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## Book Reviews

EXPLAINING YOUR FAITH WITHOUT LOSING YOUR FRIENDS. By Alister E. McGrath. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989.

McGrath, an Oxford don, has penned a useful little book to “help you deal with some of the difficulties which people—especially students!—genuinely feel when they are considering the claims of Christianity” (p. 6). McGrath suggests a number of ways to follow C.S. Lewis’ advice to create an “intellectual climate favourable to Christianity.” There are chapters on “Jesus,” “The Resurrection,” “Salvation,” and “God” with suggestions for further reading provided at the end of each chapter. McGrath provides examples of how one could discuss such topics in positive, winsome ways with those struggling to understand the major tenets of the faith.

The suggestions are good ones and the overall tone of the book is very positive; however, there are two major problems from a confessional Lutheran perspective. McGrath falls short in his attempt to explain the notion of salvation. The atonement is described as “freedom” and “victory” without a clear explanation of the death of Christ as a vicarious satisfaction for sin. Perhaps this is merely a problem of editorial constraint. And unfortunately, but predictably, no mention is made of how one goes about acquiring the forgiveness of sins. That is to say, McGrath has no theology of the means of grace. Consequently, McGrath asserts that man must “do something” to respond to the gospel and thereby appropriate personally the benefits of Christ’s death. With this caution in mind the book may serve its intended purpose of assisting college students and others as they discuss the faith with their non-Christian friends.

Paul T. McCain

JESUS AND THE THEOLOGY OF ISRAEL. By John Pawlikowski. Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1989.

John Pawlikowski presents a concise summary of the present state of discussion between Jews and Christians. There are two driving forces behind such inter-faith discussion, namely, the Holocaust and Vatican Council II’s declaration on Catholicism’s relationship to non-Christian religions. This declaration, entitled *Nostra Aetate*, included an important statement on Judaism.

The Holocaust is said to be the pivotal event in recent history which has made Christianity’s claim of universal significance and the fulfillment of ancient Jewish expectations to be untenable—an option which is never explained. That the “Christ Event” is primarily for Christians and not Jews is the fundamental assertion of this book. According to Pawlikowski, to assert anything more about Christ is to neglect the covenant made with the Jewish people, a covenant not

abrogated by Christ. What is the underlying motive behind such thinking? As Pawlikowski explains, "the extent to which we Christians can create positive theological space for the Jewish people. . .to that same extent shall we moderate, even if implicitly, all absolutist claims for the Christian faith relative to any other religious tradition" (p. 46). Conservative Christians will disagree with the major premise of the book but will find it useful as a brief summary of Jewish-Christian dialogue.

Paul T. McCain

**JOSEPH AND HIS FAMILY: A LITERARY STUDY.** By W. Lee Humphreys. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1988.

This volume is the second in the series "Studies on Personalities of the Old Testament." However, the book is primarily a literary study of the Joseph narrative (Genesis 37-50), rather than a study of the personality of the biblical Joseph. The work consists of two parts. The first (chapters 2-6) treats the Joseph narrative synchronically and employs the techniques of rhetorical and literary criticism. This is the part most worthwhile for the conservative reader. Humphreys diagnoses the narrative as a novella about "a family rent by strife and deceit. . .that finally gives way to reconciliation," which is intertwined with another story about "the remarkable rise from rags to riches of the young Joseph" (p. 11). Although Humphreys is weak on the historicity of the narrative (p. 20), his descriptions of dynamics of the plot, characters, rhetorical techniques, and theology facilitate the understanding of the text. Particularly the sketches of the personalities of the *dramatis personae* (chapter 4) and the theological evaluation of the narrative (chapter 6), which sees a strong gospel emphasis throughout the see-saw of events, provide stimulating material which pastors could adapt profitably for sermons and Bible studies.

If the busy parish pastor is forced to put the book down after finishing only the first half, it is just as well. In the second half (chapters 7-10) Humphreys attempts the dubious exercise of tracing the supposed diachronic development of the Joseph novella, which he admits is largely hypothetical (p. 136). The methodology is form criticism, following especially von Rad. Humphreys contends that the original kernel of the narrative is the story of Joseph's rise in Egypt (Genesis 40-41), which reflects Egyptian wisdom (chapters 7-8), though the kernel originated in late second millennium Canaan (p. 172), and the full novella was composed in the "Solomonic Enlightenment" (p. 190). The novella is the bridge between the patriarchal narratives and the exodus, and it is not amenable to JEDP source

criticism, though Humphreys is careful not to slaughter the sacred cow of the documentary hypothesis as a whole (p. 199).

