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REVIEWS

Theological Dialogue between Orthodox and Reformed Churches

Thomas F. Torrance (ed.)

Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1985; 158pp., £10.50;

ISBN 0 7073 04369.

This is by all accounts a tome of weighty theology. It represents something of a tour de force on the part of Professor Torrance, whose initiative it was that led the World Alliance of Reformed Churches to propose 'structured conversations' between representatives of the Orthodox and Reformed Churches and who, as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1977, personally conveyed the invitation to the Patriarch of Constantinople, as well as visiting other heads of the autocephalous Orthodox Churches. The six papers in this book were produced for the three series of consultations that resulted, at Istanbul in 1979 and Geneva in 1981 and 1983. Apart from a very brief essay on authority (of the Church and in the Church) by Hans-Helmut Esser, all the contributions from the Reformed side are by T. F. Torrance – two memoranda on Orthodox/Reformed relations and a lengthy paper on the Trinitarian foundation and character of faith and authority in the Church. He is also the author of an introduction surveying the course of this sequence of Orthodox/Reformed theological engagements, and he drafted their 'concluding affirmation', entitled 'Agreed Understanding of the Theological Development and Eventual Direction of the Orthodox/Reformed Conversations Leading to Dialogue'. There were two contributors of papers from the Orthodox side.

Although to most Reformed churchmen, Orthodoxy is more unfamiliar than any other major Christian tradition, there is something particularly appropriate about these conversations. Reformed theology, not least through the massive influence of Barth, retains in the late twentieth century a firmer grasp on credal orthodoxy than, say, Anglican theology. John Calvin was more deeply indebted to the Greek Fathers than any other major Reformer (although the extent of his indebtedness, e.g. to Cyril of Alexandria, requires further research. Torrance is inclined to overstate it. The question is of sufficient intrinsic interest, to say nothing of its bearing on Orthodox/Reformed interaction, to merit careful historical examination.) Furthermore, in both traditions, authority in the Church is exercised synodically, although this statement conceals profoundly different understandings of the standing of councils and courts in the Church's life. At any rate, Reformed Christians who identify with a conservative credal and confessional theology may well be advised to look to the common interests shared by Orthodox and Reformed, e.g. in World Council of Churches 'faith and order' discussions.

At the same time, it is important that the Orthodox should get an accurate picture of Reformed thought. Future, more formalized 'dialogue' must surely involve a broader base on the Reformed side, for by no means all Reformed theologians share Professor Torrance's very high estimate of the Nicene Creed, which at times comes near to making it a hermeneutical norm for

interpreting apostolic Scripture. Nevertheless, the question of the nature of the special status to be accorded to the early creeds is a critical one for evangelical theology, not only in grappling with liberalism in the Churches but also in confronting ecumenically Churches such as the Orthodox which place greater weight on tradition.

On other issues, too, Tom Torrance may not find the whole Reformed family following in his foot-steps. He and Esser both eschew not only a hierarchical but also a democratic approach to authority in the Church, and one wonders where the congregationalists in the WARC are hiding their light. To insist that the (ordained) ministry is to be understood "from above and not from below", as deriving from Christ . . . and not from the membership of the Church', is surely to fall into an unnecessary dualism - as though the whole membership of the Church *and all their ministries* were not also 'from above'. The way forward on this issue lies rather in distinguishing within the one Spirit-given ministry of the Church the special role of the ordained. Again, has an emphasis on 'the succession of bishops/presbyters' in the mediation of ordination from generation to generation really been distinctive of the Reformed tradition? On this question Esser's greater reserve is preferable.

Yet though one might differ on this and that, how infinitely superior is Torrance's relentless overdrive theology, with its magisterial word-heavy sentences, to the remarkably insular efforts of the Orthodox spokesmen! The former does not spare the Eastern tradition, especially in those phases of thought most deeply damaged by Neoplatonism, but no less does he spare the medieval West and much that flowed from it, in and after the Reformation, within and beyond the Reformed fold. But on the Orthodox side, self-criticism is barely discernible, and engagement with other major theological currents minimal. One almost gets the impression, fostered, for example, by the esteem accorded to the Fathers of Greek Church, of the Reformed paying court to the Orthodox. But the venerable immobility of Orthodoxy, standing by the old paths, commands its own respect in a day when theological flux reigns in other confessions. *Lux ex oriente?*

The Review Editor

Simon Peter: From Galilee to Rome

Carsten Peter Thiede

Paternoster Press, Exeter, 1986; 272pp., £7.95, paperback;

ISBN 0 85364 386 5.

It is probably true to say that in Protestantism the significance of Peter for the early development of Christianity has been considerably overshadowed by that of Paul. The unique role which Matthew 16:18 gives him has been played down for polemical reasons, and in recent times doubts about the reliability of the sources for reconstructing Peter's career have led to a situation where scholarly studies of the historical Paul far outnumber those of the historical Peter, though interest in the use of the *figure* of Peter in early Christian literature has recently been growing. Thiede is intent on redressing the balance - both in favour of Peter himself, as a uniquely important person in the early church, and in favour of the historical reliability of the New

Testament sources for our knowledge of Peter, including both Petrine letters, whose authenticity he defends. (By a curious slip, the index actually adds '3 Peter' to the usual 1 and 2!) As well as the New Testament sources, he also makes use of archaeology, for here at least Peter has the advantage over Paul: both Peter's home in Capernaum and his grave on the Vatican Hill have been excavated and identified with some probability. Thiede discusses both: he could perhaps have made more of the implications of the former. As for extra-canonical literary sources, there is a good deal of purported information about Peter. Thiede relies on the Fathers with, in my view, too much confidence, but makes too little use of the (in most cases earlier) traditions in the apocryphal literature. (For example, the earliest clear evidence of Peter's martyrdom in Rome under Nero is in the Ascension of Isaiah and the Apocalypse of Peter. Thiede merely refers to the former in a footnote and not at all to the latter.)

This is fundamentally a narrative biography of Peter, in which all discussion occurs within the narrative framework. This makes for an accessible book, from which the general reader can benefit - though he will run into some relatively technical discussion from time to time. The method does, however, limit severely the extent to which he is able to argue his case for interpretations of the evidence which are often quite controversial. Since opposing views are not set out and discussed, but only mentioned in passing, the general reader may be too easily persuaded of Thiede's interpretation. For example, the strong arguments against Petrine authorship of 2 Peter - including those from the literary form of the work, which Thiede, who claims to approach his subject as a 'literary historian', ought to feel obliged to consider - are never presented. Moreover, one would have liked something more in the way of an overall assessment of the significance of Peter's role in the history of Christian origins.

The book is equally divided between Peter's life before and after the Ascension. In the first half, the Gospels are treated as strictly historical reporting. No doubt many readers, tired of the more sceptical approach of most New Testament scholars, will welcome this. But the scholars will not be convinced, because, although Thiede claims to approach the material simply as an historian, the *methodological* issues are not discussed. For example, that the four Gospels corroborate each other, as he claims, is not a valid historical argument *unless* their sources and literary relationships are established, but it is by no means clear how far Thiede differs from the common views on these matters.

One of the most striking features of his reconstruction of Peter's career after Pentecost is that he accepts the patristic tradition of a twenty-five year episcopate in Rome (though with some of this period away from the city). He is not the only modern scholar to do so, though most have allowed Peter to reach Rome only towards the end of his life. However, there are two novel features of Thiede's argument: 1) He argues not only that the 'other place' to which Peter departed, according to Acts 12:17, in A.D. 41/42, was Rome, but also that Luke's phrase is actually a cryptic expression for Rome (from Ezekiel 12:13, by way of the equation of Rome with Babylon, as in 1 Peter 5:13). 2) He argues that Mark's Gospel - a record of Peter's preaching - was written in Rome between A.D. 44 and 46, after Peter's first departure from the city in

A.D. 44. This remarkably early date for Mark's Gospel is based partly on Thiede's claim (argued elsewhere) that a papyrus fragment from Qumran should be identified as part of Mark. But the precise date is based on Irenaeus' statement that Mark wrote the Gospel 'after the *exodos* of Peter and Paul', which Thiede takes in the literal sense of 'departure' as a reference to Peter's departure from Rome in A.D. 44. But this cannot have been Irenaeus' meaning since he refers to the *exodos* of *both* Peter and Paul. The obvious explanation of Irenaeus' statement is that it is based entirely on Papias' information about the writing of Mark and on an interpretation of 2 Peter 1:15 as a reference to Mark's Gospel (an incorrect interpretation, in my view, but correct in Thiede's view). Irenaeus correctly understood *exodos* in 2 Peter 2:15 as a reference to Peter's death, and knew the well-attested tradition that Peter and Paul were both put to death in Nero's persecution.

This is not the only weak argument among the more unusual aspects of the historical reconstruction. It will be obvious that I have numerous reservations about the account of Peter's career in this book. Thiede is currently working on a study of 2 Peter which will no doubt help to substantiate some of the opinions for which he is unable to argue fully in this book. But for the general reader who realises that historical reconstruction is often necessarily tentative, this book offers a rare attempt at an overview of the life of Peter, informed by solid and up-to-date scholarship and throwing light on a whole series of biblical passages.

