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Book Reviews

EXAMINATION OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT. By Martin Chemnitz. Translated by Fred Kramer. Volumes III and IV. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986.

When I was with Prof. G.C. Berkouwer of the Free University of Amsterdam in 1970, this redoubtable Dutch professor and prolific author (multiple-volumed *Studies in Dogmatics* and numerous other theological works) expressed genuine amazement over the projected publication of Chemnitz's *Examen Concilii Tridentini* in English translation by Concordia Publishing House. His surprise had mostly to do with the financing of a project of this size. I assured him that it required a church body deeply committed to confessional theology, along with a like-minded publishing house, to underwrite an enterprise of such magnitude. With the appearance now of Parts III and IV the task is completed, and Concordia is to be congratulated for seeing it through to a successful end, along with kudos of the highest kind for the able translator, Fred Kramer, who had the satisfaction of being there from beginning to end. A monumental task well done!

Part I (published in 1971) and Part II (published in 1978) contain beyond all argument the chief *doctrinal* articles of interest to modern readers in the four-volume set. Chemnitz simply follows the order of topics as they were treated by the Council of Trent and as reported by Payva Andrada, in the session which met, with some gaps or intervals, between the years 1545-1563. The first two parts thus include the very significant responses of Chemnitz on topics like Scripture and tradition, original sin, free will, justification, faith, good works, Baptism, Lord's Supper, penance, church orders and ordination. In Parts III and IV Chemnitz deals with celibacy, purgatory, invocation of saints, relics, images, indulgences, and fasting. Obviously the nitty-gritty of Christian doctrine is in the first two parts. Yet it was important that the translation include the last two parts, in view of the fact that many of the divisive abuses which the Reformation exposed involved these latter topics, so intimately woven into the piety of Roman Catholic life and teaching to this day. "It is not the intention," Dr. Kramer notes with the appearance of Parts III and IV, to open old wounds and "to stir up troubles," but the fact simply is that, if there is to be any rapprochement between the churches, it will have to begin with an honest, forthright facing-up-to of the critique which Chemnitz brings on the basis of sound biblical exegesis and also very careful citation from the early church fathers. In an ecumenical age like ours, therefore, it ought not be too much to hope that Roman Catholic scholars will also take seriously the incisive critique of Trent brought by Chemnitz. It is incredible and inconceivable, therefore, to see contemporary Roman Catholic scholars simply ignoring and bypassing Chemnitz's incisive dissecting of Trent's theology now that Kramer's translation is available. Chemnitz's *Examen* does not even receive

mention in Catholic University of American professor, David N. Power's, *The Sacrifice We Offer* (Crossroad, 1987), which purports to be a reinterpretation of Tridentino dogma! Rome has not to this day answered Chemnitz's challenge. But then, why should the Romanists bother, as long as the heirs of the Reformation on the Lutheran side haven't taken Chemnitz seriously either, not to mention Protestantism in general? Genuine Christian theology, including much that passes for Lutheran, is in a deep state of desperate malaise.

My comments above are not intended in any way to discourage readers' expectations as regards the content of Parts III and IV. When Chemnitz treats subjects like chastity, celibacy, and virginity, he deals with the whole area of sexual relations for the married and the unmarried in a splendidly biblical way, not in the style of Ann Landers. Chemnitz may be wordy to some readers, but the plus is that he leaves few stones unturned. The great theologian, for many years superintendent of the Brunswick territorial church, has been faulted for requiring so much time to produce his *Examen*, eight years between 1565 to 1573, midst his multiple duties. This is to lose sight of the mammoth production at Trent and all that is implied with the counter-Reformation theology. Chemnitz took his task very seriously and his scholarship is nowhere more evident than in this four-part *magnum opus*.

Dr. Kramer worked from the very best early editions, notably the Frankfort of 1578, comparing it with the 1861 Latin edition of Eduard Preuss (produced in St. Louis), and the German translation which had already been produced in 1576 by George Nigrinus and which Dr. Kramer describes as "excellent." Readers will find state of the art excellence in all four of the volumes issued by Concordia, a true monument of scholarly accomplishment that ought to serve the church for years to come. A minor inaccuracy seems to be included on the jacket accompanying each volume, namely, that Andrada, the Portuguese Roman Catholic scholar and expert *(peritus)* doing the reporting on Trent, is described as a Jesuit, an error repeated also in the New Catholic Encyclopedia and other sources. The German scholar, Reinhard Mumm *(Die Polemik des Martin Chemnitz gegen das Konzil von Trient)* argues convincingly that this notion keeps on appearing from one source to another, apparently because Andrada is confused with later men by the same name who were Jesuits.

Certainly libraries (college and university) throughout the world cannot afford to be without these volumes which exhaustively sift through the canons and decrees of the Council of Trent. Nor can individual pastors, theologians, and students of the Reformation and its theology ignore them either.

E.F. Klug

DIVERSITY AND COMMUNION. By Yves Congar, O.P. Mystic, Connecticut: Twenty-Third Publications, 1984. 232 pages. Paper. $9.95.

Rosemary Ruether has coined the term "post-ecumenism" for the manner in which church unity and communion can be anticipated today. To a significant degree, this volume reflects such "post-ecumenical" thinking—not in the sense that the contemporary ecumenical movement has accomplished all of its goals or that continued formal dialogue between traditions is irrelevant, but that the primary presuppositions for the establishment of unity among the churches now exist. Consequently, the actual shape of the one Church can be concretely envisioned.

Yves Congar stands with Karl Rahner and Bernard Lonergan as a giant of 20th century Roman Catholic theology; indeed, in the areas of ecclesiology and ecumenism he surpasses them in influence. *Diversity and Communion* only enhances his stature as Rome's leading ecumenical scholar. Yet, the fundamental thesis of this particular book is one familiar to even the most casual Lutheran observer of the ecumenical scene: fidelity to truth as perceived by individual confessions is not incompatible. Agreement on the central truths of faith exists but diversity is possible, even desirable, in this unity.

Father Congar elucidates this thesis through a series of carefully ordered, largely historical discussions beginning with questions of diversity and communion in the early church and ending with Vatican Council II. His approach is to highlight significant episodes in the tradition which demonstrate the long-standing acceptability of the concept of "diversity in unity." Thus, the debate over the date of Easter and communion in the churches during the second to fourth centuries is viewed by Congar as pivotal for the distinction between unity and uniformity. The history of relationships between the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church is examined for a similar purpose as is seventeenth century Lutheran distinctions between fundamental and non-fundamental articles of faith (e.g., the contention of Hunnius that differences with the Calvinists are over the *fundamentum dogmaticum*, not the *fundamentum essentiale*).

Much which emerges from Congar's study will be appreciated by the Lutheran reader. Augustana VII is a clear reminder that uniformity of practice ("ceremonies instituted by men") is not necessary for true unity. However, the confessional insistence that external unity in the church is constituted by agreement on the marks of the church—the purely taught Gospel and the rightly administered sacraments (FC X)—must finally shape one's reaction to Congar's work.

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WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS: UNDERSTANDING THE IDEAS AND IDEALS OF THE CONSTITUTION. By Mortimer J. Adler. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986. $16.95.

This is not a theological book; but clergymen should read it. Adler writes about the American Testament: The Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and The Gettysburg Address. The author is lucid and provocative. Without intending to do so, he confronts theological issues for the Lutheran theologian today.

Lutherans have always struggled with the correct theological relationship between state and church. The kingdom on the right and the kingdom on the left present the Lutheran church of our day with certain dilemmas. Is it acceptable for the Christian to march on the Pentagon, to stage a "sit-in," break civil laws in search of the higher good, etc.? Clergy and laymen alike remember the Viet Nam years and the agonies that touched the lives of the young American Lutherans who did not want to fight in Viet Nam. The doctrine of the just and unjust wars was hotly debated. The pressure has not eased in this moral and theological battling, whether discussing war, sex education for children, or abortion. What can or should an individual Christian or an entire church body do in these cases? What does God expect of His people in the political realm?

No, Mr. Adler will not solve the theological problems for the Lutheran church, but he does offer a clear interpretation (albeit his own!) of the three documents that give political life and structure to our land. If the Lutheran clergyman and layman seek to find answers to some of the political, moral and theological questions confronting the church in the world, then he must understand the nation's political documents.

On occasion Lutheran pastors demonstrate an abysmal ignorance concerning the political sphere. This book will remedy that deficiency on a very primary level. The reader will have a much better grasp of the content, goals, and failures of the American Testament.

George Kraus

JOSHUA, JUDGES, RUTH: THE NEW CENTURY BIBLE COMMENTARY. By John Gray. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986. Paper. 427 + xi pages.

The New Century Bible Commentary being newly issued in paperback, this volume is a partial revision by John Gray of his earlier commentary, first published in 1967 and revised in 1977. Unexplainedly, the previous publication history of this third edition is omitted from the copyright page. This edition has been expanded especially by additions in the introductory chapters, list of abbreviations, and general index and by the addition of an index of modern authors. Sections in the commentary receiving more

extensive attention are Joshua 10:1-41; Judges 5:1-31; 13-16; 19-21, and a number of verses throughout, especially in Ruth.

A well-known higher-critical scholar, Dr. Gray has also authored notable commentaries on Exodus and Kings. His works are typically shallow in theological insight and reflect the usual presuppositions of source and form criticism, such as the documentary hypothesis, the Deuteronomistic history, religious evolution, aetiological interpretation, a late date for the exodus and conquest, and the subordination of archaeological data to source analysis (p. 26). However, he is one of the more cautious higher critics in respect to textual emendation and the more radical theories of composition.

Gray gives a peculiar twist to the postulated gradual infiltration of Canaan by "Israel" (Alt, Mendenhall): The original core of Israel was spearheaded from north Sinai (Kadesh) into Ephraim and Benjamin, then joined by tribes to the north and east, some of whom constituted groups of underprivileged serfs (*habiru*), attracted by Israel's social ethic. The inclusion of southern Yahweh-worshipping tribes, including Judah, was first affected by David (pp. 9-34). Judges reveals certain progress of the settlement, growth and eventual consolidation of Israel (p. 189). Thus, source analysis bends the internal and external evidence to suit the predetermined theories. Similarly, Ruth is related to the settlement of the exiles returning from Babylonia who found it difficult to reoccupy their ancestral lands. This discounts the admitted possible affinity of Ruth to the confident climate of the age of David and Solomon and its good classical Hebrew narrative prose (pp. 368-9) that lacks examples after the Exile.