The speculations comprising the second half of the book are rather useless for understanding and proclaiming the rich law and gospel message of the text, and indeed such methods of criticism denigrate the text to the point of destroying its kerygma. Nevertheless, the first half offers enough constructive insight to justify acquisition of the book by the pastor seeking a close study of the Joseph narrative for his private study for preaching and teaching.

Christopher W. Mitchell

**STRANGER IN THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS.** By Ahmed Osman. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987.

The thesis of this book is that a vizier named Yuya who was buried in Egypt and whose mummy now lies in the Cairo Museum is actually the patriarch Joseph. The personal agenda of the author, an Egyptian Muslim, is to provide a reconstruction of biblical history which reconciles Egypt and Israel and furnishes a common link between Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the person of Joseph (pp. 15,18,141-142). According to his reconstruction, Sarah conceived Isaac by Tuthmosis III, so that Joseph had Egyptian blood, and Ishmael was the only legitimate son of Abraham. Joseph descended to Egypt in the fifteenth century, and the Exodus occurred about 1306 B.C. (chapter 11). Joseph was responsible for the rise of monotheism in Egypt under Akhenaten (chapter 13). To support this reconstruction the author cites many parallels between Joseph, as described in the Bible, Talmud, and Koran, and what is known of Yuya, primarily from archaeology.

The chief problem with the reconstruction is that, according to Exodus 13:19 and Joshua 24:32, Joseph was taken from Egypt and buried in Shechem. Yuya may well be a Semite, but he cannot be Joseph! The burial of Joseph in the promised land is theologically significant since it is the locale where God promised to dwell and make available His grace. The author dismisses the biblical evidence by using the documentary hypothesis (JEDP).

The author's thesis also requires a drastic revision of the biblical chronology, which indicates a nineteenth-century descent of Joseph to Egypt and a fifteenth-century exodus. Most critical scholars advocate dates two centuries later than the biblical chronology. The author's challenge of the critical dates is welcome, but he then posits a descent yet another two centuries later, four centuries too late, and allows only one hundred years for the sojourn in Egypt, against the

430 years of Exodus 12:40! It is true that the whole relative chronology of Egypt and Canaan needs to be re-examined, since the critical reconstruction rests primarily on nineteenth-century (A.D.) Egyptian archaeology. However, the chronology needs to be harmonized with the biblical account instead of contradicting it.

Most of the evidence cited is fragmentary, as the author admits (p. 84), and most of the parallels to Joseph would apply equally well to any vizier. The author does not seem to know Hebrew very well (pp. 17,42-43,88,114-115, 162). On the positive side the volume does provide interesting archaeological information and photographs of ancient Egypt. If the thesis had been tenable, it would have been of great value for apologetics.

Christopher W. Mitchell

**RECONCILIATION, LAW AND RIGHTEOUSNESS: ESSAYS IN BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.** By Peter Stuhlmacher. Translated by Everett R. Kalin. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.

This is a relatively slim volume but crammed and bulging with rich theological fare. The well-known Tuebingen New Testament scholar, Peter Stuhlmacher, here offers essays on the following topics:

1. Jesus as Reconciler. Reflections on the Problem of Portraying Jesus within the Framework of a Biblical Theology of the New Testament.
2. Vicariously Giving His Life for Many, Mark 10:45 (Matthew 20:28).
3. The New Righteousness in the Proclamation of Jesus.
4. Jesus' Resurrection and the View of Righteousness in the Pre-Pauline Mission Congregations.
5. The Apostle Paul's View of Righteousness.
6. Recent Exegesis on Romans 3:24-26.
7. The Law as a Topic of Biblical Theology.
8. "The End of the Law." On the Origin and Beginnings of Pauline Theology.
9. Eighteen Theses on Paul's Theology of the Cross.
10. On Pauline Christology.
11. "He is our Peace" (Ephesians 2:14). On the Exegesis and Significance of Ephesians 2:14-18.

As one checks through these topics there comes at least a twofold reaction: (1.) These themes are anything but peripheral. (2.) It is not going to be possible to react to all the subjects Stuhlmacher treats. Therefore this review will make several broad observations and then deal with only a few select specifics. In keeping with the whole concept of "biblical theology" Stuhlmacher insists on a methodology which resolutely refuses to interpret the New Testament without careful reference to the Old Testament. In fact, as outlined in his foreword to the English edition, the milieu from which Stuhlmacher draws material for his interpretations focuses on early Judaism as "the primary history-of-religions frame of reference for the New Testament."