Richard Bauckham
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The Meeting of the Waters

George Carey

Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1985; 188pp., £4.95, paperback;
ISBN 0 340 37379 6.

Despite the reference to water in its title, this book is not about baptism! Bearing the sub-title, 'A balanced contribution to the ecumenical debate', it is presented by its author as 'a book about Protestant-Catholic relationships from an evangelical perspective' (p. 9). Hoping 'to suggest a way forward towards genuine dialogue and resolution of conflict' while 'not arguing for unity at the expense of truth' (pp. 9-10), Carey expresses the 'hope that the waters of the two great Western traditions may one day meet in spirit and in truth' (p. 11). He uses the imagery of water in his chapter-titles: *The Reservoir of Rome; Protestant Wellsprings of Faith; All at Sea?; Harbour in Sight?*.

Carey's book is a strong, personal statement, 'not written for theological pundits but for average Christians' (p. 11). Since Carey is dealing with such a sensitive subject, it is inevitable that his interesting and readable book will, in places, prove to be provocative. Different readers will assess the book's importance differently. Some will be enthusiastic. Others will be more appreciative of his realism.

A short review such as this can hardly begin to evaluate this wide-ranging book. The most that can be done here is to highlight some of Carey's key emphases.

(a) Carey emphasizes the importance of the Bible, stressing that both Protestants and Roman Catholics must face the tough question: 'is your faith biblical?' (p. 21). Concerning Scripture and tradition, he writes, 'it is one thing to recognise that Scripture derives in part from tradition and quite another to conclude that other traditions are on a par with it. As the apostolic witness to Christ, the New Testament is unique and therefore normative for all other traditions' (p. 65).

(b) He insists that 'We must be careful not to allow our view of Catholicism to be coloured by its sixteenth-century appearance' (p. 33). While maintaining that 'we are not as far apart as some people make out' (p. 67), he points out that 'It would be wrong to suggest that somehow we are just the same. But there has been a true growing together nevertheless' (p. 43).

(c) In seeking a way forward, Carey intends 'not to suggest that truth is not important, nor yet to suggest that all the problems that remain will be solved through a loving attitude alone', but to affirm 'that without love for one another we will never resolve our differences' (p. 92). Quoting Moltmann, he emphasizes that this love for one another must be grounded in Christ's love: 'The nearer we come to Christ's cross, the nearer we come together' (p. 159).

(d) Carey concludes by stressing that we must be 'people of prayer' and 'people of truth' (p. 180). He insists that prayer is not 'an inactive thing: as the history of revivals and renewals shows, prayer is crucial' (p. 180). Concerning truth, he writes, 'Truth and the essentials of the faith would suffer if dialogue among the denominations ended up as a mishmash of uncertainties and vague beliefs. Hard questions must be put to one another, but how they are put will greatly affect the outcome. If history has taught us anything, we will not retreat into polemics. Beware of the polemic preacher; he is half-blind to truth because he fails to see that love must be part of the truth of Christ. Followers of Christ will always do their talking in the light of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Where he is central, not much divides' (p. 180).

Though Carey writes for 'average Christians', his sources are carefully stated in 120 notes (pp. 182-188).

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Biblical Theology: Old and New Testament

Geerhardus Vos

Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1985; 425pp., £5.95;
ISBN 0 85151 223 2.

This work was originally published by Eerdmans just a year before the author's death at 87 years of age, in 1949. It is an important book of abiding value, and the Banner of Truth edition improves its readability by dividing long paragraphs, introducing sub-headings, and supplying much more detailed contents pages.

Vos was born in the Netherlands, but emigrated with his parents to the U.S.A. when he was 19. During his period of theological study he visited the Netherlands again and came under the powerful influence of Kuyper and Bavinck. His determination to master not only Greek and Hebrew but also the

wider Semitic field showed that he had a strong interest in exegesis as well as theology.

These two interests came together when, early in his lecturing career, he was appointed to the newly created chair in Biblical Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary. The subject had been developed with rationalistic presuppositions in the 18th century, and, for this reason, there was little sympathy between evangelical systematic theologians and those liberal scholars who pursued biblical theology. The former, quite understandably, viewed the latter with distrust, for their work so often undermined the authority of the Scriptures. Abraham Kuyper, for example, rejected biblical theology as it was then understood. The authorities at Princeton however rightly saw that the challenge, represented at that time by C.A. Briggs at Union Seminary in New York, needed to be met, and that Vos was the man to meet it.

The book is the fruit of his study of the subject over many years. It is immensely stimulating, but there is one major disappointment. It closes with the ministry of Jesus. This is all the more disappointing because his other works on Pauline theology, especially his Pauline Eschatology are of such a high quality. No doubt his original intention was to include the whole of N.T. theology.

The book is divided into three sections, devoted respectively to the Mosaic and Prophetic epochs of revelation, and to the New Testament. The first of these opens with questions of subject-definition and methodology, in which he is really establishing biblical theology as an evangelical discipline.

The whole work is distinguished by reverence for Scripture, clarity of thought, and courteous treatment of those whose views are different from his own.

The back cover records the judgement of John Murray (a student of his at Princeton) that Geerhardus Vos was the most incisive exegete of the English-speaking world in the twentieth century. This volume provides evidence for this, for his biblical theology was based on painstaking work on each biblical passage handled. On Genesis 22, for example, he shows how important it is rightly to understand the passage because of its substitutionary implications.

His influence has been great, not least on systematic theologians like Murray and Berkhof. We may learn from him that systematic theology has everything to gain from the insights, and even the criticism, of a biblical theology based on the authority of God's Word.

G.W. Grogan
Bible Training Institute, Glasgow

Christ and the Judgment of God: Divine Retribution in the New Testament

Stephen H. Travis

Marshall Pickering, Basingstoke, 1986; 214pp., £9.95, paperback;
ISBN 0 551 01358 3

There are few, I imagine, who would relish writing a book on divine judgment, but we can be grateful that Stephen Travis, who lectures at St John's College, Nottingham, here presents an extensive study of some New Testament

evidence, based on his Cambridge Ph.D. As the sub-title indicates, he has a specific question in view: what place does the notion of 'retribution' hold in the NT view of God's judgment? After surveying some Jewish material, Travis restricts his study to Paul (who takes up the bulk of the book) and the Gospels; the witness of other parts of the NT (e.g. Hebrews and Revelation) is not discussed. The notion of 'retribution' is explored in relation to a number of themes: God's wrath, ideas of reward and punishment, the *lex talionis*, judgment by works, the possibility of losing salvation and the eternal fate of unbelievers. All the major references to such entities within the Pauline and gospel corpora are discussed and the thesis which Travis advances is that, although some retributive terms and concepts are used, Paul and the gospel writers (and Jesus) primarily viewed God's judgment in terms of 'relationship' not 'retribution': God does not pay people back for their deeds but allows them to reap the consequences of their own choice to enter, or refuse to enter, a relationship with him (see pp.124, 152).

It is apparent even from this summary that 'retribution' is a loaded term in this book as in most modern discussions of the matter, and the way that Travis defines his terms in the introductory chapter is clearly of crucial importance. Unfortunately, however, his definitions are not as clear or fully discussed as we might have hoped. The whole direction of the thesis is determined by the statement that 'retribution . . . operates on a less than fully personal level, and it deals with externals' (p.5; the footnote here and remarks elsewhere make clear Travis' dependence on the work of C.F.D. Moule and G.W.H. Lampe). Even if this statement is true it requires much fuller substantiation, because it forms the basis of a host of subsequent judgments that, because Paul or the Gospels are concerned with character, personal relationship with God and the whole direction of a person's life, they cannot be charged with presenting God's judgment in a 'fully' or 'strictly' retributive sense.

A related aspect of Travis' definition of retribution is that it is 'inflicted from outside' or 'extrinsic'. Thus when he finds many indications, especially in Paul and John, that our fates at the judgment are the inherent consequences of our decisions for or against God (we reap what we sow), he concludes that this 'intrinsic' view of judgment is a long way from 'retribution'. And yet, as he rightly acknowledges, the NT writers still insist that it is *God* who metes out judgment (the wrath is not impersonal but God's). Travis clearly feels a tension at this point which might have been eased if he had dropped (or more carefully defined) the terms 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic'.

Nonetheless, Travis' general point is, to my mind, convincingly established, at least in relation to most of the passages he discusses. Since he writes as a committed evangelical, the thrust of his book could act as a valuable corrective of a tendency by some evangelicals to emphasise the concept of retribution when discussing the final judgment. It also has important implications for a doctrine of atonement and it is a pity that Travis never broaches these, or allows himself to discuss at any length the wider theological issues he touches on of human responsibility, the love and sovereignty of God and the problems of holding *either* a universalist doctrine *or* the conviction that God's purpose to save all will ultimately be defeated. Although his book comes in a series entitled 'Foundations for Faith. An Introduction to

Christian Doctrine', Travis sticks very much to his NT material. The result is a book replete with exegetical details on a large number of scattered NT texts and consequently rather hard going for the reader, but nonetheless providing essential groundwork for a wider and most important theological debate.

