelation.* Steve Moyise. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012, 182 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8010-4853-1**

“Teaser” is how I would describe this small volume that gives the reader a taste of the vast and fascinating subject of the Old Testament in New Testament studies. Steve Moyise is an expert in the field and in the last decade or so has authored or co-edited several books and written many academic articles on the subject. However, this book, together with the two previous volumes in the series, *Paul and Scripture* (2010) and *Jesus and Scripture* (2010/2011), caters more for the general reader. In order to limit the volume of the book, the author adopts a descriptive and illustrative approach rather than a systematic analytical approach. Either he identifies significant themes and shows how they are developed by means of Old Testament references or he focuses on specific Old Testament passages or corpuses of Scripture that play a significant role in the arguments of these New Testament writers. An unfortunate result of this approach is that the overall logic of the arrangement of the book is not immediately obvious. Though I do not agree with all Moyise’s conclusions about the various authors’ “traditional” and “innovative” uses of Scripture, I would still recommend this book as a stimulating read that will almost certainly spark more interest in the subject.

*Greg Phillips*

***First and Second Peter.* Duane F. Watson and Terrance Callan. Paideia: Commentaries on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012, 254 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8010-3227-1**

Watson possesses an extra-ordinary efficiency with words! As a result this relatively brief commentary on 1 Peter is packed full of accurate and

highly informative exegesis. Using plain language, Watson achieves amazing clarity in his explanations of the logical relations between thought units and of the meanings of words. However, I disagree with Watson's interpretation of 1 Peter 2:8 and his view on predestination (p. 51). It also appears from his use of the term "Christian tradition" when referring to other parts of the New Testament that Watson has a weak view of the authority of the New Testament as the word of God.

Callan's commentary on 2 Peter is more difficult to read because his exegesis is focused on explaining the literary functions of words and phrases using a vast array of technical terms requiring specialist knowledge. Nevertheless, Callan's brief introductory discussion of the elements of prose composition is fascinating (pp. 132-133) and his identification and restatement of the arguments of the many "enthymemes" in 2 Peter are helpful. I disagree with Callan's view that salvation may be lost as exposed by his interpretations of 2 Peter 1:11 and 2:20 (pp. 165, 199).

On the whole, I think the series approach of dealing with introductory matters, tracing the train of thought, and summarizing the theological issues raised by each thought unit is commendable, but in this case, it is only Watson who has got the balance right.

*Greg Phillips*

## Expository

***Authentic Church: True Spirituality in a Culture of Counterfeits.***  
**Vaughan Roberts. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2011, 213 pp., paper.**  
**ISBN 978-0-8308-3798-4**

Here are expository messages on 1 Corinthians delivered by a seasoned "pastor-in-harness", Vaughan Roberts of St. Ebbe's, Oxford. The messages originated in his own congregation or in preaching in South Africa or at Keswick in England amongst other places. They make for a popular and practical ecclesiological study and could serve well for a cell group to use or in a basic Bible college course on 1 Corinthians. There are eight chapters plus an introduction elucidating the book's central theme: "the authentic church in search of true spirituality". Roberts writes about 1 Corinthians raising the question of what is true spirituality: turn to the Scriptures and be careful not to fall into a trap of spiritual knowledge, power, and wisdom, the mindset of the world. Roberts' book would read well alongside David Jackman's *Let's Study 1 Corinthians* and David Garland's *1 Corinthians*. The author writes in excellent prose, and it appears these are not just transcribed sermons. The expositions have good outlines, good analysis and application. Highly recommended – a very balanced work.

## Devotional

***Straight to the Heart of Psalms: 60 Bite-Sized Insights.* Phil Moore. The Straight to the Heart Series. Oxford/Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, 2013, 271 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-85721-428-7**

***Straight to the Heart of Solomon: 60 Bite-Sized Insights.* Phil Moore. The Straight to the Heart Series. Oxford/Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, 2013, 271 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-85721-426-3**

Here are two fine devotional commentaries by Phil Moore, a pastor in London, England with a Cambridge degree in history. They were both released in 2013 in the series *Straight to the Heart*, which now totals eleven volumes, all by the same author. In these volumes one senses good scholarly background along with a clear ability by the author to write something quite accessible.

The first, on the Psalms, is arranged into sixty units. The author has an amazing ability to both organize his material well and also to bring out, when appropriate, the context of a psalm, to make good exegetical comment, and to give pointed application. The sixty units average four to five pages each. I have been using them for personal study on the Psalms and have been spiritually enriched and blessed. If you are looking for a two-month personal devotional study, I would highly recommend this one.

The second, covering Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes, is organized similarly into sixty units. It covers Proverbs in two major divisions – chapters 1-9 with eight units and chapters 10-31 with 34 units. This is followed by Song of Songs with seven units and Ecclesiastes with ten units. Moore does not follow an allegorical approach to the Song of Songs. He also organizes the second portion of Proverbs into topical units.