The parish pastor will be pleased to note the "practical" goals to which Stuhlmacher is dedicated. He calls attention to the fact that his essays occasionally go beyond descriptive research to indulge in "a biblical-theological evaluation." He defends his procedure with the contention the "exegetical research should not simply serve the pursuit of academic knowledge, but also and above all help the Church to testify to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in today's world." Would that every exegete shared this understanding of the interpreter's task!

And now for several illustrative specifics. Chapter 2 deals with the crucial logion, "to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45; Matthew 20:28). Did Jesus really say it or did he not? Is it a post-Easter creation of the Hellenistic Jewish-Christian community? The conservative, since his confidence in the accuracy of Scripture has been initiated and sustained by the *autopistia* of Holy Writ, will not get bogged down in lengthy investigations but will proceed forthwith "to a positive interpretation of the ransom saying." Does this mean that said conservative is wasting his time going through Stuhlmacher's scholarly investigation which presupposes as a viable possibility that the saying may not be authentic? Hardly—for one thing, the conservative needs to know firsthand how the critical scholar operates. Even more importantly, following Stuhlmacher's argumentation increases the reader's understanding of the depth and breadth of the saying itself. Does the logion indicate an exemplary martyrdom? What is the nature of its dependence on Isaiah 53? Does it stem from the early Christian theology of the Lord's Supper? What are the connotations of the varied formulations *anti pollon*, *hyper pollon*, *peri pollon*? Is it legitimate to try to go behind the Greek text in search of an Aramaic original? What insights may be derived from a careful consideration of the Son-of-Man tradition?

Although it is true that the conservative may not always want to take time to follow the gyrations and contortions of the critic, it is evident that he can gain positive insights by thinking through

questions such as the above. And then when Stuhlmacher comes to his positive interpretation of the ransom saying, he does not simply repeat easy clichés. For instance, he notes the correspondence of *lytron* to the Hebrew *koper* and explores the relation of Jesus' sacrifice to the role assigned the sin offering (*asom*) of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 52 and 53.

Similar challenge and stimulus are to be found in Stuhlmacher's treatment of Pauline themes. Here one reads about "the synthetic comprehensiveness of the righteousness of God" (p. 81) and "the salvation prolepsis of the gospel" (p. 50). Involved in these professorial terms is theology worth investigating. On pages 156-158 Stuhlmacher seems to be affirming traditional justification language. However, there are times when he blurs the distinction between justification and sanctification by describing justification as a process (p. 178).

And so the challenges abound. My personal testimony is that the essay on Ephesians 2:14-18 proved helpful to a graduate student in my seminar on "The Theology of Ephesians and Colossians." In teaching the seminar on "Problems in Romans" next quarter, I anticipate frequent reference to various of Stuhlmacher's essays.

An interesting sidelight was the readiness of Stuhlmacher to concede that on certain points he has changed his mind, especially as a result of interaction with other scholars (see, for instance, pp. 91, 108, 130.) The snide cynic may ask: "If he changes his mind so frequently, does he ever really know what he is talking about?" If I may add another imperative to the familiar "*tolle, lege*," it would be "*vide*." If one reads him, I believe that one will see how his changes are often not so much substantiative, as efforts at greater precision in making his points. The preacher, who perforce struggles with this problem in proclaiming the message of Scripture, will be sympathetic. All in all this is a significant book by a significant scholar.

H. Armin Moellering  
St. Louis, Missouri

THE MYSTERY OF THE CROSS. By Alister E. McGrath. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988.

Reformed British theologian A. E. McGrath offers the readers a little book in which he fulfills his intended purpose of stimulating and perhaps irritating the reader's thinking on the full relevance of the enigma of Christ's cross to individual faith and the like of the institutional church. While written in non-technical theological language, the book does address a challenge to those responsible for

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the way theology, as an intellectual discipline, is taught in academic settings. It is the author's opinion that the growing indifference and even hostility toward the further study of theology on the part of pastors "is ultimately grounded in the suspicion that this theology has become trapped in the upper regions of the towers of academia and requires to be brought down to the ground floor of human reality if it is to regain its purpose and relevance" (p. 174).