John Barclay
University of Glasgow

The Beginnings: Word and Spirit in Conversion

Paul Helm

Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1986; 141pp., £2.25, paperback;
ISBN 0 85151 470 7.

This book is about the spiritual and theological framework of Christian conversion, an experience which is analysed in terms of three essential elements or structural principles: conviction of sin, repentance and faith. Helm carefully defines each of these in the light of Scripture, and illustrates their authentic content from biblical narratives. This question of authenticity is crucial to the book's purpose: 'it has to do with the question of how a person who is inclined to respond favourably to the gospel message may be helped to recognise whether or not God is truly at work in him.' As the subtitle indicates, there is also a stress throughout on the conjoint operation of Word and Spirit in true conversion.

While he insists that these structural principles are essential in making up what conversion means, Helm is concerned that we do not absolutise a specific, rigid pattern in Christian experience. This is why he uses the language of 'strands' rather than steps or stages. He recognises conceptual and logical priority, so that saving faith arises out of conviction, and repentance is the consequence of faith, but he is clear that to firm the elements into an invariable order would be unevangelical and legalistic. He adds that the language of strands rather than stages also has the advantage of demonstrating that these are conditions in the logical rather than the causal sense.

The final two chapters deal with 'Problems' and 'Consequences'. Helm faces some of the objections brought against the theology for which he has argued, such as the charge that irresistible divine sovereignty means impersonal and mechanical grace. He argues that divine grace actually restores human personality and freedom. When he turns to the implications which a proper understanding of conversion must have for the life of the church, he has a particularly helpful focus on the kind of piety that results from authentic conversion, a piety that is God-centred, moral, culturally aware, and directed to the end-time.

The importance of our language is a recurring theme. Helm regards the need for our ideas about conversion and the whole course of Christian experience to be gained from and controlled by Scripture as one of the most pressing of the day. He pleads for a restoration of the basic biblical categories of law and sin, of grace and forgiveness, and of penitence and saving faith. 'It is because of the close way in which experience and scripture are and ought to be intertwined that the language that is used in worship, in preaching and in

all other forms of Christian communication, ought to be chosen with great care'.

There is a lot here in brief compass, and the arguments are presented with clarity. The work will be especially useful to all who strive for increasing biblical fidelity in gospel proclamation. It includes General and Scriptural Indexes.

Alasdair I. Macleod
Free Church of Scotland
Muir of Ord

Speaking in Tongues: A Guide to Research on Glossolalia

Watson E. Mills (ed.)

Paternoster Press, Exeter, 1986; 537pp., £22.20, paperback;
ISBN 0 8028 0183 8.

This large volume is essentially a collection of twenty-seven reprinted essays on the subject of glossolalia with an Introduction and a Survey of Literature by the editor, whose own (unpublished) doctoral dissertation (Southen Baptist Theological Seminary, 1968) was on the theological interpretation of tongues in Acts and in 1 Corinthians, and who has published several works pertinent to the theme since.

The aim of the collection is not to provide a unified perspective on the subject but to illustrate the diversity of approaches and methods that have been used in assessing the phenomenon. Accordingly the book has five parts devoted respectively to exegetical, historical, theological, psychological and sociocultural studies; and the contributors range from those who are sharply critical of tongues speech to those who all but explicitly advocate it.

The section on exegetical studies is unfortunately not a good advertisement for New Testament scholarship. With the exception of Harrisville's lexicographical study (*Cath. Bibl. Quart.*, 1976), and John Sweet's careful analysis of Paul's attitude to tongues (*New Test. Studies*, 1967)), the contributions are evidence that the best minds in New Testament research have not considered the theme worthy of especially detailed analysis: silence or mere survey and generalising comments are considered to suffice. Both May's essay on glossolalia and related phenomena in non-Christian religions (which does not rightly belong in this section as it is almost entirely devoted to modern religious phenomena) and Bunn's study of 'Glossolalia in Historical Perspective' provide instructive examples of the misuse of parallels!

The section devoted to historical studies offers only five essays; one general but balanced discussion of the 'Significance of Glossolalia in the History of Christianity'; another on 'The Place of Glossolalia in Neo-Pentecostalism' (actually a theological evaluation and advocacy of the gift), and then three essays only marginally related to glossolalia: on Catholic and Black Pentecostalism and on the Holiness Movement in Southern Appalachia. Perhaps as disappointing was part three - 'Theological Studies': it comprises one NT essay (J. Massyngbaerde Forde) with little more evaluation than already offered in the earlier exegetical section; a most tentative theoretical essay on the problem of applying N.T. advice on glossolalia to today (E. Best);

an attempt to find a common factor in Quaker silence, Catholic liturgy and glossolalia (R. Baer; they each allow the querulous rational mind to rest, and the spirit to respond), and an eirenic and pastoral summary and reappraisal (by Mills).

The last two parts, while containing some thoughtful essays (e.g. that by Vern Poythress), ably demonstrate that the behavioural sciences are no more rigorous, and no less divided on the subject, than their more theological colleagues. The editor did not have available to him Malony and Lovekin's work (1985) which eclipses all previous study.

On the whole we must be grateful to Mills for a useful and representative guide to research on glossolalia, which we must hope will serve to stimulate more rigorous work in the future. The essays are relatively untechnical, and so readable, and there is a fairly lengthy (but by no means complete) bibliography. The reviewer was surprised to find no reference at all to the approaches of Gunkel and Leisegang, even more so to find not a single reference to either of the major works (*vis-a-vis* baptism in Holy Spirit, Pentecostalism and the gifts of the Spirit) by Professor J. D. G. Dunn (he should certainly have appeared on p. 30 instead of Hoekema, who popularises him), and astonished to learn (also p. 30) that F. D. Bruner's *The Theology of the Holy Spirit* is a classic example of biblical exegesis from the Pentecostal point of view (Bruner opposes precisely such)! Perhaps most surprising of all was to find the editor defining glossolalia as 'a purely ecstatic utterance that represents no human language' (p. 2; contrasting it with xenolalia). This is an unforgivably question-begging definition when what little access we have to the psychological state of prophecy and tongues in the NT suggests it was at most partially dissociative (not ecstatic: see Aune and Grudem), and when most modern tongues-speech is decidedly *not* ecstatic (as at least some of the essays in the volume point out).

Max Turner
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Divine Communication: Word and Sacrament in Biblical, Historical and Contemporary Perspective

Hans Schwarz

Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1985; 162pp., £10, paperback;
ISBN 0 8006 1846 7

The author is Professor of Protestant Theology at Regensburg, a Lutheran with an ecumenical orientation. His concern in this book is to survey both historical differences and current understandings of the main observances of the Church's worship, in order to measure progress towards agreement. In relatively short compass he provides a handy guide to mainstream approaches to the word of God, baptism and the Eucharist (to follow his and many writers' questionable discrimination in the use of capitals).

The word of God covers everything from God's 'self-disclosive', history-making word, finally expressed in Jesus Christ, to the preached word, the word as guidance (involving penance), the 'dialogical word' of prayer and liturgy, and the 'empirical word' of miracles - in the Bible, not in the contemporary

world. One might have expected some discussion of Scripture as God's word, but this kind of professional theology has still to recover from the strongly anti-propositional prejudice of a couple of decades ago.

Infant baptism is defended, but the presentation ultimately lacks consistency. On the one hand a theology of baptism must begin with the baptism requested by the convert, on the other hand, 'we do nothing in baptism; God does everything'. Although Schwarz engages with Barth's assault on infant baptism, his own position shows how deeply the passivity of the infant in baptism (which must be judged quite incidental and theologically indifferent, since it is absent from the baptism of those who come voluntarily) continues to influence baptismal theology.

Tagged on to the final chapter on the Lord's Supper is a brief section on ordination, which in turn discusses women's ordination in the last paragraph. Partly because past divisions have run so deep, a greater degree of convergence is evident on the Supper, although Schwarz does not shrink from pointing to areas of continuing disunity - include communion in both kinds. Individual cups are found to be symbolically deficient, but no word of criticism is directed to wafers or pre-diced bread. Surely 'one loaf' is no less biblically demanded than 'one cup'?

Those who want to know the state of play in contemporary inter-confessional reflection on these topics will find this book informative.

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Reality and Scientific Theology

Thomas F. Torrance

Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1985; xvi + 206 pp., £10;

ISBN 0 7073 0429 6.

This book - which is volume one in a series entitled 'Theology and Science at the Frontiers of Knowledge' - explores the links between science and theology. It is a revised form of the Harris Lectures, given in the University of Dundee in 1970. Professor Torrance develops the theme he has explored in other places, that there is no inherent contradiction between science and theology.

Chapter One investigates different approaches to knowledge, contrasting a classical, objective idea of knowledge with a modern constructivist approach that sees science no longer dealing with truth *per se*, but simply formulating mechanisms by which to achieve certain ends (instrumentalism). Torrance notes the danger of scientists' abstracting an aspect of reality (their field of study) and then trying to absolutise that abstraction and understand all on that basis.