Otherwise, Gray's commentary retains significant reference value through a generally solid exposition, especially of many practical matters and details. However, the conservative would prefer Martin Woudstra's *Joshua* (*New International Commentary on the Old Testament*) and *Judges and Ruth* by Arthur Cundall and Leon Morris (*Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries*), with the confessional Lutheran having recourse in C.F. Keil's commentaries and Horace Hummel's introduction for theological considerations.

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HISTORICAL COMMENTARY ON THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION. By Wilhelm Maurer. Translated by H. George Anderson. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.

The translation of Wilhelm Maurer's *Historical Commentary on the Augsburg Confession* is a landmark event in these days of renewed interest and research into the Lutheran Confessions. We are grateful to Fortress

Press and to George Anderson, who gives us a clear and readable translation, for making this classic available.

Maurer's work is not just another theology of the Augsburg Confession, nor is it a mere historical commentary on the Augsburg Confession like Leiv Grane's excellent *Confessio Augustana* just recently translated and published in English by Augsburg Publishing House. It is a thorough and definitive isagogics to the Augsburg Confession. Maurer traces the theology and development of the Augsburg Confession not only back to its earlier drafts by Melanchthon, but more importantly back to the formative theological concepts in the writing of both Luther and Melanchthon. In doing so he demonstrates a prodigious comprehension of the theology and output of Luther, to whom he devotes much more attention than to Melanchthon. The reader is greatly rewarded by this procedure in two ways. First, he gains deeper insight into the theology of the Augsburg Confession. Second, he becomes familiar with the relationship of Luther's theology to the Augsburg Confession.

Like Elert and others, Maurer sees differences in the approach of Luther and Melanchthon as they construct confessions for the church. For instance, Maurer finds that the doctrine of the Trinity, which is the foundation for Luther's Confession of 1528, together with the doctrine of the incarnation of the Son, presupposes all the Reformation principles, including justification by faith. To confess the Trinity is to describe the course of revelatory events that run from Christ to us, including our justification before God. And so the atonement is our justification. But Melanchthon in the Augsburg Confession presents a separate doctrine of justification. Whether this approach, which became more pronounced as time went on (but not in the Apology), indicates a dangerous deviation from Luther's Trinitarian approach Maurer leaves an open question. He concludes that Melanchthon's article of justification, unlike Luther's, belongs under the framework of pneumatology. I would dispute this notion in the light of Melanchthon's Apology IV as well as from Luther's scattered writings on justification. I think the evidence Maurer himself supplies would lead one to the conclusion that both Luther and Melanchthon in the Augsburg Confession place justification *propter Christum* under the second article of the Creed rather than under the third article. Maurer's *Commentary* requires patient and studious reading, but the student who wishes to know more of the background, development, and theology of the Augsburg Confession will be greatly rewarded and challenged.

Robert Preus

THE TRUTH OF CHRISTMAS BEYOND THE MYTHS: THE GOSPELS OF THE INFANCY OF CHRIST. By Rene Laurentin. Translated from the French by Michael J. Wrenn and associates. Petersham, Massachusetts: St. Bede's Publications, 1986. 569 + xx pages. Paper. $29.95.

If this study had not been translated, one would be tempted to suggest that learning French just to read this book would be worthwhile. In contrast to the widespread historical devaluation of Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2, Laurentin repeatedly and emphatically affirms the historical reliability of these infancy narratives. His exposition of Luke 1: 1-4 is a model of brevity compact with substance. He concludes: "We are not contesting the religious intent of Luke, but this intent cannot be dissociated from a concern to express the truth about events relating to the real person of Christ. For the evangelists, truth and meaning do not oppose each other. They are correlative" (p. 318).

Laurentin deals with the two opening chapters of Matthew and Luke in depth and detail, giving attention to textual criticism as well as literary criticism, and also using techniques of structuralism and semiotics in his study. He supplies an introduction to semiotics, which he characterizes in these words: "This is a new field, and it is still in the stage of proving its worth, yet it seems to offer surprising resources for further progress in understanding the Gospels" (p. 111).

The parish pastor may be skittish and skeptical, suspecting that something like semiotics is bound to be remote from the realities of congregational life and appropriate only for disportings in academe. I am convinced that such an attitude is wrong. Within three pages I found stimulation for three sermon themes: (1.) To Praise God is to Be Provocative. (2.) Can You Stand It Out of the Limelight in the Shadows? (3.) The Time of God vs. the Time of Caesar. Not very much farther along the way, two more themes came to mind, triggered by Laurentin's exposition: (1.) Mary, Exemplar of the Meditative Witness. (2.) Jesus in Utopia. This latter theme was inspired by Laurentin's observation: "The child was laid in a manger, because there was no place—*ou topos*—for them in the inn. The Messiah was born in an *ou topia*, in the etymological sense of the word which signifies a 'non-place' " (p. 178). Bored listeners and bogged down preachers should welcome the prodding stimulation Laurentin provides.

Several important features of Laurentin's philosophy of history must be noted, however briefly. His basic commitment is to historicity/facticity in these opening chapters of Matthew and Luke. Thus concerning the canticles he challenges: "Why not then evaluate these texts according to their content rather than according to fragile presuppositions which seek to attribute the canticles to the 'creative Christian Community ' (itself a lovely myth, generously exploited by the *Formgeschichte* school)?" (p. 380). A fairly long section on the virginal conception affirms the historicity of our Lord's miraculous conception and brings the argument up to date with helpful references to recent literature.

At several points Laurentin makes some concessions to a less than literal intrepretation which I find unacceptable. Perhaps the problem derives from what he does with two principles he enunciates. (1) Concerning the writing of history he says: "The transfiguration of recollections is the law of all memory and all history. It is not necessarily betrayal. It is interior illumination of an event, and thus implies a degree of stylization" (pp. 376-377). (2) Concerning the Holy Spirit's use of human instruments he contends: "He [the Holy Spirit] does not interpose himself, but rather awakens the subject from within to what is best in himself..." (p. 441). "The intimate activity of God, who does not manipulate human beings but inspires them to what is best in their desires and in their hope..." (p.442). Both statements, I believe, contain an important truth. However, without more precise definition and delimitation they invite distortions.

A series of nineteen "quasi-excursuses," which Laurentin calls "Special Notes on the Text," range from "Kecharitomene: The Name Given Mary," to "Is Mary the Source of Luke 1-2?" These alone would make the book eminently worthwhile.

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WOMEN IN THE CHURCH: A BIBLICAL STUDY ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH. By Samuele Bacchiocchi. Biblical Perspectives 7. Berrien Springs, Michigan: Biblical Perspectives, 1987. 295 pages. Paper. $12.95.

The present debate over the proper role of women in society and the church, along with the attendant issue of ordination of women into the pastoral office, has for a long time transcended denominational lines. It is a truly "catholic" issue. At its 1990 General Conference the Seventh-Day Adventist Church will decide on the ordination of women to the priesthood. This book by a professor at Andrews University hopes to influence that body so that it will resist the pressure to ordain women as pastors. Two appended essays, by Rosalie Haffner Lee (Chapter 9: "Is Ordination Needed to Women's Ministry?") and by William A. Fagel (Chapter 10: "Ellen White and the Role of Women in the Church"), are of interest and of importance to Adventist readers, but beyond that communion hold no special significance.

The body of the book presents a thorough and thoroughly traditional interpretation of the relevant biblical evidence concerning women in the church. In his "Introduction" Bacchiocchi states the ruling "vital biblical principal" of his study: "men and women are equal before God by virtue of creation and redemption. Yet God assigned distinctive and complementary roles for men and women to fill in their relation to each other. These roles are not nullified but clarified by Christ's redemption and should be reflected in the church" (p. 26). Indeed, the phrase "equality

in being and subordination in function," which recurs in variant form throughout the book, may be regarded as the byword of Bacchiocchi's book.

Bacchiocchi breaks no new ground but does offer in an orderly and clear manner the arguments both of "feminist" scholars and of his own conservative viewpoint. He is fair and equitable and does lay out an adequate defense of traditional church doctrine and practice. His chapter headings indicate the scope and thrust of his presentation: Ministry of Women in the Old Testament; Ministry of Women in the New Testament; The Order of Creation; The Order of Redemption; Headship and Subordination; Women and Church Office; The Role of Pastor. Perhaps most helpful are Bacchiocchi's discussions of Genesis 1-3 and of the major New Testament passages (1 Tim. 2:9-15; 1 Cor. 14:33-36; Gal. 3:28). His treatment of the concepts of "headship" and of "subordination" is also of interest.

Nevertheless, the book is finally not satisfying. This book may well serve the discussion within the Adventist Church, but it is too dependent upon earlier (conservative) treatments to commend itself to the general reader as a new, meaningful contribution to the discussion. Moreover, there are occasions where the argument is overplayed and methodologically skewed. I really doubt whether Jesus was a revolutionary in his attitude toward women as is often asserted. Certainly to imply that Judaism held women to be "second-class citizens in Israel" or of unequal spiritual status (p. 91) is simply a crass inaccuracy. But whatever difference Jesus represented vis-a-vis Judaism, it cannot be expressed as a restoration of "human dignity and worth" (p. 90f.). Here Bacchiocchi is merely adopting the rhetoric of pop sociology, as is prevalent in feminist circles, and it frankly does not gain cogency just because a conservative says it.

Bacchiocchi argues strongly that "headship" means "authority" and not "source" (pp. 114-118). Certainly he is right that "headship" can and usually does entail the meaning of authority. Yet his argument against the meaning of "source" lacks persuasiveness, and when Bacchiocchi simply reduces "headship" to leadership (p. 224) it becomes clear that that notion of authority has achieved too high a status in Bacchiocchi's argument. Methodologically Bacchiocchi places too great an importance on the husband-wife relationship and the church as an extended family. On the other hand, Bacchiocchi's discussion of the pastor as representative of Christ has much to commend it, even though I think he unnecessarily rejects what he calls the "sacramental" view of the pastor as *in persona Christi*.