It is McGrath's emphasis that the purpose and relevance of the church is grounded in proclaiming the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The cross and resurrection are the fundamental statement concerning the human situation and God's manner of dealing with it (p. 176). McGrath reminds the institutional church that "God works through the powerless and continually threatens to contradict those who wish to work otherwise, such as by modelling the church upon secular institutions of power" (p. 177).

The pastor who is called upon to minister to people amidst life's crises will find chapter 7, "Life under the Cross," full of valuable insights. McGrath reminds the reader that the cross points out, among many things, the sheer unreliability of human experience to grasp the working of God in the world. After all, amidst the cross's shame, helplessness, and suffering, God was working out His victory.

The reader should be aware that the book's sacramental theology (symbolic), as well as its theology of the Word, is open to criticism from Lutheran theologians. McGrath opens the way to the errors of Barthian neo-orthodoxy and its rejection of propositional revelation when he says "reality is essentially mysterious and not capable of being summarized in neat consistent propositions" (p. 87). "Christian faith is about an encounter with the living God, not about interesting ideas and concepts" (p. 75). Because he, unlike Lutheran theology, does not stress the inseparable and continuing connection of the Holy Spirit with the inscripturated Word, he can only say that our human communication of the Word of the Cross "*may* [emphasis added] become a means by which God encounters and confronts humanity" (p. 126).

The author makes constant reference to Luther's "theology of the cross." If the book gets any reader to read Luther on this theme, the author will have accomplished an admirable deed. Luther, more than McGrath, supplies the reader with theological food for thought and life.

Richard J. Shuta  
Ann Arbor, Michigan



**THE CHURCH AND PASTORAL CARE.** Edited by Leroy Odden and J. Harold Ellens. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988.

The expressed aim of this book is to put the pastor back into pastoral care. Reacting against the capitulation to secular methodologies, which have forfeited in recent times any biblical or theological foundational constructs in pastoral care, the book attempts to swing the pendulum back to the center. Thus, while recognizing "the use of psychological science to illumine the pastoral task," it also claims, and justifiably so, "that there is a growing desire to get pastoral care and counseling back to its roots" (p. 11). The book, which is a collection of articles by various practitioners in the pastoral care field, strives to demonstrate through these essays a worthy synthesis of theological construct and secular psychological methodologies. Given the number and various backgrounds of the contributors, a noble goal is met more successfully by some than others. The authors, furthermore, represent a broad theological spectrum, which also plays heavily into how readers will assess the degree of success in accomplishing the editor's stated goal. Nevertheless, the book does bring us up to speed in what is going on in the discipline of pastoral care and is well worth the investment involved in obtaining and reading the book.

Norbert H. Mueller

**KINGDOM OF PRIESTS: A HISTORY OF OLD TESTAMENT ISRAEL.** By Eugene H. Merrill. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987.

Merrill, who teaches Semitic studies and Old Testament at Dallas Theological Seminary, treats the Old Testament text as the inspired Word of God. He recognizes the way in which archaeological discoveries have brought many insights into the period between 2000 and 400 B.C. The presupposition is that the Old Testament is reliable in constructing history.

Among Merrill's suggestions are the following: Abraham spoke Sumerian, Akkadian, and Amorite; the sojourn in Egypt began before the time of the Hyksos; only Jericho, Ai, and Hazor were completely destroyed during the conquest; both the traditio-historical approach, which suggests the conquest by the tribes of Levi (under Moses) and Joseph and also the sociological peasant-revolt model are wholly inadequate to explain the conquest (dated 1406-1399); kingship under David was not God's concession to Israel but the divine plan for humans to have dominion; the Northern and Southern Kingdoms were inexplicably never really united except through the persons of David and Solomon; David was allied with Philistia until crowned in the North; Thiele's explanations of the complex issues of the

Divided Kingdom are basically sound; and, finally, after the exile, Ezra came before Nehemiah.

So much of the historical study of Israel is consigned to the realm of mastering a host of theories about individual events that no feeling of a general cultural pattern for each era emerges. Merrill deals with the problems connected with dates and refers to a plethora of primarily English sources. Still, one yearns for a clearer picture of the cultural world in which the patriarchs and Israelites lived.