Chapter Two examines the status of natural theology. Torrance desires to retain natural theology, not in the traditional sense with some independent status but in a bipolar relationship with revealed theology.

Chapter Three seeks to open up 'The Science of God'. Drawing on Einstein, Torrance indicates how scientific concepts are not arrived at by simple logical inference from sensory experience. There are intuitive elements, which for the theologian must be controlled by the Word which needs to 'become interiorised in our understanding' (p.85).

Chapter Four begins by noting the simple fact that our knowledge is socially, culturally and historically conditioned, and ends with a series of helpful propositions which remind us of the need to relate theology to a living community of faith and also to the scientific world in which we live.

Chapter Five argues that knowledge is not all on the flat, at one level, but multi-dimensional, and the final chapter places everything within a Trinitarian structure - 'the basic grammar of theology' (p.161).

So much for the general content of this book, which is written in Torrance's usual complicated style which unfortunately precludes popular consumption. Several basic criticisms may be made. Is it true to say that it is no longer philosophy but science which drives our culture (p.ix), when it is remembered that it is difficult to separate science from its philosophical foundations? One thinks of Heisenberg's *Physics and Philosophy*, in which he freely indicates that he is pursuing an epistemological programme. Nor is it helpful to characterise the modern field of science in such a uniform manner as Torrance seems to indicate.

Professor Torrance gives the impression of a romantic view of the scientific enterprise. He writes of scientists 'in their service of truth' (p.109), 'for the scientist has no romantic interest in expressing his own individuality or asserting the place of his own personality in knowledge' (pp. 111-112). A few years ago the *New Scientist* ran a series of articles on 'Cheating in Science', while a recent book by Broad and Wade on the sociology of science (called *Betrayers of the Truth*) examines cheating and fraud within science!

Furthermore when Torrance steps out of the rarified academic atmosphere into the practical world of technology we find phrases such as: 'we must also reckon with the cybernetic thrust of the technological society . . . which threatens the purity and objectivity of science' (p.151). This seems to verge on a philosophical Ludditism as regards technology.

Despite these criticisms this is a useful and stimulating contribution to our understanding of theology and science. The book has extensive footnotes at the end of each chapter but could have benefitted from both a general and a name index.

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Worship (Guides to the Reformed Tradition)

Hughes Oliphant Old

John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1986; 202 pp., £6.50, paperback;
ISBN 0 8042 3252 0.

This book not only perfectly fulfils the aims of the series, but can stand on its own as a first-rate scholarly and practical book on worship. In the best Reformed tradition, it expounds Scripture and surveys Church history, especially the early fathers, before explaining what the Reformers did and why they did it. Old understands that it is not enough to assert the authority of the Bible, it is necessary to see how it has been interpreted by the great scholars of the past. And when he comes to the Reformation itself, he knows that the Reformed tradition is collegial, and so we find Bucer and Bullinger, Luther

and Zwingli, Vermigli and Knox alongside Calvin. The author deserves in this review a summary of what is covered, after an opening chapter on *principles*: Christian worship is according to Scripture, in the name of Christ, in the body of Christ – 'Worship is the work of the Holy Spirit, in the body of Christ, to the glory of the Father'. The service of God and the service of neighbour must go together.

On *baptism*, Old stresses the primary meaning of washing, in the context of covenant theology, so that we are justified by faith, not by either our baptism or our decision. There follows a discussion of how the Jewish Sabbath relates to the *Lord's Day*, and the importance of the book of Revelation for understanding the latter.

The chapter on *praise* is one of the most interesting. The psalms are good for praise, prayer, teaching and self-expression. 'It is when there is a dynamic relation between [hymns and psalms] that Christian doxology is best served.' He points out that the Huguenot Psalter was better poetically and musically than the Scots Psalter some are so keen to retain. He speculates when he argues that 'spiritual songs' in Colossians 3.16 cannot be simply 'songs inspired by the Spirit', on the grounds that these early Christian hymns 'simply disappeared' or were 'taken over by the Gnostics'. This seems as weak as the Pentecostals' opposite argument that 'spiritual songs' must simply be singing in tongues.

The chapter on *preaching* is rich, studying scriptural patterns, Jesus' method, later developments so that (a) the preacher began also to preside at the eucharist and (b) prophecy became the prerogative of the preacher. He notes the change during Augustine's time from continuous to selective exposition. The Reformers themselves stressed simple preaching, and tried to hold together a unity between word, prayer and sacrament which the Puritans later lost. After looking at *prayer* in the Bible, and how the early Church continued much Jewish practice, Old notes how prayer forms break down and go stale, and how the Reformers tried to restore true public prayer in a balance between set forms and extempore prayer which is much needed today.

With the *Lord's Supper*, Old seeks to show how a biblical and Reformed approach avoids the twin dangers of sacramentalism and nominalism. He advocates the common cup and single loaf. He explains Calvin's doctrine of Christ's presence at (not on) the Table, to restore our humanity, and expounds Vermigli, a little known Oxford theologian who in turn used the ideas of Hilary of Poitiers. He comments on Knox's liturgy and the common design of Scottish churches to let the congregation sit round three sides of the Table.

The Reformers restored the Jewish and early Christian practice of *Daily Prayer*, with a morning service (one or two psalms, prayer, sermon, intercessions and blessing) and evening service. In the 17th century this became daily family prayer, and later just individual prayer. Especially with the number of single people in churches, we need to recover daily worship in congregations, and set our counselling ministry in that context. There follows a chapter on alms and the importance of the diaconate.

The final chapter is irenic, noting that we cannot put back the clock, and that we have still to practise some of the things the Reformers failed to - such as weekly communion! And a final lesson from the Reformers: their prayers

were not 'so obsessed with walking the tightrope of theological formulation that they lost the doxological spirit'.

*Jock Stein
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The Church: God's Agent for Change

Bruce J. Nicholls (ed.)

World Evangelical Fellowship Theological Commission, Paternoster Press, Exeter, 1986; 299pp., £7.95, paperback; ISBN 0 85364 444 6

In an age of conferences experience suggests that the majority make an impact that is immediate but short-lived. This collection of essays demonstrates how exceptional the 1974 Lausanne Congress on World Evangelisation has proved to be. For the Lausanne Covenant which emerged from that Congress has proved, ten years later, to be central in setting the agenda not only for the thinking of Evangelicals, but also for determining their approach. This book is an edited selection of materials originally presented in 1983 at Wheaton College, Illinois. The subject is the nature and mission of the local church. The themes round which the book is built emerge straight from the Lausanne Covenant: the biblical foundations for the Church; the place of the Church in relation to the Kingdom of God; the twin responsibilities of the Church to evangelise and work for social change; the fact of suffering and the call to renewal. So too does its spirit, recognising the importance of repentance and rejecting all temptations to triumphalism.

In the introductory essay the book is described frankly as 'bewildering and enriching' and indeed, that may be an accurate assessment. It is bewildering in that there is an unevenness to the handling of the eight themes. Some of the contributions are light-weight, others have had their readability affected by the editorial pen. Yet for the Christian, concerned to see the state of Evangelical thinking and practice in the 1980s, this book can also be enriching. Over two thirds of the essays and reports come from the Third World or from Eastern Europe. That in itself is a reminder of the way that the centre of Christianity has shifted from the West. It also allows us to listen to the authentic voice of the Church around the world, thinking, feeling, planning, praying, working, suffering. In the theological essays that introduce most sections we have helpful summaries of contemporary Evangelical thinking on key issues concerning the doctrine of the Church. These papers provide the meat of the book, and are well within the scope of the interested church member. They also provide a framework for reflection on the papers that follow. Half the chapters - 14 out of 31 - are case studies, where local churches throughout the world relate their experience as a demonstration of how the Church actually practises its beliefs. For those concerned with church leadership, seeing how others do it, and why, is always constructive. The book itself is written under the belief that Evangelicals, concerned as they are with the priority of personal faith, continue to have a 'blind spot' in terms of their doctrine of the Church. This is no new criticism, as it is voiced by those in the High Church in the 19th century. It was Christ the King who said 'I will build my Church' (Matt. 16:18) and the New Testament sees the Church as a

gathered community which has a sending mission to the world. By worship, witness and service it is to be involved in the work of world evangelisation, in concern for human justice, and in responding to human need. By doing so it seeks to fulfil Christ's mission of redemption and liberation while pointing forward to his coming reign as Judge and King. Yet the Church too often has been characterized, despite its growth and activism, by fragmentation, disunity, paternalism, insensitivity and the abuse of power. Recognising where the Church has failed to fulfil its high calling, the papers in this book call Christians and local churches to examine afresh their attitude to the Church, the relationship between churches and para-church agencies, and the importance of creating a Christian counter-culture in a non-Christian world. This is an interesting book to dip into, to test the temperature of the worldwide evangelical community.