The book reveals the marks of hurried production. There are numerous errors of spelling and of syntax. Overall, *Women in the Church* is a reasonable survey of opinions with an informed conservative outcome. Women ought not be ordained into the pastoral office for it is against the

divine will and the divine ordering of creation and of redemption. Certainly Bacchiocchi's heart and mind are in the right place.

William C. Weinrich

THE LETTERS OF ST. CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE. Volume III: Letters 55-66. Translated and Annotated by G.W. Clarke. Ancient Christian Writers, Volume 46. New York: Paulist Press, 1986. 345 +vi pages.

The writings of Cyprian (+258) are the writings of a bishop fully involved in the ecclesiastical and pastoral problems of his day. Cyprian was a practicing Christian thinker whose theology was wrought in the fiery furnace of church life. No letters from the early church are more charged with the drama of pastoral practice than are those of Cyprian. And episcopal oversight in third-century Carthage (North Africa) was no easy task. The Roman Empire was increasingly unstable as military men fought for the imperial purple; the Christian population was beset by threat of persecution; deadly plague wreaked havoc in the cities; the sin of apostasy was creating difficulties in the practice of penance; the church at Carthage suffered schism. All these problems and more provide the plot and story of these letters. The very energy and vitality of Cyprian as he leads his people, guards his people, and struggles for his people are evident on every page. Cyprian remains a model for every churchly pastor. I would recommend Cyprian to anyone, but especially to our pastors. His letters are a 'how to' book written in the vivid colors of real pastoral oversight, not in the faded hues of managerial manipulation.

The series, Ancient Christian Writers, presents excellent and readable translations of early Christian works. This translation of Clarke is superb, and it is accompanied by an informative introduction, an extensive bibliography, and exceptionally thorough notes for a fuller understanding of the text. For those interested in Cyprian and for everyone else who ought to be interested in him, this is a welcome addition to the previously published Cyprian volumes of ACW.

William C. Weinrich

LUTHERAN HIGHER EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA. By Richard W. Solberg. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1985. 399 pages. Paperback.

Almost never can an historian cover such a broad topic as *Lutheran Higher Education in North America* with a degree of objectivity acceptable to every family and branch sharing in the enterprise. But Richard W. Solberg has done just that, penetrating the inner workings of every branch of the Lutheran family and capturing the spirit of the diverse and complex Lutheran subcultures, yet never offending in his description of them.

Lutherans seem to have no better record than other religious groups as they air differences and stake their claims. But Solberg remains a respected historian because he respects his subjects.

By identifying with his subject Solberg accurately reflects the decisional premises of the organizations, yet maintains sufficient distance to analyze the diverse groups. Lutherans, including some professional workers who despair of threading their way through the complex story of American Lutheranism, will find that Solberg has written a clear history of Lutheran higher education, superimposing it upon an overall view of American Lutheranism, sketching the essential history in bold comprehensible strokes, often including significant political, economic, and cultural history. Masses of facts are introduced without boring the reader because the interpretive wrapping holds them together. Solberg's generalizations, undergirded with well chosen examples, stand up under scrutiny. The subject is so well researched and the author's grasp of information is so complete that he appears capable of dipping into the huge reservoir at will and producing the precise illustration to make his point.

For those who put history in the category of *adiaphora*—interesting to know but not really essential—Solberg's *Lutheran Higher Education in North America* clearly shows that if we are to undestand ourselves and our challenges today we must know from where we have come and how we have become what we are. Perhaps nostalgia coupled with a search for identity as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is being launched has resulted in several recent excellent historical studies within the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America. The LCA, the ALC, and now the ELCA are to a great extent the result of divisions and mergers. The essentially monolithic nature of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod until the mid-twentieth century may have resulted in less interest and less need to probe the past. However, Missouri Synod historians ought to pick up the challenge now as the Synod recognizes the anniversaries of C.F.W. Walther's birth and death, the Saxons' immigration in 1839, and a number of less known but equally significant events.

Wilbert Rosin

GOD AND HUMAN SUFFERING. By Douglas John Hall. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1986. Cloth. 223 pages.

Theological readers thank Augsburg Publishing House for encouraging the author, Douglas John Hall, to develop this book which interrelates so many different topics which help us interpret human suffering. Hall has provided an update of this perennial subject. The main section of the book deals with different aspects of the doctrine of God which help us understand how God can help us face human suffering. The valuable contribution of

this book is Hall's showing us how the theology of the *cross* reveals a merciful and compassionate God in our situation of tragic suffering.

We also find Hall's rational interpretation of four natural levels of suffering as understandable as they participate in the becoming of the life enrichment process. He includes anxiety, loneliness, temptation, and experience of limits under this section. He applies the doctrine of creation to these four dimensions of suffering. He exhorts us to transcend these four tolerable and understandable dimensions of suffering as part of the human process moving toward our more satisfying degrees of the biblical view of the abundant life. He advises us to accept these in so far as they can be experienced as "integrative suffering," but we should not let our natural sufferings become exaggerated or distorted into "disintegrative suffering." For example, we should not permit anxiety, loneliness, finite limits, or temptation possess us to the point where we lose our direction toward the abundant life. We should assume our responsibility to use our freedom in helping others bear their suffering as taught in the account of the Good Samaritan and "...inasmuch as you have done it unto these..." in Matthew 25. Hall uses the theology of the cross and a deep interpretation of the tragic element involved in suffering to combat the outdated progressivism of liberalism. He criticizes all escapes from suffering, such as Christian Science.

The author analyzes the orthodox approach to pain and suffering, as exemplified in C.S. Lewis, and hammers away on the inadequacy of the orthodox Christian defenses of anti-patripassionism. God the Father can look after his own aseity, Hall says. Moreover, orthodox trinitarians need not use propositions to rationalize the two natures of Christ and the persons of the Trinity, he continues. "The alternative, rather, is to *return* the *whole* discussion of 'the godhead' to Jerusalem!...At bottom, it would entail eschewing the substantialistic frame of reference in favor of a relational representational understanding of the Christ. The important message of the church is not to demonstrate that the *being* of God and the *being* of Jesus are identical (with distinctions!), but as presenting Jesus as God's mode of *being-with* us; Emmanuel...Something like this, I believe, is what Dorothy Sölle has done in her book, *Christ the Representative*: *An Essay in Theology after the 'Death of God'*...The God who is arraigned because of the suffering of the innocent is really the omnipotent God, the king, father, and ruler, who is above the world. Modern man rightly indicts this God" (pp. 215-216).

Hall also criticizes "evangelicalism," "empirical Christianity," the "empirical church," the classical doctrines of the atonement, references to "heaven," "paradise," and the resurrection in the context of suffering. In place of these appeals to a transcendent dimension in the old orthodox and substantialistic ways of thinking he puts an approach which continually repeats the suffering God in Jesus, the theology of the cross. He says there

is too much Easter without Good Friday in modern church triumphalism. He argues that it is enough to say that "...nothing can separate us from the love of Christ."

When one understands Hall's position as a professor of Christian theology at McGill University in Montreal he can more readily engage in this book's arguments at the speculative, theoretical level. But even then one questions whether Hall's and Sölle's "relational-representational" theology will optimistically field test on the front lines of suffering where pastors of the so-called "empirical" church comfort the suffering, dying, and grieving. The main problem that the so-called "shallow evangelicals" and "orthodox" and "empirical church" pastors and laity are going to have with Hall's book is that it is unnecessarily condescending to such a large segment of the Christian tradition which has found it authentic to the Bible and functional in pastoral care to refer to dimensions of the transcendent. Few of us will be persuaded by Halls's defense of patripassionism in his redefinition of the Trinity in the context of "relational-representational" thought categories. The specific audience of this present review will also find Hall's historical-critical evaluations of the major sources of relevant doctrine in the Bible as "myths," "sagas," etc. to be inadequate in theological method. Hall's work should provide a stimulant for an orthodox Christian author to provide a modern book on God and human suffering.

Harold H. Zietlow

2 KINGS. WORD BIBLICAL COMMENTARY, Volume 13. By T.R. Hobbs. Waco, Texas: Word, 1985. 388 + xlviii pages.

T.R. Hobbs, professor at McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario, has written a solid work. He follows the prescribed format for the *Word Biblical Commentary* consisting of, for each chapter, a special bibliography, fresh translation, text-critical notes, discussion of form-structure-setting, verse-by-verse comment, and expository explanation. Hobbs is particularly strong in the areas of Hebrew syntax, textual criticism, explanation of words and phrases, and literary considerations. In the useful introduction, he defends the hypothetical "deuteronomist" as the single author of the books Joshua to 2 Kings, argues for a narrative hermeneutical approach, interprets the general outlook of the author, and discusses the chronological problems.

Hobbs frequently takes issue with less conservative higher-critical commentators in the areas of textual criticism (avoiding most temptations at emendation), form criticism, and literary criticism. He employs the narrative approach to hermeneutics to great advantage, emphasizing the unique peculiarities of Hebrew literary conventions and the final form of the text as what is relevant for the interpreter. Not only on this basis does he so regularly dismiss more radical arguments, but also because they even

frequently violate principles of logic, being rife with value judgments, circular arguments, begging the question, etc.

Hobbs' outstanding theological contribution delineates the author's purpose as interpreting the future of the monarchy—apostasy brings defeat (p. 38) but with God shaping Israel's history through His Word (pp. 164, 173, 283f.). He freely brings judgment despite attempts at reform and is also the basis of hope as the One who can freely offer grace (pp. 343, 368f.).

As valuable as this may be, however, for the conservative Lutheran reader, Hobbs' preoccupation with higher criticism's basic agenda all too often assigns essential theological insights to the human faith or piety of the "deuteronomist" writer rather than to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Also, apart from the author's theological purpose, this approach precludes recognizing much of the theological content of 2 Kings, especially in the Elisha stories, which is generally expounded better by such all-round commentators as C.F. Keil and K.C. W. F. Bahr (in *Lange's Commentary*).