Some interpretations are questionable. Did David really expect to return to Jerusalem when fleeing from Absalom? Should one gloss over Solomon's actions of bringing the consequences upon those who sided with Adonijah? Why was there such an animosity between Israel and Judah, even before David becomes king? Was Israel really a major power in the tenth century along with Egypt and Assyria, or was it strong only because the others were weak? Did Solomon's demise really take place because he was caught up in events beyond his control?

The Bible remains primarily a theological book. It must be understood in the light of events which took place within history. Merrill has certainly done an admirable job of getting at the complex questions of chronology from a viewpoint that the Bible is trustworthy. But this is only one step in the study of the interaction between God and humanity, once centered in the people of Israel but now centered in those who are part of the new Israel by faith.

Thomas Trapp  
St. Paul, Minnesota

**DANIEL IN HIS TIME.** By Andre LaCocque. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1988.

Andre LaCocque, professor of Old Testament at Chicago Theological Seminary (1966 to present) and previously at the Protestant Seminary in Brussels, has provided a clear window for the reader on current aspects of scholarly research and discussion on Daniel. The author's previous commentary on *Daniel* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1976), as well as a series of articles, demonstrate his familiarity with the whole spectrum of issues which characterize the literature. The present study was originally published in French under the title *Le Monde de Daniel*. It is also the first volume in "Studies on Personalities of the Old Testament" (edited by James Crenshaw) from the University of South Carolina Press.

The merits of LaCocque's study are many. Particularly helpful is the systematic manner in which he treats an entire series of topics. Since most questions in exegesis intersect with a host of historical considerations, the uninitiated can easily lose the thread of an argument. LaCocque and his translator, Lydia Cochrane, have done an admirable service in charting a clear course through the maze of questions which attend scholarly research on the Book of Daniel. For example, there is a concise discussion of "Daniel As a Work of Literature" (pp. 59-75), "Symbolic Language, Dream, and Vision" (pp. 121-136), and the "Major Theological Lessons of the Book of Daniel" (pp. 138-172). LaCocque's organization of material around such themes works very well.

Another strength of this study is the author's synthesis of technical research without theological rigor. The assertion that the world of Daniel would not have distinguished "transcendent" from "terrestrial" as "opposing categories" rightly challenges certain modern readings of apocalyptic texts (p. 169). The manner in which Daniel's life is linked to the resurrection is representative of the rich theological exposition (p. 191):

It is fitting, therefore, that he [Daniel] exemplify the glorious resurrection that awaits the righteous. To him it is said in the last sentence of the book: "You, go until the end. You will have rest and you will arise to receive your lot in the end of the days."

LaCocque's investigation of "son of man" in Daniel 7 does not exclude the Messianic freight of the title (pp. 143 ff.). He suggests that Israel's *Weltanschauung* must be fully accounted for before foreign influences are posited or credited with the text's perspective (p. 141):

This means that the apocalypse does not substitute a foreign (Iranian?) topology for a traditional and biblical topology. In the spiritual patrimony of Israel, there was already a cosmological topology at hand ready to be used. In overlooking this, modern scholars have proven unjust toward apocalyptic.

Most readers of this journal will question the standard, critical datings and categories which are assumed throughout. The challenge, of course, is not to neglect those insights which are entirely consonant with and perhaps even required by the text of Daniel.

Just as Luther loved the classics and humanities, it is fitting for his spiritual heirs to glean wisdom wherever it is found rather than uncritically pronounce a study entirely pure or hopelessly poor on the basis of a prior disposition. One should read this suggestive study with a sensitivity to the author's assumptions but also with an openness to some sterling and insightful expositions of the text of Daniel.

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PREACHING ABOUT FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS. By Elizabeth Achtemeier. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1987.

Elizabeth Achtemeier, Visiting Professor of Homiletics at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, has set out to provide us with a mini-textbook dealing with preaching about the family. The finished product seems to fall somewhat short of the author's intent. There are some positive things to be said about the volume. It is clearly written. One cannot say that about every book these days! The book also provides a call to clergy to address, from the pulpit and from a biblical viewpoint, issues relating to marriage and family life. The book also does very well in cataloguing the various attacks brought to bear upon the family by a sin-sick society.

Confessional Lutheran readers will be comfortable with Achtemeier's emphasis on law and gospel and with her pro-life stand. They may also be surprised that she appears to subscribe to the "three uses of the law." On the other hand, most readers in our synod will not appreciate the neo-orthodox approach of the book, which views Scripture as God's Word only subjectively, nor will they appreciate the "higher critical" approach taken to exegetical issues.