Colin A. M. Sinclair
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Ayr

Spiritual Care

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1985; 93 pp., £4.75, paperback;
 ISBN 0 8006 1874 2.

In 1935 Dietrich Bonhoeffer was appointed Principal of the clandestine seminary of the German Confessing Church at Finkenwalde, one of five such preachers' seminaries to be established. He saw his task to be the training of pastors as 'theologians, preachers, pastors, teachers and administrators under the Word of God, persons who lived as "committed disciples"'. *Spiritual Care*, after a long introductory essay by Jay C. Rochelle, consists of Bonhoeffer's lectures to his students on the pastoral process by which a person is introduced to a meeting with Jesus Christ. He considers how the gospel message, which is essentially that of forgiveness, can be brought to people in the midst of their personal lives. After a long, and valuable, chapter on law and gospel in spiritual care he looks at the practical situations people face - temptation, weddings, funerals, sickness, and considers the pastor's role and message in them. The central emphasis is that the pastor is not a psychotherapist, but a man of God, called and sent by his Lord to his flock, not even to befriend them, but to be to them the agent of spiritual care. The pastor must not draw attention to himself, allow his own weaknesses and unworthiness to obstruct or make himself out to be someone whom you can trust. His task is to lead sinners to Jesus Christ, the source of forgiveness and salvation. Bonhoeffer's total emphasis is much needed today and deserves, in an age of counselling and pastoral techniques, to be given a hearing.

Jay C. Rochelle's long introduction rather tends to invite us to read *Spiritual Care* as an example of Bonhoeffer's early thought rather than for its own sake. The eleven pages of notes and the bibliography of works by and about Bonhoeffer all contribute to this impression. That is a pity as *Spiritual Care* deserves to stand by itself and make its own impact.

James Taylor
Stirling Baptist Church

Journey Towards Holiness: A Way of Living for God's Nation

Alan Kreider

Marshall Pickering, Basingstoke, 1986; 252pp., £4.95, paperback;
ISBN 0 551 013621.

This is an invigorating, refreshing and stimulating book. It would be a mistake to lump it with the multiplicity of current calls for a simple life-style for Christians and for protest against social injustice and the nuclear folly. It is that, but much more. Just as Kreider calls for distinctive living so there is something basically distinctive about the book. The author begins with God and ends with a call to godly holiness. Holiness he sees as a living force, God on the move, and the 'geyser' of spiritual energy. Holiness is separation with a God-reflecting quality. God, being holy, calls Israel, and then the Church, not only to be holy but also to take part in holy action. The author traces this call through the phases of Israel's history, dealing perceptively on the way with the issue of the just war, stressing the importance of the manna principles of sufficiency and equality and highlighting the Jubilee as the central theme of Old Testament economics. Kreider believes that in Luke 4:18-19 our Lord inaugurated the Jubilee. He then called his own to display a social holiness which will affect every area of life. The Church is called to practise Jubilee economics and will deal with enemies, not by killing them, but by loving them. Kreider complains that many contemporary Christians apply holiness mainly to things, have replaced sufficiency with unrestricted growth, have ignored the principle of equality and are prepared to go to unholy lengths, through militarism, to satisfy their need of protection. He insists that the only separateness which has anything to say to our age is one that is a reflection of God. Our contemporaries assert their own strength and security while God calls his people to trust him while acknowledging their own powerlessness.

Kreider encourages us not to start our thinking with bombs, economics, social injustice and the like. Our starting point is God and his holiness and his call, fulfilled in Jesus, to his people to be holy. Not surprisingly, therefore, the book is full of hope and confidence.

It is difficult to fault the argument. Instead of looking for weaknesses in the author's case the reader begins to sense the inadequacies of his own defences. The book is compelling reading.

James Taylor
Stirling Baptist Church

A Textbook of Christian Ethics

Robin Gill

T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1985; 571 + xiii pp., £9.95, paperback;
ISBN 0 567 29127 8.

This is a 'Textbook' in an unusual sense of the word. It is not so much a straightforward description of the main issues of Christian ethics, as a book of texts, ranging from Augustine to Miranda, which discuss problems in Christian ethics and illustrate some of its most essential characteristics. Gill divides his texts into four main sections, entitled 'Methodology', 'Politics and Social Justice', 'War and Peace' and 'Human Life and Interpersonal

Relationships', and in each section he provides a 'Text' from Augustine, Aquinas and Luther followed by six or seven 'Extracts' from twentieth-century authors of Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Reformed, Lutheran and Quaker backgrounds. As well as an Introductory chapter, he provides an introduction to each section and to each Text or group of Extracts. Here he introduces his sources with an analysis of their Background, Key Issues, Ethical Arguments, Bases of Christian Ethics, Social Determinants and Social Significance. And at the end of each subsection he provides a brief critique weighing up the strengths and weaknesses of the texts under discussion. The result is an extremely valuable perspective on the complex issues of Christian ethics, demonstrating above all the great *variety* of Christian viewpoints which have been and continue to be propounded.

Obviously the worth of a book such as this depends entirely on two factors: the selection of texts and the critical acumen with which they are introduced and commented upon. It is fascinating to see, side by side, Augustine's struggle to express the relation between the earthly and heavenly cities, Aquinas' assumption that God designed the church to rule the state, and the very different perspectives engendered by Barth's neo-orthodoxy, Temple's Christian socialism and Miranda's liberation theology. Gill has deliberately chosen texts which illustrate the diversity in Christian ethics - the range of different theological starting-points and the bewilderingly different conclusions. The latter is particularly well exemplified in the section on 'War and Peace' where we have the full range from Aquinas' 'Just War' theory to Raven's Christian pacifism, taking in, on the way, Ramsey's theory of the justifiable bluff in nuclear deterrence and a fascinating United Reformed Church paper on non-violent action. My only criticism of Gill's selection would be (a) that he sticks too rigidly to his trio of 'classics' (Augustine, Aquinas and Luther): surely Calvin should be included somewhere; and (b) that he sometimes tries to cover too broad an area. In particular, the last section on 'Human Life and Interpersonal Relationships', is really too disparate, since it covers sexual ethics, racism, abortion, euthanasia, suicide and feminism. It would have been better to stick to just one or two of these areas.

As regards Gill's introductory comments and critiques, one may say that he has helpfully highlighted the different theological traditions evidenced in his sources, e.g., the Catholic accent on 'natural law', the Lutheran emphasis on man's fallenness, and the 'personalist' stress in modern situation ethics. He also points out the very varied uses of the Bible and is particularly helpful in demonstrating the influence of the writers' social contexts on their ethical presuppositions and conclusions. It is only a pity that, sometimes, Gill's comments are not as crisp and incisive as they might have been; the discussion of 'Key Issues' is never more than a *précis* of the relevant document(s) and the Critique could have been usefully sharpened by enumerating the most important unresolved or unanswered questions. However, there are times when Gill is admirably perceptive and employs his wide-ranging knowledge to good effect. Certainly this book will prove to be a very useful 'primer' for many students of Christian ethics, both in formal education and in private reading. Gill's broad selection of materials and his overall conclusion, that there are some crucial and creative tensions built into Christian ethics, will

undoubtedly correct those who approach the subject (or a particular modern ethical dilemma) without a proper sense of its history and complexity. In other words, this book is well suited to fulfil its aim, 'to contribute to a more mature understanding of Christian ethics' (p. xii).

John Barclay
University of Glasgow

Talking about God is Dangerous

Tatiana Goricheva

SCM Press, London, 1986; 103pp., £3.95; ISBN 0 334 01582 0.

Students of religious life in modern U.S.S.R. agree that the continued life of the Orthodox Church is nothing short of a miracle. Archaic in its liturgy, hamstrung by pressures Westerners can hardly conceive of, the Orthodox Church continues to be a vehicle of salvation, renewal and rebirth.

Tatiana Goricheva's book, *Talking about God is Dangerous*, describes one woman's pilgrimage from atheism to faith. It gives a clear inside view of Orthodoxy, with fascinating portraits of monks and laity, as well as an immigrant's view of the West.

John Bowden is to be commended for his flowing translation. Tatiana Goricheva, a philosopher 'of great promise', co-founder of the Leningrad Christian Seminar and the women's movement known as the Maria Club, begins her book with the appearance of the K.G.B. 'I sat down at my desk and began to read Karl Rahner's *Foundations of Christian Belief*', she writes, and describes how she confronts her questioners with silence sustained by prayer.

She describes her conversion ('My life only began when God found me') via the saying of the Lord's Prayer as a yoga exercise. 'I was suddenly turned inside out. I understood, not only with my ridiculous understanding, but with my whole being - that he exists . . . the old me died . . . my heart was also opened.' Evangelicals will be familiar with this, but when Goricheva writes about her confession, her visits to the monastery, I would urge readers: not to be disturbed by a spirituality which is so unfamiliar to many Scottish Christians. Goricheva's lucid mind, her converted heart go to the essences: 'Today the time has dawned in Russia in which the truth is being revealed, in all its force, that says of Christ, "He is the life".'