Hobbs' usually reliable, painstaking work (aside from numerous errors in the titles of German sources), especially with the text, literary form, and narrative aspects of 2 Kings, will ensure that his commentary will long enjoy a place among the greater ones for both the scholar and the discerning lay reader. However, its disadvantages underlie the need for conservative Lutheran scholars to produce their own commentary series.

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A HISTORY OF ANCIENT ISRAEL AND JUDAH. By J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986. 523 pages.

Miller and Hayes expand on the book they co-edited in 1977 for the Old Testament Library entitled *Israelite and Judean History*. Miller is the primary contributor of materials concerning the geographical and chronological context of Israel, the origin of Israel and possible connections with non-biblical sources in terms of history and archeology. He also wrote the sections about the period of the judges, early monarchy, David, Solomon, the division of the kingdoms, the Omrides, and the Jehu dynasty. Hayes is the primary contributor for the time of the end of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, the era of Assyrian domination of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, and the last years of the Davidic Kingdom. He alone is responsible for the material about the time of Babylonian domination and the Persian period. A planned second volume will cover the Jewish and early Christian communities.

A major question which comes up in any history is the nature of the historical task in its use of biblical and non-biblical sources and archeology. They expect "this volume to receive negative responses...from those who regard our treatment as overly skeptical of the biblical story, and from those who regard it as overly gullible" (p. 19). The collection of non-biblical sources which are used in this text is simply enormous. From all the major ancient centers of civilization, the last hundred years has yielded numerous texts and inscriptions. These have provided much more than just names. The authors do a very good job of employing these (and include about twenty major text excerpts) to fill in the major events which impact on Israelite and Judean history. They freely admit that much is still in the realm of guesswork. One can certainly feel the time periods of the Arameans, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians come more alive. They suggest that David's pattern of administration follows the Late Bronze Age city-state model and departs radically from a tribal pattern, a problem David never completely can solve. They seem to be at least somewhat critical in their evaluation of these texts, though gaps in data are their chief problem. Archeological data is also dealt with critically. They question whether the four-room house and collar-rim stone jars can be identified as uniquely Israelite, since they recognize that the invasion of the Israelites did not result in a complete replacement and annihilation of the previous population.

Their methodology, however, treats the historicity of biblical texts, particularly before the time of David, with great suspicion. They suggest that Samuel is sometimes written into stories about Saul, that Elisha was not a direct follower of Elijah, that Ahaz and Manasseh were not as bad as they seem nor Hezekiah and Josiah as good. These are just some examples of their very negative view of the text due on account to its "theological bias." In other words, if a theological insight concerning God's activity in history or a significant personage such as Naboth or Jacob is presented, the historical veracity may be in doubt. Unfortunately, even though we need and can profit from historical data being discovered and assimilated into our picture of Old Testament times, to doubt the existence or importance of unique personages is simply without foundation. They put too much weight on what is "verifiable" or what seems to sound right, using more of a sociological yardstick than a theological one. It may be proper for historical research, but religious factors are the center of the message and the probable cause for much of the other data being left out of the biblical record.

The biblical data within the Scripture itself has brought forth much discussion concerning the dates and synchronizations of the kings of Israel and Judah, the role of the high priesthood and tension within the Aaronic family, the role of the Levites, and the relations between Israel and Judah during the period of the divided kingdoms. (They see Judah as under the thumb of Israel during most of its history.) If one wants to know about

the wider historical picture, particularly from 1200 to 500 B.C., this can be a help. Certainly their view of the biblical history is much too negative.

Thomas Trapp
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CELSUS ON THE TRUE DOCTRINE: A DISCOURSE AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS. Translated with a General Introduction by R. Joseph Hoffmann. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1987. 146 and xiii pages. Cloth, $18.95. Paper, $7.95.

During the first decades of the church's history pagan notice of Christianity was largely sporadic and uninformed. Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny are early witnesses to general Roman hostility (c. 100 A.D.), and Fronto's testimony shows Roman loathing at perceived Christian immorality (c. 140 A.D.). However, the first truly frontal assault upon Christianity came from Celsus whose *True Doctrine* was written, according to Hoffmann, in the last quarter of the second century. The work of Celsus is itself no longer extant. However, an estimated seventy per cent of *True Doctrine* is accessible through Origen's massive response to Celsus' arguments, *Against Celsus* (c. 240), in which Origen quotes from Celsus at length.

In this volume Hoffmann presents a handy, readable (if sometimes overly popularized) English translation of Celsus' polemic. He wisely foregoes any attempt to restore the original order of Celsus' work, opting rather to present Celsus' writing thematically (the unoriginality of the Christian faith, Christian doctrine compared to that of the Greeks, the Christian doctrine of God, the Christian doctrine of resurrection, etc.). Indeed, the critique of Celsus is a wide-ranging indictment against Christianity. Yet certain themes are central and recurring: Christian perversion or plagiarizing of Greek thought; the simple-mindedness of Christian thought and the arrogance of the Christian attitude; the poverty of the Christian view of God as Creator and incarnate Redeemer; the absurdity of Christian hope, especially the resurrection of the body. Hoffman's translation nicely retains the vigorous force of Celsus' sarcasm (pp. 102f.):

> [Silly] is the way the world is supposed to have come about...Isn't it absurd to think that the greatest God pieced out his work like a bricklayer, saying "Today I shall do this, tomorrow that," and so on, so that he did this on the third, that on the fourth, and something else on the fifth and sixth days! We are thus not surprised to find that, like a common workman, this God wears himself down and so needs a holiday after six days. Need I comment that a god who gets tired, works

with his hands, and gives orders like a foreman is not acting very much like a god?

Disappointing, however, is the "General Introduction." While (given the scope of the book) Hoffmann gives adequate treatment to the identity of Celsus and to his argument, other introductory issues are scantily mentioned, if at all. Celsus is clearly "middle Platonist," but where does this show up in *True Doctrine* and how does it affect his attitude toward Christian belief? More difficult, perhaps, is the question of Celsus' understanding of Christianity. He evidently gained much of his information from "heterodox" or even "heretical" sects such as that of Marcion. Although Hoffmann's notes reflect this, a short treatment of this important issue in the introduction would have been appropriate.

More disconcerting is the largely skewed picture of early Christianity which Hoffmann gives to explain pagan reaction to the new faith. Here he completely overplays the importance of apocalyptic enthusiasm for early Christianity and is wholly wrong when he speaks of "the alliance" between Christianity and the mystery religions as "accomplished fact" (p. 15). Strangely, too, Hoffmann attributes the existence of both ascetic and libertine ethics among "Christian" groups to "eschatological thinking" (p. 14) rather than to docetism. Finally, Hoffmann quite exaggerates the extent of early Christian antinomianism, leading him to silly if not jaded interpretations (i.e., that of Tertullian, *Apol.* 39, on p. 19). Yet, despite all of this, the translation is welcome.

William C. Weinrich

RESURRECTION AND MORAL ORDER: AN OUTLINE FOR EVANGELICAL ETHICS. By Oliver O'Donovan. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986. 284 pages.

Seldom does a volume vindicate the effusive promotional blurbs on its dustjacket. This is such a book. Intended as an exploration of "Christian moral concepts," Oliver O'Donovan expressly anchors Christian ethics in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Specifically, Christian ethics arises from the New Testament's good news of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. The resurrection both vindicates the objective created order and points forward to our own eschatological participation in the same. The Holy Spirit forms and calls forth the appropriate pattern of human response to God's objective—and hence universally valid—natural order. The particular merit of this work is its author's resolute insistence that morality is related to salvation; indeed, that Christian ethics is necessarily evangelical in character. Along related lines, O'Donovan is adamant that the formal questions of ethics must be addressed theologically and their proposed resolution subjected to theological interpretation and criticism.

In this context O'Donovan rejects both legalism and relativism as well as facile traditional distinctions between teleological and deontological ethics. O'Donovan opts for an "ethic of character," wherein love is the principle conferring unifying order upon the moral field and the character of the moral subject. Love is the fulfillment of the moral law as well as the form of the classical moral virtues. Authentic human love will conform to the image of God's love, and it must always entail an integration of will and reason in a "rational and comprehending affection" that accords with the truth of its object.

O'Donovan unifies his argument with the affirmation that all Christian love, from the universal to the most particular, finds its singular fount in Jesus' resurrection from the dead—the act by which God designates Jesus as the Christ and (note especially well) vindicates creation in Him. For precisely this reason, O'Donovan avers, St. Paul groups love, as the form of the moral life, with faith and hope, and not with the other assorted spiritual gifts. The latter have their own intelligibility, whereas the former depend for their intelligibility upon the end of history disclosed in the resurrection.

This volume is a careful prolegomena to an unabashedly Christian ethics. The sometimes complex presentation is interspersed with helpful excurses in a smaller typeface on more technical matters in the history of ethics. One can follow the argument without studying the excurses, but such a procedure will impoverish the reader. To be sure, confessional Lutheran readers will voice an occasional *caveat* (e.g., the occasionally imprecise use of "gospel" and "evangelical moral law," though in the case of the latter O'Donovan notes the verbal paradox involved). Yet these will be far outweighed by the author's overt commitment to the revealed Christian tradition *in toto*, his affirmation of the ontological priority of the created order, and his pervasive concern to keep soteriological themes central in moral reflection.

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SKILLFUL SHEPHERDS. By Derrek J. Tidball. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986. 368 pages.

Tidball, presently the minister of Mutely Baptist Church in Plymouth, England, is the former Director of Studies at London Bible College. The text demonstrates the scholarship typical of his academic background yet breathes a spirit of pastoral authenticity which demonstrates an admirable synthesis of the two realms in which he has carried out his ministry.

Subtitled "An Introduction to Pastoral Theology," in reality it is an

overview of the history and development of the pastor as shepherd. After a brief yet adequate discussion in defining what pastoral theology is, in which he shows pastoral theology to be a special discipline within the area of practical theology, Tidball meticulously develops the concept of "shepherd," reviewing the biblical literature in both testaments of the Scriptures and, in the New, specifically considering the concept in the synoptics, the Johannine literature, the Pauline corpus, and the general epistles. He then traces the church's understanding of the concept beginning with the early church fathers and bringing it through the various periods of church history to the present day.