Phil Moore represents a growing Reformed Charismatic movement and clearly is an able writer within his grouping of churches. I suspect some will not have read much from this circle before. These books are like the older, evangelical “Bible Notes” of a former day; as they blessed many, I think this series will also be a blessing for this generation. We can learn much spiritually here and also learn much about communication from a writer with excellent communication skills in writing.

## Pastoral

***Am I Called?* George W. Robertson. Basics of the Faith, ed. Sean Michael Lucas. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013, 31 pp., paper. ISBN 978-1-59638-543-6**

This is a 2013 contribution to the worthy Basics of the Faith Series by P&R Publishing. The booklet very concisely answers the question about whether or not one is called to the pastoral ministry. The author, George Robertson, a pastor, begins by summarizing fundamental aspects of pastoral ministry beginning by making it clear it is about “Service” (p. 5). He then examines this under “Service in Preaching” (p. 8) and “Service in Pastoring” (p. 11). This is all helpful material to keep us well-focused as to the real nature of what constitutes pastoral ministry. Then follows more the issue of call with “Service in Calling” (p. 17), “Discerning Gifts for Service” (p. 22), and “Service in Confirming the Call” (p. 26). Robertson writes with focus and sound biblical conviction on this subject. He provides many scriptural references and refers to Edmund Clowney’s *Called to the Ministry* (1964), a work which could serve as a follow-up to this booklet. *Am I Called?* is a helpful tool to have in church bookstalls.

***Sexual Abuse: Beauty for Ashes.* Robert W. Kelleman. The Gospel for Real Life, ed. Brad Hambrick. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013, 39 pp, paper. ISBN 978-1-59638-419-4**

This is a tremendously helpful booklet – for one who has experienced sexual abuse, for one wishing to help a friend through such deep waters, or for pastors. In fact, I think just about everyone would find helpful nuggets here as probably all have suffered abuse of some sort – from mean teasing or bullying of classmates to more violating physical, psychological, or spiritual abuse. And all will find direction, sensitivity, and healing balm here – for oneself and/or others. The short work is filled with scriptural references grounding the understanding and approach. Kelleman uses as the vehicle for his exploration of the subject the story of the rape of Tamar in 2 Samuel 13 and his experience in counseling a married woman who twenty-five years previous had been sexually abused by a family member in her youth. Highly recommended.

*Christina Lehmann*

## Theology

***Pocket Dictionary of the Reformed Tradition.* Kelly M. Kapic and Wesley Vander Lugt. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2013, 140 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8308-2708-4**

I have used a couple of books in the past from the Pocket Dictionary series for two reasons – they are cheaper than larger reference volumes while being very precise. This one could be used for teaching a survey course on Reformed theology. It contains about three hundred articles written either by Kelly Kapic, Covenant College, Georgia, or Wesley Vander Lugt, a pastor in Charlotte, North Carolina. Selecting three hundred terms would be a difficult task. Generally the selections were fair; however, I did find it heavily loaded towards America. I was surprised to find some key Scottish theologians were not included nor was the global Reformed/Presbyterian community developed as it could have been. This could give the impression that missions/missiology was not a Reformed emphasis. The entry “Reformed theology” has many merits, but I did wonder just how many would say, “Reformed theology is *concordant*” (p. 99). Perhaps it is current language – I am not sure. Generally a helpful and inexpensive reference tool.

## Sanctification

***The Hole in Our Holiness: Filling the Gap between Gospel Passion and the Pursuit of Godliness.* Kevin DeYoung. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012, 159 pp., paper. ISBN 978-1-4335-3334-1**

Here is a contemporary work on the subject of Christian holiness in the great tradition of J. C. Ryle and the 20<sup>th</sup>-century works of Jerry Bridges. DeYoung’s work speaks clearly and decisively into the context of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century Christian with relevant illustration and discussion. The author clearly lives between the two worlds of Scripture and his own cultural context and brings the two together with insight and integrity. This book has good chapter progression starting with the first chapter, which thematically introduces the book’s subtitle. This is followed by “The Reason for Redemption”, then “Piety’s Pattern”, “The Impetus for the Imperatives”, and “The Pleasure of God and the Possibility of Godliness”. These are good foundations and the author is building a solid house. Chapter 6, “Spirit-powered, Gospel-driven, Faith-fueled Effort”, deals with some thorny issues of the relationship of the Holy Spirit and our sanctification. I agree with his conclusions, but it may have needed a little more treatment to develop the reasoning here. Chapter 7

will stand out with great relevance – “Saints and Sexual Immorality” – a subject often missing in older works. The book ends with very helpful study questions and indices. *The Hole in Our Holiness* is highly recommended for spiritual formation courses (whether at Bible colleges, Christian colleges, or seminary/theological colleges) and for serious readers.