Personal though this testimony is, it is also the story of Russia, its peasantry, its elders, who officially no longer exist, its 'martyr children' who 'bravely bore the torments - and indeed the blows'. We witness the fervent prayer of Russian Baptists, and we see the church of the West, where Goricheva now lives in enforced exile. Banal and boring, on the one hand, 'steeped in emptying' on the other, the church here, says Goricheva, has failed to understand the strength of hiddenness and the conquering power of the cross. It is here in the West that 'Talking about God is dangerous', because too many words trivialise and too few are authentic. This is a book to ponder. It will be welcomed by the many hungry souls in our satiated society who reach out to God in hidden ways.

Jenny Robertson
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Jonathan Edwards: A New Biography

Iain H. Murray

Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1987; 503pp., £10.95;
ISBN 0 85151 494 4

This is a handsome, and, for those with any interest in Jonathan Edwards, an enthralling volume, in which scarcely a leaf or a stone has been left unturned in an effort to provide an attractive portrayal of Edwards, his family and his pastoral ministry. Reading it prompted three lines of thought.

The first is that Iain Murray portrays Edwards chiefly as a pastor and family man. He maintains that all that Edwards did was subservient to gospel preaching. As a consequence only a few lines are devoted to those writings of Edwards which were not concerned either with revival or with more general issues of Christian spirituality. There is scarcely a word on *The Freedom of Will* or *Original Sin*. Such an emphasis hardly corresponds to that of Edwards himself, and does scant justice either to his metaphysical appetite or to the legacy of writing which he has bequeathed. Edwards himself had a much broader view of 'divinity' than that implied here.

Secondly, the book focusses upon the Great Awakening and then upon the troubles at Northampton which led to Edwards' dismissal from the pulpit. The juxtaposition of the glories of the one and the shame of the other cries out for comment and analysis, but receives none. Can it be that the very same congregation which received such benefits of revival in 1740 and subsequently, unceremoniously bundled Edwards and his family out in 1750? Where were the fruits of revival? Had they completely vanished? Among the possible answers to these questions are that the effects of the revival were transient, or that Edwards' dismissal was due to the actions of an influential and unrepresentative minority. Murray opts for the second explanation without even considering the first. But could it be that the popular idea that revival is a panacea needs serious qualification?

There is another plausible explanation of Edwards' dismissal, that the people had by 1750 had more than enough of their pastor's aloof and austere ways and were glad to see the back of him. Such an explanation is not even hinted at in the book, much less seriously considered.

This leads me to my third line of thought about Murray's biography. It is an example of a familiar and popular genre, the Protestant life of a saint. In its attention to detail Murray's book has some of the features of a modern critical biography, say Ben Pimlott's recent study of Hugh Dalton, but it is not *critical*. The materials which Murray uses come from this Protestant hagiographical tradition and he endorses it. There is scarcely one adverse comment on Edwards between the book's elegant covers. There is no assessment, no analysis. Why is there this perfectionism among the Reformed? Where are the warts and the skeletons which, the apostle Paul tells us, afflict and haunt even the most eminent believer until his death?

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Luther and the Modern State in Germany (Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, 7)

James D. Tracy (ed.)

Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, Kirksville, MO, 1986; 108 pp., \$25;
ISBN 0 940474 07 7

There is a feeling abroad that German history has trodden a path different from that of the French or English pattern since the Renaissance (its *Sonderweg*), a path which culminated in the disastrous wars of Kaiser Wilhelm and Hitler, a path which in some vague way originated with Luther. This idea has been perpetuated by otherwise reliable authorities, e.g. William Temple and Bonhoeffer, or earlier writers such as Weber or Maritain. It is this 'Luther-to-Hitler' legend which is handled by these essayists at a high, scholarly level. Though learned and authoritative, the essays are readable, fresh and informative, well illustrated from sources, annotated and documented.

The essayists bring fresh light and informed argument into a complex and controversial area of thought. Heinz Schilling gives an account of the Reformation and the rise of the early modern state, and argues trenchantly that, to make Luther responsible for the German political thinking of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, is dead wrong. He brings in the new point of the importance of the rise of confessionalism – Lutheran, Calvinist and Post-Tridentine Catholic. He points out the significance of the rise of independent territorial states, as well as the complexity of factors which produced the sacralisation of the prince and his government in modern Germany. He bluntly (and rightly) argues that Luther never started this and never upheld it. T. A. Brady writes a highly readable essay on Luther's teaching in its social setting, and how Luther's prestige and the weight of history were brought in to support ideas which could not otherwise bear examination. (This is exactly how the reviewer remembers the Hitler regime in his studies in the Nazi Germany of 1936-7.) Eric Gritsch gives a straightforward account of Luther's teaching on the state. He dissociates Luther from Lutheranism in this respect, and also sixteenth-century politics from those of the modern state, now secularised, which, contrary to all Luther stood for, defines everything in terms of human need and human purpose and not in terms of God's demands. He shows how twentieth-century Lutheranism has lost this dimension altogether, and not only this, but also Luther's two-kingdom ethic. Karlheinz Blaschke contributes a specialist study of the rise of Albertine Saxony, showing how the state as state was obliged to support Protestantism in order to exist at all, which in turn enriched the state, and further, how the territorial state was the only power able to reconstruct a new church order: being Protestant became virtually a state duty. He stresses the importance of the administrative bureaucracy, which provided an institutionally unified state Church, which was no Protestant movement as such, but which equally characterised Catholic powers such as Spain and Austria. He cannot see all this as a consequence of the nailing up of the 95 Theses in 1517. The final essay by Brent O. Peterson handles the story of Luther scholarship in East Germany. In a commanding grasp of the material he shows how the modern state of the DDR seized on Luther for political

ends, and how, by and large, German scholars stood up to the state, and in turn have discovered the ambiguity of Luther and his refusal to be measured by, or limited to, any political, social or even theological preconceptions.

This collection of essays is a work first of demolition and then of reconstruction. They serve to remove prejudice and ignorance and restore sound, historical judgment. Some general conclusions emerge. First, the ghost of the 'Luther-to-Hitler' legend is now finally laid. Secondly, the complexity of historical movements is demonstrated, and with that, the danger of making facile and simplistic judgments. Thirdly, the story of the Marxist historiography reminds us how an historian's judgment, even when informed, may be crippled by a wrong starting point. Fourthly, the stern lesson that when all the political, social and cultural factors are assessed, neither singly nor collectively do they constitute a true approach to Luther, nor a profitable analysis, for the simple reason that one can only begin to understand Luther when seen in the divine dimension, i.e., a prophet from God to the whole people of God.

James Atkinson
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Renaissance and Reformation

William R. Estep

William B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, and Paternoster Press, Exeter, 1985; 331pp., £19.50, paperback; ISBN 0 8028 0050 5

About one third of this book by the Professor of Church History at Northwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is devoted to the background of the Reformation. Although the emphasis, as the title would suggest, is on the Renaissance in Italy and northern Europe, useful sections are included on the character of medieval life and upon previous reform movements in the Church, especially those connected with Wycliffe, Huss and Erasmus. But the greater part of the book is devoted to the Protestant Reformation. Quite detailed accounts are given of the contributions of Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, the Anglican Reformers and the Anabaptists. Events in France, Spain, the Netherlands and Scotland are recounted more briefly. The volume concludes with a chapter on 'The Catholic Revival' and an 'Epilogue', entitled 'Reformation and Revolution'. There is a substantial but selective bibliography of works in English, German, Latin and Spanish. There are numerous illustrations and the maps are to be commended for their clarity.

Professor Estep is an attractive writer and the book is elegantly produced. The specialist will find it satisfying because it is based on extensive but unobtrusive scholarship. At the same time, the book should find grateful readers amongst students and the general public.

The author defines his standpoint in the 'Prologue'. He declines to accept the view that the Reformation was a rejection of the Renaissance and prefers to see it as a movement that learnt from the Renaissance how to return in a scholarly way to the Bible so that it could once again 'hear the voice of the apostles - and of God'. He insists, however, that there was much more to it than an academic revival. He declines to follow those historians who seek to interpret the Reformation 'in terms of Marxist paradigms', as well as those

social historians who interpret it 'in terms of the economic, political and social changes' of the period. In Dr. Estep's opinion both groups fail to do justice to the religious, theological and philosophical aspects of the Reformation. He therefore seeks to redress the balance - and he succeeds. Insofar as the Reformation inspired a re-examination of the gospel itself, it led to a new and creative appreciation of the revelation of God in Christ.

The author's own special emphasis, as one would expect after reading his previous studies of Anabaptism, is that the Reformation eventually led to a flowering of the voluntary principle and this, with the passage of time, made freedom one of the cardinal elements in Western society. Nevertheless, Dr Estep, although he is particularly enlightening on the Anabaptists, is warm and judicious in his appraisal of the work of the magisterial Reformers, and has a special admiration for Martin Luther.

In short, we have here an admirable study, to be welcomed and commended.