In an insightful concluding section Tidball makes application to five areas of ministry in our day that are challenging pastoral authenticity—the biblical paradigm of what a skillful shepherd is to be. Particularly appreciated are the chapters on belief (13), forgiveness (14), and suffering (15). In the chapter on unity (16) the author resorts to general truths which cannot be disputed but which fail to give clear principles and directives with regard to ecumenical involvement and church fellowship questions.

Tidball supplies a rather complete and extensive bibliography. Significant in its absence is the lack of any sources by Lutherans except for a few selected monographs by Luther. In passing he incorporates a significant amount of material giving Luther's pastoral insights. This lack of citing of Lutheran sources and including them in a bibliography may well be a commentary on the church's deficiency in this area of writing rather than Tidball's oversight or Reformed predilection. The Missouri Synod has for years been in dire need of a pastoral theology reflective of the needs of our society and responsive to contemporary needs and opportunities.

Norbert H. Mueller

DESIRING GOD: MEDITATIONS OF A CHRISTIAN HEDONIST. By John Piper. Portland, Oregon: Multnomah Press, 1986. 262 pages.

Piper touches on a vital ingredient of the faith for our day and life. Joy, or should I say *hedonism*, is the central concern of this book. I hasten to say the book was enjoyed by the reviewer and despite some reservations he profited withal. Piper centers his claim on an old theological proposition—the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. The author changes the axiom to read thus: the chief end of man is to glorify God *by* enjoying Him forever. The volume stays with that theme from beginning to end. If nothing else, the author is consistent; he writes about Christian joy, its content, its need, its lack, its blessings, its fulfillment.

A few of the chapter headings will give the potential reader a clear idea of the subject material covered: "'Worship: The Feast of Christian Hedonism," "Marriage: A Matrix for Christian Hedonism," etc. Surely

the child of Christ desires to experience and express that joy which Christ has given in His redemption and resurrection. While God's pilgrims must be aware of Christian suffering and the theology of the cross, they will not fail to exhibit the triumphant joy the Savior has won for all by His Easter victory.

However, some caution should be expressed. The author strives to make "hedonism" an acceptable substitute for "joy." This reader was not that impressed. "Hedonism" is defined by Webster as "living for pleasure." Piper endeavors to cover this worldly morsel with a Christian dress. One simply cannot empty a word of its familiar context and give it new meaning, no matter how noble the effort. In short, one cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Yet this criticism should not deter one from reading this splendid volume. It is a much desired focus for the people of God who are called upon to endure much in this vale of tears. It is worth the price and the reading.

George Kraus

HOW TO MANAGE YOUR CHURCH. By Edgar Walz. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987. 220 pages. Paper, $8.95.

Author of *Church Business Methods* over twenty years ago, Walz uses his rich experience as a pastor, college administrator, and adjunct seminary professor to write this practical manual for pastors and lay leaders. Based on a biblical theology of the church's mission and a pastoral sensitivity in the Lutheran context, the book provides simple descriptions of leadership positions found in most churches, articulates principles of church management for congregations of various sizes, and addresses special church management problems such as communication, conflict management, and leadership styles.

Especially helpful are the sections on writing church constitutions and bylaws, establishing sound financial management, and managing the church office with computer possibilities. The appendix includes organizational charts, a sample constitution, and other useful forms. Pastors and lay leaders will find this manual a useful tool for training leaders, sharpening organizational arrangements, and planning for mission. With the changeless Gospel of Jesus Christ at the heart of a congregation, Walz sees church management as a supportive tool with the flexibility to serve in a variety of community contexts. This practical manual belongs on the pastor's shelf along with theological treatises on church and ministry.

Stephen Carter

DEATH SET TO MUSIC: MASTERWORKS BY BACH, BRAHMS, PENDERECKI, BERNSTEIN. By Paul S. Minear. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987. 173 pages. Cloth, $14.95.

Lutherans are accustomed to call Johann Sebastian Bach "the fifth evangelist." Though the title is obviously intended in an honorific sense, there may be a measure of truth in the appellation. From the perspective of their religious attitudes, Yale professor Paul S. Minear analyzes musical compositions from each of four composers: the St. Matthew's Passion of Johann Sebastian Bach; the Requiem of Johannes Brahms; the Passion and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke by Krzysztof Penderecki; and "A Cry for Peace," a mass by Leonard Bernstein. Perhaps many who have heard these kinds of religious musical works have wondered whether these compositions carried a religious message in the combination of the words and the music. The St. Matthew's Passion by Bach is broken down into four elements: the narrative, the chorales, arias and recitatives, and the six dialogues. In the narrative, the evangelist is recognized with his tenor voice as playing a prominent role in providing a commentary on the events and introducing them. Just how dependent Minear is on the recent approach to the gospels as narrative cannot be determined. The role that Minear sees assigned by Bach to the Evangelist seems identical to the role assigned to the original evangelist, Matthew, by Jack Kingsbury. In hearing the gospel read or in reading the gospel, the role of the original evangelist as narrator is not evident. In the St. Matthew's Passion, he is seen to be everywhere, so to speak. Bach developed an approach to gospel studies that is only now being uncovered. The baritone voice of Jesus distinguishes it from the tenor of the evangelist and is the most important. The chorales were probably not sung by the congregations, but they were recognizable at once by them and carried the Lutheran and Pauline motifs that Christ's work was *for* us. Arias are used for individual emotional response to the events of salvation. The dialogues, which always have the Daughter of Zion as one of the conversational partners, provide an overview of the occurrences. Penderecki's work reflects such Roman Catholic themes as the adoration and veiling of the cross and the place of Mary at the cross and as intercessor. Bernstein's work is more complex since it blends the traditional mass and unbelief as symbolic of the crisis of faith. Though some parts are sacrilegious in the struggle of the celebrating priest caught between salvation and unbelief, the message of divine peace is victorious at the end.

Unlike contemporary New Testament studies which see a virtually unbridgable gap between the contemporary man and the original events of salvation, all four composers approach the gospel texts at their apparent meaning to tell their story. The verbal texts of their compositions can only be understood in conjunction with the musical score which form an indissoluble unity. Those who know these works will have their hearing

enriched by Minear's study and those who read this study will make every effort to hear them again or for the first time.

David P. Scaer

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE. By John Stott. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1985. 32 pages. Paper.

Although one must surely praise the growth of "singles ministry" in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, as evidenced by the June 1987 issue of the *Lutheran Witness*, the ecclesiastical observer must wonder whether the biblical teaching on divorce is being taken seriously by these groups and their pastoral leadershp. What pastor today would dare to consider disciplinary action for any divorce situation in his parish in light of the sure alienation of most of his congregational membership. The lure of American Protestant congregational polity has at last trapped its clergy prey, with the result that the clergy are unable to prevent the subtle undermining of the authority of Jesus and the apostles in ethical matters such as divorce.

The only solution to this problem is good biblical teaching on this topic from the pulpit and Bible study podium. Stott's booklet gives perhaps the clearest exegesis to date of a topic that has often foundered into casuistry. After outlining the divinely instituted purposes of marriage and sketching contemporary attitudes toward the same, Stott presents an analysis of the Mosaic laws regarding divorce. This is followed by an analysis of Jesus' modification of this legislation for the Christian church, and Paul's commands regarding the marital status of converts. The booklet concludes with the issue of "covenantal disloyalty" as grounds for divorce, as well as a discussion of the practical and pastoral applications of the biblical teaching about divorce and remarriage.

Stott is quite clear about the two grounds for divorce and subsequent non-adulterous remarriage by the innocent party: (1) sexual infidelity by the guilty party; (2) insistence on divorce by the unbelieving spouse on religious grounds in a "mixed marriage" (pp. 22-23). Stott's careful discussion resists all attempts to expand the grounds for divorce and remarriage to cover desertion, cruelty, or temperamental incompatibility. He rejects the grounds of "covenantal disloyalty" with the insight that the covenant of marriage is so deep and profound that nothing less than sexual infidelity can break it (p. 25). Stott's attention to the context of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 reaps the exegetical insight that the intention of the Mosaic law "permitting" divorce was to forbid remarriage to a former spouse (p. 9). The intent of the law was not to sanction divorce, as Jesus Himself noted.

The only weakness in this fine work is that Stott sees the need for *some*

"concession to human fallibility and failure" in the Christian church similar to what Moses gave to Israel (p. 29). Stott is caught between the demands of forgiveness to penitent sinners and the divine ordinances on marriage. An understanding of the distinction between Law and Gospel at this point would help Stott and his readers see that forgiveness never means concession—it means calling a spade a spade *and* burying the spade six feet under only where there is repentance. In light of the modern attitude toward divorce and remarriage, the call to repentance and attempted reconciliation for divorced Christians is perhaps the most urgent message of the Christian church on this subject. This booklet is highly recommended for the pastor's own study, as well as for Bible classes, youth groups, and singles groups. At its low price, it is a practical choice for putting the biblical teaching on divorce into every interested lay member's hands.

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THEOLOGY OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS. By Friedrich Mildenberger. Translated by Erwin L. Luecker and edited by Robert C. Schultz. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.

I approached this book with the question: Does anyone today need a new theology of the Lutheran Confessions? After all, we have the excellent volume of Edmund Schlink, offering a synthetic approach to the Confessions, which at times offers us more of Schlink than the Confessions themselves, and the valuable volume of Holsten Fagerberg,which provides an analytic approach to the Confessions, including useful word and concept studies and little more. Together these two fine books, complementing each other as they do, leave no more to be done by a commentary on the Confessions except to fill in *lacunae* and correct aberrations where necessary. Mildenberger's book fills neither of these functions, but after careful reading of the book I must affirm that the author is more than justified in offering us a new study of the Lutheran Confessions—although I hope that the aforementioned useful theologies of the Confessions do not thereby fall into disuse. For Mildenberger understands the Confessions well and he expresses himself clearly and effectively as he summarizes, synthesizes, and explains them to us.