## Ethics

***Migrants, Strangers and the Church in Southern Africa. A Biblical Perspective.* Thorsten Prill. NETS Theological Research Papers, vol. 2. Norderstedt, Germany: GRIN, 2013, 88 pp., paper. ISBN 978-3-656-43808-3**

This small book was based in part upon the author’s D.Th. thesis, published as *Global mission on our doorstep* (Wissenschaft, 2008). *Migrants, Strangers and the Church* begins with opening illustrations of the xenophobic attacks which occurred in South African townships in 2008. From that introduction Prill moves quickly to the Church and raises serious questions about how the Christian community deals with migrants, strangers, and ethnic minorities. Prill is blunt that the situation “within the African Church” is often not much better than in the general society (p. 4). I would add – the global Church context.

The book’s structure begins with a one-page glossary followed by three chapters: an introductory contextual chapter and two biblical chapters dealing with a biblical theology of migrants and strangers and the treatment of foreigners. It ends with a concise two-page conclusion followed by an extensive bibliography. The work though short is very helpful in developing a biblical and ethical framework on the subject. The conclusion shows years of reflection and maturity of thinking. The application is the hard part now to implement in the Church. The author is an evangelical Lutheran with experience in Europe and Namibia, where he currently lectures and pastors.

## Missiology

***Mission as Transformation: Learning from Catalysts.* Eds., David Cranston and Ruth Padilla DeBorst. Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2013, 77 pp., paper. ISBN 978-1-908355-34-8**

This small book contains eight biographical and interpretative sketches of key evangelical leaders of the 20<sup>th</sup> and into the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. They represent a global diversity – Africans, South Americans, Americans, one New Zealander, one Englishman, and one from Eastern Europe. The portraits are of

John Stott, Kwame Bediako, David Gitari, Catharine Feser Padilla, Juan José Barreda, David Bussau, Peter Kuzmič, and Ronald J. Sider. Anyone interested in learning more about missiology and the tensions of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the rise of holistic missional theory will find this “story” approach an excellent entry point. The book will introduce the reader to some key practitioners with each entry averaging eight pages. This is a warmly written narrative text of those who were/are catalysts for transformation in church, society/community, and context with little critical digression. Thus readers desirous of an open critique of some issues of holistic mission will not find such here. *Missions as Transformation* could be used in introductory courses on mission theory. It would have been helpful to identify for readers the seven images on the cover. I also did wonder why seven rather than eight were there.

### **African Denominational**

***The Great Adventure: Stephen Bradley Bishop Church of England in South Africa His Story.* Stephen Bradley. Clareinch, SA: The Church of England in South Africa, ND, 215 pp., paper. No ISBN.**

For someone wanting to know some of the key events and personalities of the Church of England in South Africa (CESA/REACH) of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a good entry point can be found in this autobiography, *The Great Adventure*. It will provide story, narrative, and personality as a way to learn much of the significant occurrences in that denomination over almost a seventy-year period. One will find it interesting also by way of the personalities who are mentioned throughout the autobiography such as Philip Hughes, Marcus Loane, and Knox Broughton and by many significant events and ecclesiastical battles. Analysis is sometimes included by the author, but often the narrative moves so quickly that the analysis is minimal. The author was an Australian who went to South Africa in 1936 and died there in 2003. Reading his autobiography makes one keep in focus the proclamation of the gospel and the planting of churches – this clearly comes through in the book as a central theme. It is arranged into fifty-four brief chapters without illustrations or maps except for the photograph on the cover, so one does need to know their geography well, particularly of South Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, to follow the narrative. Additional editing, illustration, and an index would be welcomed in a second edition and make it more accessible. This is an easy read without an academic apparatus and meant to edify and inform.

## Interdisciplinary

***Pastors in the Classics: Timeless Lessons on Life and Ministry from World Literature.* Leland Ryken, Philip Ryken, and Todd Wilson. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012, 184 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8010-7197-3**

Authored by father and son Leland and Philip Ryken of Wheaton College, along with pastor Todd Wilson of Calvary Memorial Church in Illinois, *Pastors in the Classics* is a compilation of summaries and lessons from many prominent works of literature. The book is divided into two parts. The first portion examines twelve literary classics which centre around the role of a pastor. Some notable examples are *Cry the Beloved Country*, *The Canterbury Tales*, and *Gilead*. The second part of the book is a reference guide which explores a wide range of literary masterpieces in multiple genres, all of which take a certain angle towards the pastoral experience. This concise resource for pastors and lay-folk alike uniquely combines the discipline of literature with leadership in ministry and helps the reader to illumine his or her understanding of both. The authors effectively lay out literary works which embody the realities a pastor will face and remind any reader of the power of well-crafted narrative to help us understand the church.

*Andrew M. Whytock*