R. Tudur Jones
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**Church and University in the Scottish Enlightenment:
The Moderate Literati of Edinburgh**

Richard B. Sher

Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1985; xix + 390 pp., £30;
ISBN 0 85224 504 1

The second half of the eighteenth century in Scotland witnessed an efflorescence of cultural activity that has attracted the label 'The Scottish Enlightenment'. Its prevailing tone, unlike that of its French equivalent, was neither anticlerical nor critical of the established order. Dr Sher, who teaches humanities at New Jersey Institute of Technology, shows that the explanation lies in the prominence within its ambience of ministers of the Church of Scotland. He has selected for detailed study five approximate contemporaries, born about 1720, each of whom contributed significantly to what he calls 'the culture of the literati of eighteenth-century Scotland'. They are William Robertson, equally outstanding as historian, principal of Edinburgh University and manager of ecclesiastical affairs; Adam Ferguson the social analyst and moral philosopher; John Home the dramatist; Hugh Blair the preacher and professor rhetoric; and Alexander Carlyle, noted chiefly for the pungent autobiographical account of his career. All were Moderates in church politics. They believed that the choice of parish ministers should be in the hands not of the people, but of the landed proprietors. It was through the patronage of the great that they rose to positions of influence, a process skilfully dissected in this book. By analysing their writings and the controversies in which they engaged, Dr Sher goes on in the greater part of the volume to lay bare their assumptions.

The Moderates, it is insisted, were orthodox. Nevertheless they conspicuously avoided what a contemporary Evangelical called 'the peculiar doctrines of Christianity'. Rather than dwell on the person of Christ, the atonement, justification and sanctification, they characteristically devoted their attention to commending moral behaviour. Their ethics, derived through Francis

Hutcheson from the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, were ultimately inspired by Stoicism. Virtue, they contended, consists in a steadily benevolent disposition. Even in adverse circumstances, such as poverty, this quality could be sustained. Hence there was no reason for doubting that the lower orders could possess a virtuous contentment. The principle of subordination was the capstone of a conservative socio-political theory that proved entirely acceptable to Samuel Johnson. The rebellion of the Americans was consequently anathema; conversely the Scottish nation needed to defend its existing happy state by employing a militia, an expression of public virtue. Pride in Scotland's standing induced the literati, and especially Hugh Blair, mistakenly to believe in the authenticity of the poetry of Ossian. Tolerance led them to wish to concede fuller civil rights to Roman Catholics. Moderatism, the author concludes, was a blend of Presbyterianism, Scottish nationalism, Stoicism, civic humanism, conservatism and enlightenment.

What picture emerges of the Evangelicals in the Kirk? Although they are not the subject of the monograph, a large number of incidental references build up a substantial body of information. It is evident, for instance, that the traditional image of the Evangelicals as inveterate opponents of the Moderates in the church courts possesses a large measure of truth. There were clashes over patronage, Catholic relief, the American war and many other issues. In this area, however, a reservation may be registered on a point of Dr Sher's interpretation. He argues that the Inverkeithing patronage case of 1752-53 injected disputes of principle, as opposed to squabbles over political management, as a new element into the Kirk. But dissension on points of principle - doctrinal principle - had already broken the peace of the church. In 1743-44 for instance, a disputed election to the Glasgow chair of divinity had divided Evangelicals from proto-Moderates, and there had been discernible similarities in the earlier Marrow and Simson affairs. So there was probably more continuity between the two halves of the century in ecclesiastical partisanship than is here contended.

Further, the Evangelicals possessed within their ranks much more culture, decorum and 'politeness' than is suggested in this work. Dr Sher points out that there is evidence of the shedding of narrowness by Evangelicals later in the century, but in fact some of their leading figures assimilated novel intellectual influences at exactly the same time as their Moderate contemporaries. John Erskine was at Edinburgh in the 1730s with Carlyle and Robertson, imbibing the same spirit of inquiry, an identical love of literature and (to quote Erskine's biographer) a comparable 'active solicitude to promote the best interests of mankind'. The circle round Erskine corresponded with Jonathan Edwards, concurring in the philosophical views of John Locke that he expounded. As much as their ecclesiastical opponents, they were men of the Enlightenment. Their objection to Roman Catholicism was not a sign of intolerance but premised on the belief that Roman Catholicism was itself intolerant. Erskine and his friends actually called themselves 'moderate'. The party label 'Moderate' was fixed to the advocates of patronage by one of the Evangelicals, John Witherspoon, as an exercise in irony. Their rigid imposition of ecclesiastical authority, according to Witherspoon, was to be censured precisely because it was not moderate. This is not to suggest that all Evangelical ministers were polished, urbane and highly educated, far from it.

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But it is to propose that another dimension of the church would amply repay study by specialists in the Scottish Enlightenment.

Dr Sher's book will be the starting point for such study. It is primarily a work for scholars, replete with notes at the foot of the page that bear testimony to painstaking research and critical appraisal. Yet it is extremely readable and will serve a much wider public on account of the admirable bibliographical essay that provides detailed guidance about the literature on Scotland and its Enlightenment. This volume takes its place as by far the most valuable published work on eighteenth-century Scottish church history.

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Faith Theology and Imagination

John McIntyre

The Handsel Press, Edinburgh, 1987; 176 pp., no price;

ISBN 0 905 312 65 1.

I have long suspected that the Reformed tradition has neglected the realm of imagination. But, so I believe, imagination is part of our humanness and is a gift of God.

So I welcomed this book by the Professor Emeritus of Divinity at Edinburgh University. As he tells us, he has thought long on the use of imagination, and he is obviously aware of the problems of the subject. His aim is 'Not to invent some new theology which is designed to replace the old, but rather, by using the concept of imagination to work over much of the familiar theological material, to view it from a different angle, in the hope that we would gain fresh understanding of our faith' (p.4). In the Introduction Professor McIntyre briefly discusses why imagination has been suspect. He then considers an essay by George MacDonald: 'The Imagination: Its Function and its Culture'. This little known essay raised questions which have been largely ignored. This book is a response to some of MacDonald's ideas.

In an examination of the biblical material there is an interesting chapter on 'The Parabolic Imagination'. It concentrates mainly on the Gospels and, obviously, the parables and images used by Jesus. There can be no doubt that Jesus stimulated the imagination, and challenged the hearts of his hearers, with his parables. The same is true of his enacted parables which are described as 'Realistic Imagination'. I found some fresh insights in this chapter.

In discussing 'Imagination as a Theological Category' Professor McIntyre shows how imagination can help our understanding in many areas of our faith, including the attributes of God, creation, incarnation, atonement and the Holy Spirit.

Imagination is then considered in the 'Ethical Dimension'. An imaginative approach can help in the tensions which our ethical principles hold, such as those between persons and principles, freedom and necessity, and authority and freedom.

Then there is imagination in the 'Philosophical Dimension'. This chapter gives a helpful outline of various views on imagination and what can be learned from them. Philosophers discussed include Plato, Hume and, among the more modern, Sartre, Collingwood, Warnock and Murdoch. I found this to be a helpful summary of various philosophical viewpoints. This is then carried into a chapter on methodology and epistemology. The final chapter summarises the characteristics

of imagination and images. In all this, Professor McIntyre sees imagination, not as one specific part of the mind but 'the whole mind working in identifiable ways' (p. 59).

I found this an interesting and stimulating book. It reinforced my suspicions that 'whether we acknowledge it or not, we have been employing imagination in our religion and in our theology, ever since we first became involved in these practices' (pp. 175f.).

It is a book of scholarship, as we would expect, and not for light reading. There are areas where I would tend to differ and, as we need our minds renewed, I would have liked something on the question of sanctified imagination. But, on the whole, I found it a challenging and thought-provoking book.

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God and Science: The Death and Rebirth of Theism

Charles P. Henderson Jr.

John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1986; 186pp., £10, paperback;
ISBN 0 8042 0668 6

This book seeks to trace the rise and fall of scientific atheism, attempting to invert the major arguments against religion and use them to defend God. In pursuit of this objective Henderson examines the work of Einstein, Freud, Darwin and Marx and seeks to develop what he calls a 'new biblical theism'. Central to his thesis is the argument that the historical dualism between fact and faith is no longer tenable in the light of contemporary science. This is helpful but needs to be much more clearly developed than it is here. The last chapter - 'Towards a New Theism' - reviews the work of Tillich, Küng, Macquarrie and Torrance, with the last taking us full circle back to Einstein. In earlier chapters the author sees a real reconciling of science and God in the work of Tillich and Teilhard de Chardin. There is an adequate index and bibliography.

I found this a puzzling book because the central thesis often disappears under irrelevant biographical cameos. Chapter One is entitled: 'Albert Einstein - New Proof for the Existence of God.' But Einstein's thought is not explored in any depth and we are treated to a history of twentieth-century physics - in which Einstein certainly played a critical role. Similarly in the third chapter, on Darwin, we find ourselves more caught up in a discussion of Paley. This chapter assumes that the Bible is inaccurate and evolution true. It is also puzzling to learn that de Chardin and Tillich are the theologians who have rescued God from the clutches of scientific atheism. Overall the work lacks an awareness of contemporary philosophy of science - an area one would have thought essential in a work of this nature. Indeed apart from a few references to Torrance and Küng this book is curiously out of date.