Mildenberger's study of the Confessions is synthetic like Schlink's. But his is basically an historical study, whereas Schlink's is systematic. Mildenberger provides us with the historical background to the Lutheran Confessions, Schlink more with the theology itself. Thus, Mildenberger fills a real gap in confessional studies for the American reader. To mention just one of many instances of this: he goes into the history leading to the Christological and Trinitarian formulations of the Ecumenical Creeds more than any other commentary of the Lutheran Confessions, and his conclusions and observations seem all to be very well taken. He also ferrets

out and discusses very thoroughly Luther's theological contribution to the Lutheran Confessions.

Mildenberger's research is vast and very informative, and his understanding of the Lutheran Confessions is accurate and profound at times. However, we cannot always accept his conclusions and observations, especially as he assesses the modern role of the Confessions as Lutheran, faithful to their confession, relating to other churches. For instance, he actually thinks that the Leuenberg Concord expresses unity between Lutherans and Reformed on the articles of the Lord's Supper and Christology sufficient for fellowship. On the other hand, after presenting an excellent delineation of the monergistic Lutheran doctrine of justification *propter Christum*, he maintains, contrary to many American and European Lutheran theologians and ecclesiastical magnates today, that the chasm between the Lutheran doctrine of justification and the synergistic Roman doctrine of sanctification is as vast as it was four hundred years ago. And he does not even bother to consider the recent spate of dialogs and discussions between Roman Catholics and Lutherans on this critical subject. As an historian he probably sees no real lasting significance in all these recent conversations, at least as they affect the article of justification through faith. Any confessional Lutheran interested in a new and interesting and perceptive study of the Lutheran Confessions will be rewarded as he reads this latest contribution to confessional Lutheran studies.

Robert Preus

DEATH: CONFRONTING THE REALITY. By William E. Phipps. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987. 219 pages. Paperback.

William E. Phipps is Professor of Religion and Philosophy at David and Elkins College and is an active member of the American Academy of Religion. *Death: Confronting the Reality* is a fairly complete overview of the material normally embraced in the discipline of thanatology. He also includes a unit on "Violence and Death" discussing such things as the death penalty, gun control, and war The book is provocative in nature. It is targeted in part for lay groups. Thus it is written, at least in part, as a discussion starter. In order to facilitate this goal Phipps makes an attempt to present various positions on the issues discussed. I say "attempt" because the treatment is not evenhanded. The author's predilection to the liberal rather than orthodox theological view is evident. Although having a certain theological perspective, this is frequently sacrificed to the sociological.

Three cases in point are these: In "Suicide" Phipps gives complete and helpful definitions but comes, in this reviewer's opinion, to some unwarranted conclusions. He says, for example, "after the couple died, a committee of the Presbytery of New York City wisely concluded that

'for some Christians, as a last resort in the gravest of situations, suicide may be an act of their Christian conscience' " (p. 86.). In "Body Disposal" the author finds little if any value in current methods employed in the United States. He carries on with a vengeance much of Jessica Mitford's detailed attack on the funeral industry in her *American Way of Dying*. Yet the other side of the question receives only terse mention and treatment. In "Life after Death" Phipps presents an incisive overview of the perceptions and beliefs of various religions and cultures concerning life after death. Biblical Christians will have difficulty with the author's open-ended acceptance of views and tenets clearly antithetical to orthodox Christianity and with the implied hermeneutical views leading to this position.

One of the more helpful and constructive chapters is "Grief and Bereavement." In his definitions, analysis, and guidance Phipps provides material that is helpful to bereaved persons in working through their grief. A wholesome emphasis is the encouragement for the "religious community" to take its historic responsibility " for burying the dead rather than leaving it to secular surrogates" (p. 153).

For the pastor who needs to get his feet wet and be introduced to the discipline of thanatology, this book would be helpful. For that group of pastors who have done some reading and perhaps some course work in the area, nothing particularly new would be found. As to use with lay people in the congregation, the pastor must be satisfied that the group is biblically literate and possesses some degree of theological discernment. Otherwise, he is going to have a lot of explaining to do.

Norbert H. Mueller

THE RESTLESS HEART: THE LIFE AND INFLUENCE OF ST. AUGUSTINE. By Michael Marshall. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1987. Cloth. 151 pages.

The sixteen hundredth anniversary of Augustine's conversion and baptism (386-387) has produced a two-year spate of conferences, books, and articles on the bishop of Hippo. Many, of course, were for the professional student and scholar. But many were not, and of these *The Restless Heart* is the most attractive. It is a book more for the coffee table or the living room than for the study. Yet it is a book both of delight and of real substance.

The author and publisher assert that this is the "first fully illustrated life of St. Augustine in English." There are some very nice color photographs of ancient ruins in North Africa and Italy which vividly illustrate the places of Augustine's life and work. Were that there were more of these! However, many illustrations and photographs are artistic renditions of Augustine's life which, to my mind, serve no illustrative purpose or value.

Chief among these are the photographs of a sentimentalized life of Augustine in nineteenth-century glass windows in the cathedral at Annaba (the modern name of ancient Hippo).

On the other hand, the text of Marshall is very good. It is simple yet elegant in style, directed quite intentionally for the layperson. A repeated theme is that Augustine was a man of words, rhetorically schooled to move the mind and to move the heart. It is a proper emphasis and Marshall enhances his own presentation by allowing Augustine to speak through well-chosen, apposite quotations. Marshall has allowed Augustine's *Confessions* largely to determine the outline of Augustine's life. In doing so he ignores some historical problems. But no matter, Marshall has already warned us that the specific aim of the book is to popularize and make "attractively accessible the character and features of one of the greatest saints of Christian history" (p. 8). Corresponding to this aim, Marshall does not dwell upon Augustine the philosopher or Augustine the theologian, although these aspects are not lacking. Rather, as the title attests, Marshall wants to depict the man Augustine in his attempt to love God and then to love God more purely.

It is in his intense introspection that Augustine is most like our own age. For Augustine his whole life was a pilgrimage, a journey from birth to death, but a journey which by the grace of God would issue into life again. For that reason, Augustine always remained a theologian of hope, not of a rigid determinism which is the view of many about him. He knew his restless heart would at the end find its rest in God. Through his own fine text and the choice words of the saint, Marshall has allowed our hearts to be stirred in the discovery that in Augustine's life and hope we may see also our own.

William C. Weinrich

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN ENGLISH. First Exact Facsimile of the First English Bible with an Introduction by Donald L. Brake. Portland, Oregon: International Bible Publications, 1986.

Visitors to the campus of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne are sometimes surprised by the street names: Martin Luther Drive, of course; but what are Coverdale, Tyndale, and Wycliffe streets doing on a *Lutheran* campus? They are a tribute to those through whom God worked to put His Word into English. And as English-speaking Lutherans committed to the Word, we treasure the Bible in our native tongue. It is a thrill therefore to have at hand a facsimile of the first fruits of English Bible translating, the Wycliffite version of the fourteenth century.

To commemorate the six hundredth anniversary of the first translation of the entire Bible into English, Donald Brake and International Bible

Publications have reproduced one of about two hundred manuscripts of the Wycliffe Bible, the Rawlinson 259 in the Bodleian library, a non-illuminated copy of the New Testament written around 1430. The result is a handsomely bound, gilt-edged, and clearly reproduced text of nearly five hundred pages, including a thirty-page introduction to John Wycliffe (c.1330-1384) and his Bible.

For the most part Brake's introduction is adequate since he notes that scholars are still wrestling with the question of Wycliffe's precise connection to the Bible that bears his name. Although the earliest written accounts (by Wycliffe's near contemporaries) are unanimous in attributing the English Bible to him, modern scholars have raised serious doubts about this attribution largely on the basis of manuscript evidence that reveals various dialects in the translation instead of just one and that even names one of Wycliffe's disciples, Nicolas Hereford, as the translator. However, the evidence is far from conclusive and so the debate rages; but virtually all agree that Wycliffe was at the very least the prime instigator of the translation since his disciples both used and promulgated it and his theology justifies it (a medieval *sola scriptura* principle and a repudiation of the visible hierarchy as necessary mediators of divine grace).

The facsimile itself produces the second or late version of the Wycliffe Bible, done around 1390 just a few years after the original work and sometimes attributed to Wycliffe's amanuensis, John Purvey. The first version is practically a word-for-word rendering of the Vulgate; but the second is in much more readable English. Two columns fill every page of this copy, and the printing is remarkably clear, revealing both skill and dedication on the part of the anonymous copyist. Although written in middle English hand employing archaic characters like the thorn, most readers will be able to reconize the texts as English. They should not be surprised, however, if what they can read is unfamiliar since the language of our most common English Bibles (King James and RSV) goes back only to Tyndale in the sixteenth century. Besides the text of the New Testament itself, the Rawlinson manuscript also includes brief prefaces to each of the books, a calendar of the church year, a tale of epistle and gospel lessons, and translations of Old Testament lessons.

Although scholars will continue to make use of the critical editions of the Wycliffe Bible (Forshall and Madden, 1950, and the still incomplete *Middle English Bible*, edited by Conrad Lindberg), libraries and Bible lovers will want to obtain this beautiful and fitting tribute to six hundred years of the English Bible.

Cameron A. MacKenzie

MARK: A NEW TRANSLATION WITH INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTARY. By C.S. Mann. The Anchor Bible, Volume 27. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company. 715 pages. $20.00.

It can be safely said that the acquisition of Mann's commentary on Mark will preclude the purchase of any other during the purchaser's normal life span. The data assembled by the author in the introduction cover nearly the first two hundred pages. At the end of the volume are exhaustive indices of commentators, subjects, and Old Testament, intertestamental, New Testament, classical, and early church writers. The preacher, scholar, and Bible class teacher will want to have this commentary simply because of the enormous amount of information put between two covers. This might be said about any number of commentaries appearing in *The Anchor Bible*.