Achtemeier is correct. We need bold biblical preaching that relates law and gospel to the issues presently confronting marriage and the family. Yet the book has one glaring problem, besides those I have already mentioned. The author strays from the topic, on a number of occasions, in an attempt to build a case for ordination of women to the pastoral office. Achtemeier attempts to weave these arguments into the main thread of the book. Yet, in my view, she does not succeed in doing so, nor does she present a compelling argument. The book can be read with profit, but it would not appear in this reviewer's list of books which must be read.

Gary C. Genzen  
Lorain, Ohio

COUNSELING FOR PROBLEMS OF SELF-CONTROL. By Richard P. Walters. Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1987.

Word Books had produced a set of counseling guidebooks for the pastor. The title of the set is "Resources for Christian Counseling." *Counseling for Problems of Self-Control* is one of several books from the set that I have read and had an opportunity to review. The author, Richard P. Walters, Ph.D., is an author and a private practice counseling psychologist. Walters has, in my opinion, provided clergy with a readable, practical, helpful book on the subject of counseling those with self-control problems. The presenting problem of the

counselee may be one of explosive personality, overeating, compulsive use of pornographic materials, chronic involvement in adulterous relationships, alcoholism, etc. The basic problem is a lack of self-control.

Through the use of case-studies and from a perspective of Christian psychology, Walters provides suggestions for exploring such problems, and for helping the counselee achieve better self-control. Walters advocates the use of non-directive counseling techniques to build rapport with the counselee. He also uses such techniques to help the counselee discover the core problem which has led to uncontrolled behavior.

After the initial exploration of the problem, Walters provides the model he calls an "Ideas Diagram." In this process, the counselor uses a step-by-step plan to teach the counselee how to overcome the self-control problem. The counseling process moves from a non-directive to a directive modality. Indeed, appendixes to the book provide take-home sheets for the counselee, to give guidance in various self-control problems. Walters sees the "root problems" in self-control failures as manifestations of sin. He views faith in Christ, and experience of God's forgiveness, as vital in the healing process.

While the book appears to advocate a Reformed position with regard to conversion, that does not detract, in a major way, from the overall counseling value of the volume. This book could be a valuable addition to a pastor's library. The author seems to view counseling mostly as directive teaching. While there is a teaching function in Christian counseling, it needs to be balanced with careful, empathetic listening. The book can be useful, if this caution is observed.

Gary C. Genzen  
Lorain, Ohio

**TEEN SEX.** By Margaret O. Hyde. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1988.

*Teen Sex* by Margaret O. Hyde conveys several messages. Readers are informed that more than one million teens become pregnant each year, that a variety of sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS, threaten the sexually active teen, and that abstinent teens risk neither pregnancy nor venereal disease. These messages are realistic, even though Hyde's qualifications to present them do not mention specific academic training. The book is designed to help teens face several issues. Yet it does not seem to represent especially Christian thinking concerning sex. It could just as easily have been published by a secular publisher, rather than a religious publishing house.

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Hyde tries to represent current views about teen sex, medical, religious, and sociological. She attempts to maintain a neutral stance regarding much of the material but, in this reviewer's judgment, fails in that attempt. For example, Hyde seems to oppose the pro-life position when discussing abortion. She also appears to be saying that, while certain religious groups may view premarital sex, homosexuality, and abortion as sinful, cultural views are changing and those views are what really matter. While calling for sexual abstinence, she still seems to believe that so-called "safe sex" provides a fifty percent safety rate against AIDS. My understanding is that some medical authorities would question an assured safety rate that high.

I would not classify this book as a Christian book dealing with teen sexual issues. The volume is well written and can easily be understood by teens. Yet it appears to find permissible certain views with which most in our synod would not agree. I do not recommend purchase of this book, nor do I recommend its use with Christian teens.

Gary C. Genzen  
Lorain, Ohio

**COUNSELING FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND ADDICTION.** By Stephen Van Cleave, Walter Byrd, and Kathy Revell. Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1987.

Two physicians and a nurse, all Christians, and all expert in substance-abuse rehabilitation, have teamed to write this volume. The book is Volume 12 in the "Resources for Christian Counseling" series. The series editor has sought Christian mental health professionals to write books on a variety of counseling topics of interest to pastors. In the case of this book, the authors sought out the editor with their manuscript. One might suspect that this is an indication that churches are in the relatively early stages of confronting the drug problem and helping the substance abuser.