Finally, in a book concerned with the rebirth of theism the concept of God is crucial. In the end the fusion Henderson achieves between God and science is with the God, not of the Bible, but of Tillich. With approval he notes that Tillich 'concedes that the concept of a supernatural being who intervenes in history and interferes with natural events is incompatible with science' (p.126). The word 'G-o-d' is seen as simply a 'papier mache' symbol of deeper reality. On p.137 Phil.2:6-7 is used to negate any idea that God rules over his creation - surely a

strange extrapolation from a passage dealing with the humiliation of our Lord Jesus! In fact God is not even lawgiver: 'as we reflect back upon the biblical roots of western theism, we know that God is not fundamentally a lawgiver at all' (p.150).

This is an intriguing and easily read book. It is intriguing because of the puzzling characteristics I have hinted at, and the sweeping way in which the Bible is assumed to be inaccurate. It is easily read, however, and there are some interesting details concerning the lives with which it deals.

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Transforming Economics. A Christian Way to Employment

Alan Storkey

SPCK, London, 1986; 212pp., £5.95, paperback; ISBN 0 281 04225 X

Alan Storkey examines three explanations of unemployment and the remedies each implies: designated briefly as the monetarist, the Keynesian, and the Marxist and Socialist alternatives. Each is found to be wanting. Storkey shows that even mechanistic models of the economy cannot dismiss institutional influences and values and goes on to provide a Christian alternative, which substitutes 'our stewardship of God's creation' for the 'dominant attitude today' of self-interest. Its consequences are worked out in critical evaluations of several institutions - the financial world, joint-stock companies, professional organisations - and lead to a series of recommendations for changes in policy.

The main thrust of the study, brought out in the final section, that economics will be transformed only by the prior transformation of the values of those who make economic decisions, is commendable, but some reservations must be expressed on its detailed application to economic affairs. Some follow the inevitable brevity of the exposition. It would not be easy to recognise from the references to Adam Smith's advocacy of self-interest that he stressed also the influence of sympathy in human motivation. More serious is Storkey's emphasis in his evaluation of contemporary institutions. How accurate is the conclusion of the chapter on financial institutions that 'While the temples to money soar in the City, factories are flattened in the provinces'? Are 'bankers, capitalists and many Conservatives' alone in British society in having an ideology which gives a low priority to the consumer? Is less than one page given to trade unions out of 13 devoted to the 'Professional Closed Shop' a balanced presentation? Should the 'greed and status-maintenance of some consultants' be isolated as widely responsible for subverting the National Health Service? Such views are too complex for sweeping condemnations; still more so are the consequences of implementing the long lists of radical changes in policy which are suggested.

Storkey does great service by drawing attention to the influence of institutions and values in economic decision-making and by insisting that Christians must adopt Christian values. Unfortunately he gives inadequate recognition of how some of those who would agree with his exposition of the biblical principles involved can still reach different conclusions on their application in economic life. They are matters about which Christians may disagree. Even acceptance of his leading principle of stewardship may include the application of some of the objectives he castigates at the end - efficiency, growth, competition, profit,

consumption, pleasure and technology - to promote economic prosperity, without which many of the laudable objectives of improved conditions of life are unobtainable. Storkey's objection is to the sin of making such objectives the goal of economic activity, but there is a danger, especially among the economically less well-informed, that their legitimate, though supporting, role within the greater principle of stewardship may be neglected. Such objectives are certainly not man's chief end; they may still be, in the words of the Larger Catechism, 'lawful means' to be used to 'enjoy a competent portion' of 'the outward blessings of this life'.

There is much to be said in favour of Storkey's objective of encouraging Christians to be aware of the implications of their beliefs in economic life, but those who do so should also stress the practical difficulties. Storkey does not underestimate them in his general emphasis on the need for transformed values, though his book would have gained from more emphasis on the difficulties of the detail. The danger is that some of the less perceptive among the wider readership at whom the book is aimed will think the solutions are easier than they are.

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Empathy and Confrontation in Pastoral Care

Ralph L. Underwood

Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1986; £6.50, paperback;

ISBN 0 8006 173 1

Every counsellor will welcome a discussion of the subject of this book. For many years non-directive counselling was in vogue with a concomitant stress on counselling as empathy. Many would have seen confrontation as a major indiscretion in counselling. Others, however, most notably Jay Adams, have argued that confrontation is not only a legitimate strategy in counselling but the only authentic biblical strategy. Underwood sets out to explore the issue in depth and see if they can be seen in a reconciled relationship to each other rather than in contrast.

In a complex opening chapter he discusses the proliferation of techniques which are current in counselling and sets out his understanding of ministry as communication. This he develops by using the root metaphor of the 'ministry of the word' as the basic imagery behind ministry. He believes the time is ripe for this perspective to assume greater prominence in ministry. 'Pastoral care is the communication of the gospel verbally, dynamically, and symbolically in interpersonal relationships that refer however implicitly, to the community of faith.' After fully expounding his definition, he uses it in the second chapter to offer a critique of other theories of communication in pastoral care. Here he fairly assesses the approach of Thurneysen, Ruel Howe, whose work was inspired by Buber, Faber and van der Schoot and Paul Johnson.

After his two theoretical chapters, which would make some demands on the average pastor, he turns to the application of his perspective to the question of empathy and confrontation. Both approaches are fully set out and any pastor would benefit from his exposition of them. Throughout these chapters he illustrates his argument by quoting snatches of pastoral conversations, many of which strike very close to home.

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But how do empathy and confrontation relate? Empathy refers to one's ability to take in another's viewpoint, to understand their outlook, holding one's own views in check, whilst maintaining one's viewpoint. In confrontation one is challenging the person to be open to another view - a fresh perspective is being introduced. The pastor is saying, 'Having gained some understanding of you, I now trust you to deal openly with some things you have not considered'. There is no fundamental contradiction between the two approaches, Underwood argues, so long as there is respect. Both stem from the ministry of the Word and both, when sound in spirit, are expressions of respect.

This is a worthy addition to the 'Theology and Pastoral Care Series'. It is a work of scholarship, but deals with a very real tension that many ordinary pastors face, and does so in a way which is balanced and perceptive. To a great extent it is convincing in its attempt to resolve the tension between empathy and confrontation and would liberate many a pastor from unnecessary conflicts of interest in their counselling.

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God's Action in the World

Maurice Wiles

SCM Press, London, 1986; 118 pp., £5.95, paperback;
ISBN 0 334 62028 X.

Professor Maurice Wiles fully justifies his decision to break with recent tradition and retain the original form of his Bampton lectures for publication rather than revising and expanding them. The book, as we might expect, is a model of jargon-free clarity with an absorbing intellectual appeal to a wide variety of readers. The work is also freer from the *spirit* of studied iconoclasm than Wiles's previous radical writings, *The Remaking of Christian Doctrine* and *Working Papers in Doctrine*.

The radical revision of traditional notions of divine providence remains, however, in response to the old problems of reconciling divine providence and human freedom and of knowing 'what sense to give the concept of an arranged contingency' (p. 19). The difficulty, he rightly adds, is not confined to Calvin's followers but inherited by the whole Western Christian tradition. It is highlighted every time God is petitioned to act in the human situation.

Wiles retains the anchor doctrine of the *creatio ex nihilo*, but goes on to argue that God has voluntarily qualified his omnipotence by conferring on parts at least of his creation a genuine independency. The revised view of God's action which follows is far-reaching. Divine action, consisting simply in (continuous) creation, is only 'in relation to the world as a whole rather than particular occurrences within it' (p.28). But the original dilemma has not here been solved but merely bundled into one package instead of many. The problem now is: how can God's one act of creation fulfil the divinely intended purpose if in its deepest reaches it involves independent beings? Wiles is admitting the difficulty when finally he reduces the prospect of fulfilment to no more than this: '... the work of that creation will not come to an end unless or until it is fulfilled' (p. 52). The 'unless or' is revealing. Perhaps the work of creation will *not* come to an end. The old

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dilemma of divine sovereignty and human freedom is in fact 'solved' here only by the old-fashioned remedy of making the divine will hostage to human choice and God's enabling or 'grace' into little more than a reassuring presence external to the specifics of human life. The result resembles a quasi-deism.

As Wiles recognises, the chief problem of the Christian faith is the existence of evil, and this difficulty, he acknowledges, remains even under his own radical reconstruction. It all seems meagre gain for a costly surrender by reductionism of such key Christian convictions in their traditional form as the incarnation and resurrection, the believer's strengthening by the Holy Spirit, answers to prayer and all miracles. Moreover it is achieved by a very selective recognition of biblical material, uncongenial texts being seemingly dismissed on the basis of no established objective criteria and a mass of material, say on prayer, being ignored.

It is impossible in a brief review to do justice to such an ambitious and accomplished piece of work but Wiles's satisfaction on the last page that his scheme's problems are not as severe as those contained in other accounts of divine agency will not be shared by all.

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