What is "new" and important is that Mann operates under the old church hypothesis that Matthew and Luke were first and that Mark was third. Of course, this leaves no place for Q or the Markan priority, the sacred cows of modern gospel scholarship. The priority of Mark's gospel was even endorsed in an LCMS insert for Sunday bulletins in the summer of 1986. This new and sharp turn of events entitled Mann's commentary to a special article in *Time* magazine. Whether Mann will make any converts to his position from the established critical orthodoxy remains to be seen, but his thesis will cause a few heads to be turned. It must be taken seriously. Established scholars will hardly offer up their written offsprings, which like Athena sprang from the mind of Zeus, on the altar of academic fairness, but a new breed of scholars may come along who will recognize Matthew and not Mark as the premier gospel.

Mann lays out his terms in a lengthy introduction providing the definition of a gospel, their composition, the required disciplines for their study, synoptic relationships and the supposed superiority of Mark, the evangelist's purpose, his concept of the kingdom, principal texts, word usage, notes on transliteration, and suggestions for the arrangement of the gospel. In his section on the supposed superiority of Mark, thirteen reasons were laid out for dispensing with the two-documentary hypothesis and for accepting Matthean priority. In his own words, "The majority view that Mark was written first and that Matthew is substantially dependent upon Mark cannot be adequately proved; indeed, the premise of Markan priority allows for too many obstinate surds in the calculations of relations to be sustained" (p. 51). Problematical for Mann is Luke's failure to use Matthew's infancy narratives. This is not an insurmountable difficulty. For example, he might have found Matthew's approach a bit too negative and wanted to include accounts which had a more universal appeal. Mann will be able to resolve this problem in another volume.

Matthew 12:14 is used by Mann to demonstrate the different results from using Matthean in place of Markan priority. Rather than Matthew and

Luke using Mark, Mark conflates the texts of Matthew and Luke. With Markan priority, Matthew is said to change the order of events. Luke retains some of Mark's order and some of his wording and omits the other wording. Mann prefers seeing Luke using Matthew by rewording, reordering, sometimes radically, and omitting. Luke supplies "you do not consider a person" for Matthew's "you pay not attention to outward appearance." Mark generally followed Luke, but in the case of significant difference chose the longer text of Matthew. Mann comments that Markan priority "results in Matthew and Luke acting at whim and in an almost irrational manner" (p. 471). Too much scholarly and academic investment has been placed in the Markan priority to expect a quick turn of events. The least we can expect is that another scholar with the same outlook will provide us with a commentary on Luke. Perhaps the commentary on Luke should have come first, but things do not happen in the most logical order. *The Anchor Bible* series for Luke is provided by Fitzmeyer who uses Markan priority and Q. Perhaps the editors will allow a competing commentary by Mann on Luke.

David P. Scaer

ETHICS: BASIC ELEMENTS AND METHODOLOGY IN AN ETHICAL THEOLOGY. Volume I. By Trutz Rendtorff. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.

As prelude to another volume promising to treat specific moral problems, Rendtorff presents this proposal for an "ethical theology" and a discussion of theoretical issues in the construction of such an ethic. The result may lead one to wonder, however, whether theory is best discussed in such detachment from specific issues; for this volume, despite its richness in certain places, remains finally unsatisfying in its generality.

For Rendtorff, ethics must be neither deduced from within the premises of Christian theology (in Barthian fashion) nor a discipline which does nothing more than show the futility of human striving (as in many Lutheran hands). It is harder to say what, in his view, ethics should be. Rendtorff seems to be drawing on several different theological emphases—a stress on creation like that found in Logstrup (and, perhaps, Wingren), and an emphasis on eschatology taken from Pannenberg. How these come together in his ethical theology remains unclear to me. But one of the strengths of the book is its attempt to recover and emphasize what Rendtorff calls "the givenness of life"—an emphasis on the natural world and the moral significance to be discerned within it. This in turn leads him back to a concept of "order," though he wants to understand them in historical and functional terms. There is much here that is thought-provoking and worthy of attention.

This volume first outlines the "three basic elements of the ethical reality of life" and then moves from these elements to "methodological aspects" of ethics suggested by each. Thus, the elements of life that have moral significance are its givenness, the giving of life to which its givenness in turn calls us, and reasoned reflection on life. These in turn suggest that theoretical reflection must concern itself with received rules for moral conduct, with responsibility for one's own life, and with the justification of moral language. In my judgment, Rendtorff's discussion is both richer and clearer when he is phenomenologically investigating the elements of ethical reality than it is when he turns to questions of method. This last section of the book is rather sketchy, attempting too much in short compass.

The normative ethic that emerges is a utilitarian one, emphasizing the need for discernment and responsibility on the part of moral agents. This grows chiefly out of the second element in ethical reality—namely, the call to giving. How it coheres with the first element—the givenness of life and its natural structures—is not easy to see. Rendtorff does not clarify how we are to resolve the tension between the limits placed upon us by the created reality within which we live (and within we are to find moral significance) and the free exercise of our responsibility for shaping a world.

This volume is likely to be of interest chiefly to scholars in theological ethics. It is not the place to start, though it may be one place to which one might later turn.

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NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY. By Leon Morris. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986. 386 pages. Hardcover.

There is a strong tendency in modern biblical scholarship to accent the diversity and to speak of "theologies" within the New Testament. Leon Morris, former Principal of Ridley College in Melbourne, Australia, and a well-known conservative New Testament scholar, reasserts the validity of examining the New Testament Scriptures as a unity and the "theology" these documents present. His purpose is to present an overview of the theological contents of the New Testament while staying clear of technical discussions. Morris addresses his topic by individually examining four main groupings of New Testament literature—the Pauline writings, the synoptic gospels and Acts, the Johannine writings, and the general epistles. No common organizing principle is employed in examining these groupings; rather, the author randomly highlights the major theological themes of the individual authors. Keeping with his purpose, Morris limits footnotes to a minimum and alludes to, but does not debate, historical questions.

Ironically, Morris' "encyclopedic" approach to the theology of each individual author does not give the reader the unified perspective of New Testament theology that is expected. In order to discuss each New Testament writer, Morris' treatment tends to be extremely terse and at times too brief (for example, the theology of the Revelation to St. John is discussed in just five pages). In the opinion of this reviewer, an author cannot overview such a broad subject without realizing the danger of "saying little about much." I often found myself skimming the numerous short discussions of theological concepts. Although an attempt is made to synthesize his findings in the conclusion, Morris still focuses on the individual writers rather than their common message.

This is not a volume for the pastor or advanced theological student. Its value lies in its accessibility to the layman and beginner. While it is weak on the sacraments (e.g., "the Holy Spirit makes the believer a member of the church, not the use of water," p. 81) and there is occasional Law-Gospel confusion (e.g., "judgment belongs to the good news," p. 28), this study is a basic, sound treatment with many valuable insights (e.g., his examination of word usage, the corporate character of Paul's "in Christ," his discussion of Matthew's genealogy, his analysis of Luke's use of "the Lord," and his perceptive comments regarding Luke's focus on women, children, and prayer). Because of his respect for the text, Morris' writing takes on a "devotional" quality. For these reasons this volume may prove a helpful addition to a church library.

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LUTHERISCHE FREIKIRCHE IN SACHSEN. Geschichte und Gegenwart einer lutherischen Bekenntniskirche. By Gottfried Herrmann. Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1985. 600 pages.

This large paperback, published in the German Democratic Republic, is a welcome treatment of our sister church in Germany. It tells the story of the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany, both East and West. It is an exceedingly thorough and well-documented example of historical research, of great interest to the Lutherans in America. Herrmann reveals the warm interest of the Saxons in the development of Lutheranism in America. While many people were traveling east and west across the Atlantic, the interest in each other was mutual. While the leaders in Germany could theorize about the nature of a free Lutheran church, the leaders in America could put theories into practice. This was reflected back to Germany in 1876, when Ruhland took over the so-called "congregational principle" (*Gemeindeprinzip*) of the Missouri Synod.

In preparation for the Saxon church in Germany, a meeting was held in March 1868 in Dresden in the publishing house of Heinrich Immanuel Naumann, grandfather of our deceased colleague, Dr. Martin Naumann, after whom a dormitory has now been named. Dresden in 1871 considered calling a pastor back from the United States but did not believe that anyone would accept such a call as long as the Saxon church had not declared its separation from the *Landeskirche*.

The author traces many names of the early immigrants whose families are among us. In 1876 Carl Manthey-Zorn and Friedrich Zucker attended a convention in Baltimore (August 16-23). They were received without the customary colloquy. Zorn wrote many popular commentaries, and Zucker taught in Fort Wayne in 1879, accepted the leadership of a Missouri mission in 1894, and died in Fort Wayne in 1927. Karl George Stoeckhardt was very active in Germany before he came to America to become the leading exegete in the St. Louis seminary.

This history is important for our time when Lutheran churches are reorganizing and establishing new patterns. It becomes apparent that the Missouri Synod wants to continue the ideal of keeping Lutheran practice and Christian doctrine pure, while the "evangelical" commingling with other traditions, called ecumenical today, remains the aim and the style of the fifty or more American synods coming together in the ELCA.

Otto F. Stahlke

THE SUPPER OF THE LORD. The New Testament, Ecumenical Dialogues, and Faith and Order on the Eucharist. By John Reumann. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985. Paperback, 225 pages.

There is nothing sadder than apostasy thinly veiled by jocund ecumenical optimism and pious-sounding formulae. In certain quarters, Reumann's book will doubtless be hailed as yet another catalyst of the ecumaniac-cum-syncretist's Shangrila where much is "celebrated" and nothing confessed and where sugary sentiments of unbounded fellowship with all and sundry can cheerfully coexist with open blasphemy. A sober reading of this volume will render inescapable the melancholy conclusion that Reumann's theme is something other than the one Holy Supper instituted by our Lord in the upper room for the refreshment of His Christians until His visible reappearance. Lest this judgment seem unduly harsh, let it be pointed out that Reumann invites the same strictures against himself as have been leveled by orthodox commentators on the Lima BEM Document; in company with the latter Reumann digresses at length on sundry peripheral dimensions of

the Lord's Supper, while pointedly failing to state the one thing necessary, namely, that Christ has commanded us to consecrate, distribute, and consume bread and wine as His body and blood. The opening chapter, "Biblical Motifs as Foundations" (pp. 1-52), gives the game away; Dr. Reumann considers the church's eucharistic celebration to be rooted in such things as the earthly Jesus' granting of table fellowship with Himself and, in certain aspects, what is reported concerning His resurrection appearances. Reumann's attitude towards the catechetical statement "instituted by Christ Himself" is sceptical, to say the least. His scholarly methodology explains all: "Perhaps the most profound impact from biblical studies is the growing realization that we cannot today with surety ascertain exactly what Jesus did, said, or intended historically" (p. xii). Again, "one of the ironies resulting from all the intense modern study of the Gospels is that scholars are more and more certain that *we do not know exactly what Jesus said that night"* (p. 2; author's emphasis). Having put a question mark behind the *verba testamenti*, Reumann offers a fanciful reconstruction of the allegedly competing interpretations of them given in various strata of the New Testament writings. Thus, he can quote approvingly Eduard Schweizer's desperately flippant dictum that, "if asked to explain 'the elements,' a Jewish Christian would have answered as a Reformed pastor does now, a Hellenistic Christian as a Lutheran does!" (p. 95). Levity of this kind opens the door for the displacement of Christianity by churchianity, and it comes as no surprise that Reumann offers the following insipid gloss on 1 Corinthians 10:16, " 'a participation in the body/blood of Christ,' that is, in Christ himself" (p. 42).

Interestingly, Reumann finds fault with the currently popular view (overtly expressed in the NEB translation) that the "body" Paul bids us "discern" in 1 Corinthians 11:29 is the ecclesial community rather than the Lord's physical presence in the elements (pp. 44-45). Of course, on his understanding the latter is merely the view of the apostle and the Hellenistic Christian community! Moreover, Reumann is unconvinced of the exegetical strength of arguments in favor of more frequent eucharistic celebration than has been the case among Lutherans in recent generations. Acts 2:42 does not convince him, since Luke gives a "romantic reconstruction" of the life of the primitive church in Jerusalem (p. 48). Nor does Augustana 24 make much of an impression on him (p. 66) for, as he candidly observes in his closing chapter, "The strongest argument for regular Sunday celebrations seems to be the claim that Jesus instituted this meal and that it remains the uniquely Christian form of worship, elsewhere unparalleled. That argument will be evaluated on the degree to which one feels we can work back to words and intent of the historical Jesus and will be judged in light of what one thinks about cult meals in the history of world religions, in Hellenism or elsewhere, as an influence" (p. 196).

Reumann's unwillingness to take the New Testament seriously carries over into his attitude towards Christian tradition in general and the Lutheran

tradition in particular. The chapter entitled "Some Developments in the History of Holy Communion through the Centuries" (pp. 53-76) is an insult to the discipline of historical theology. The passing reference to Luther's contributions in the area of eucharistic theology (pp. 64-65) do not betray much acquaintance with the Reformer's sacramental writings. Just as folk have wondered why anyone would bother to crucify the "historical Jesus" of Harnackian liberalism, so it would be difficult to see why Zwingli and the Reformed saw the need to differ with Luther as presented by Reumann.

The greater part of the book is devoted to an encomium on the church-political wheeling and dealing which Reumann describes under the heading of "Ecumenical Motifs: Dialogue and Convergence in Recent Decades" (pp. 78-182). Recounted in detail is the record of Lutheran-Reformed, Lutheran-Roman Catholic, and Lutheran-Episcopal dialogue on matters eucharistic, Reumann's narrative reaching its crescendo with a hymn of praise to the Lima BEM document. One is inclined to suspect that many of the participants in these dialogues cannot with accuracy be regarded as true representatives of classical Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, or Roman Catholic positions. The manipulating ecclesiastical bureaucrat has replaced the churchman and the theologian. Lest this review appear overly negative, it is fitting to close on a note of agreement with the author. Reumann appositely remarks that, although the term "eucharist" runs the danger of turning the Sacrament of the Altar into our work rather than God's, nevertheless it has the advantage over other labels for the Lord's Supper that it "yields a covenient adjective, 'eucharistic' " (p. 2).

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THE TRIUMPH OF THE MEEK: WHY EARLY CHRISTIANITY SUCCEEDED. By Michael Walsh. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986. 256 pages. $17.95.

This is a beautifully illustrated book about the rise and development of Christian thought and practice until the triumph of the church with the coming of Constantine (313 A.D.). The illustrations, which occupy perhaps one-fourth of the book, offer visual aid to the text's discussion of the background and context of the early Christians and of their life and experience. Many of the illustrations are color photographs which enhance the attractiveness of the book. The selection is good—pagan depictions of emperor deification, geography (the Judean wilderness, Ephesus, Qumran, Masada, Caesarea, modern Edessa), Christian iconography (catacombs, sarcophagi), pagan and Christian graffiti, a Manichaean text, an early baptistery, an example of Roman insula, and many more. There are also photographs of early texts, a reasonable number of helpful maps, and interesting drawings (such as a cut-away of a Christian house-church in Dura Europa).

The illustrations make for interesting and informative perusal. It is the narrative which falters. There are, to be sure, sections which summarize

early Christianity with clarity and fairness. It is simply that it is not clear just what the author intends. Certainly his intention cannot be to answer the question implicit in the subtitle, "Why Early Christianity Succeeded." That issue is never broached, let alone explained. Indeed, the narrative suffers from a pervasive lack of theme and internal coherence. For example, chapter 6, entitled "Christians of the East," contains subsections devoted to the churches of the Apocalypse, Ignatius and Polycarp, Christian origins in Syria, Marcion and the problem of the canon, Montanism, Mani and Gnosticism, the Quartodeciman controversy, and Dura Europa. Nothing in the discussion indicates how any of these relates to the "triumph of the meek" or, for that matter, to each other.

The weakness of the book is revealed, I think, in the assertion on the jacket that the author "brings together the latest findings of archaeologists, historians, and New Testament scholars." The text is, in fact, pock-marked by the interests, biases, predilections, and obsessions of recent scholarship. Now there is an obvious legitimacy to incorporating recent research into one's narrative. However, when in a book of this limited size and large chronological scope the author expends seven pages on the uncertainties of gospel origins (two pages on Q!) and dedicates no discussion to Irenaeus, it is clear that the author's interst in the "latest findings" of scholarship has beclouded his vision. This is evident as well in the inordinate space allowed for discussion of Jesus and the New Testament in comparison to the two centuries from 100 A.D. to 313 A.D.

Furthermore, some of the latest findings are dubious. The full significance of Marcion for second-century Christianity needs to be appreciated, but it is doubtful that Marcion "contributed to the high status which the letters of Paul have been accorded" in the canon (p. 130). Also the Pastoral Epistles were not directed against Marcion (p. 128). Finally, Walsh's statements concerning women in the early church reveals the tendentiousness of much modern writing. Although he mercifully does not develop the theme, Walsh partakes of the current view that the position of women in the early church evolved from a full equality in the period of the New Testament to a position of increasing subordination in the early patristic period. This idea is certainly exaggerated. Specifically, the claim that Montanism restored women to the leadership positions they enjoyed in the first-century church and further offered women celibacy and virginity as a "means of escape from male domination" (p. 133) is nonsense. Although without a meaningful thematic, individual sections can be read with profit. Unfortunately that is not enough to warrant the price of the book, even with the beautiful pictures.

William C. Weinrich

WORD BIBLICAL COMMENTARY, VOLUME 40: 2 CORINTHIANS. By Ralph P. Martin. Waco: Word Books, 1986. Cloth, 527 pages.

This weighty volume on 2 Corinthians will certainly serve as the "water mark" by which successive New Testament volumes in this new commentary series will be measured. Ralph P. Martin, Professor of New Testament and Director of the Graduate Studies Program at Fuller Theological Seminary, is a prolific author who wrote this volume while also serving as the New Testament editor for this entire Word Books series. Thus, this treatment of 2 Corinthians is characterized by clear organization, careful documentation, completeness in addressing questions, an emphasis on grammatical exegesis before theologizing, and a very high standard of evangelical scholarship.

A primary concern when using a commentary is format. Martin organizes his research in an appealing manner. After addressing a number of introductory questions, he presents a detailed analysis of each pericope in this pattern: (1) bibliography of scholarship on the specific pericope; (2) a fresh translation of the Greek text; (3) notes on the Greek text; (4) an overview of the pericope's form, structure, and setting; (5) extensive verse-by-verse comments; and (6) a brief explanation of the pericope. The indices which conclude the volume are superb. A clear strength of Martin's work is his grasp of current scholarship; his bibliographies are extensive and are used in his interpretation (even Leo the Great and John Chrysostom grace his writing). Only two minor criticisms of his format arise: The versification sometimes gets lost in the print (bold numbers would help to locate a specific verse quickly). And the use of secondary material (current scholarship) is so prevalent that the verse-by-verse comments become, at times, overwhelming and hard to follow. The busy pastor will appreciate the terse explanations at the conclusion of each pericope.

A more important concern than format is content. Martin's treatment is, in a word, complete. Although he is theologically conservative, he draws on a wide spectrum of scholarship and addresses the sticky questions of this epistle (e.g., the composition of 2 Corinthians, which he views as originally two letters, chapters 1-9 and 10-13, that were later joined). His approach is strongly focused on detailed exegesis; his analysis of sentence structure and word usage is impressive (e.g., the presence of Jewish exegesis and antithetical parallelism in 3:7-18 and the Greek rhetorical patterns and devices of a "Fool's Speech" in 11:16-12:20). His Reformed theology is visible in his handling of the conversion of Israel (pp. 258-70). He correctly identifies *theologia crucis* versus *theologia gloriae* as a primary theme of this letter and Paul's apostleship. He states convincingly (p. 475):

> But the cross is not simply a past happening; it is caught up in his present risen life where he remains the crucified one, as the crucified Jesus is now the risen Lord ... the cross [is] not

> a station on the way to his final glory, but the *esse* of that lordship, so that always his lordly power is conditioned by his continuing weakness, obedience and humility.

This commentary is not meant for the layman or church library; it is definitely a technical volume of quality for the library of the pastor, teacher, or scholar who desires to probe this Pauline letter carefully and deeply.

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