This excellent book can be of great assistance to clergy who seek to help those persons with substance-abuse problems. The book contains several glossaries of substance-abuse and treatment terms, an alcoholism and a drug abuse self-inventory, plus a list of helping resources. The volume is well-documented and appears to draw from a rich variety of resources. The book also contains many helpful case studies. The authors view substance-abuse as a physical problem (possibly with genetic overtones) and also as a spiritual problem. The spiritual aspects include the lack of purpose and meaning in life demonstrated by substance-abusers and also failure to have developed the ability to say "no" to the first use of the substance being

abused, even though the person may know that the substance is dangerous and addicting.

The book describes the development of substance-abuse in the individual. Also described is the co-dependency of other family members, or the effect that the drug-abuser has on other members of the family system. The volume presents a plan for confrontation of the substance-abuser, discusses the various merits of outpatient and residential treatment programs, and deals with the matter of aftercare. Medical, spiritual, and emotional treatment plans are outlined, with many counseling suggestions included for the pastor. The authors endorse the "12 step" program of A.A. and believe that with some slight modification it can be useful to addicted Christians.

Pastors who seek to help substance-abusers should buy and read this fine book. It should then go to the study shelf to be used as a ready reference. No theological defects worth noting were found.

Gary C. Genzen  
Lorain, Ohio

**COUNSELING FOR PROBLEMS OF SELF CONTROL.** By Richard Walters. Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1987.

*Counseling for Problems of Self-Control* by Richard Walters is the eleventh volume in the "Resources for Christian Counseling" series (edited by Gary Collins). The author defines self-control as "managing our attitudes, feelings, and actions so they serve our long-term best interests and those of others." The basic thesis of his text is that overeating, violent behavior, alcohol abuse, chronic lust, shame, and even compulsive spending are basically self-control problems. As Walters sees things, the counselor's goal is to curb such control problems through confrontation. The confrontation process is to include healthy doses of prayer and Scripture reading. The 200-page text includes case histories, frequent verbatim dialogues between the counselor and client, and numerous self-help appendices which the counselor assigns the counselee.

This reviewer found the text long on the law but short on the gospel. The theories presented here are uneasy combinations of psychology and pop theology. Scripture is reduced to a methodological handbook. When the gospel is mentioned, it is unpleasantly mingled with the law. The distinction between justification and sanctification is fuzzy at best, totally obscured at worst. The basic understanding of natural sin and the vehicles God uses to redeem and sanctify seem sadly lacking here. Instead, the author places emphasis on the power of prayer, healings, repentance, and obedience. While these words may

appear in the Bible, the treatment of these issues apart from a correct understanding of law, gospel, word, and sacraments detracts appreciably from the text's usefulness. The classification of such afflictions as alcoholism, child and spouse abuse, and perfectionism as "self-control" problems is also simplistic. The familiar "try harder and you can be healthy" line of reasoning was also difficult to swallow. The text, however, is not entirely without merit. Walters' presentation of the interview process was informative. He correctly urges counselors to identify troublesome underlying issues. He presents counseling as one of many important tools in a congregation's ministry and urges pastors to make full use of corporate worship, support groups, and fellowship activities. The brief discussions of "multimodal" therapy (including referral), crisis management, enablers, and "What to Do When Counseling Is Not Wanted" were somewhat helpful.

Jan Case

**THE TRINITY IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN: A THEMATIC COMMENTARY ON THE FOURTH GOSPEL.** By Royce Gordon Gruenler. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986.

The author, Professor of Biblical Studies at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, offers this book as the first of a trilogy on the Holy Trinity as the Divine Family. The next two works will deal with the Trinity in the New and Old Testaments and the pattern of the divine community as application to Christian life and thought. Professor Gruenler employs a term used by Gabriel Marcel to describe the social nature of God, "the attribute of disposability." By this he means that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit offer themselves to one another for listening, for service, and for love. The internal and external workings of the Holy Trinity are personalized, but not psychologized. The Divine Family becomes a pattern for the divine Christian community wherein all relationships are lifted to a higher family level and where mutual service and love take precedence over any hierarchical model of simple command and obedience.

The Gospel of John abounds in Father ("Him that sent Me") and Son (incarnate Logos) relations, and in Son and Holy Spirit (Paraclete) relations. The background for John is really the Old Testament, Genesis 1-3, where God is Speaker in calling into existence the creation. When man misuses God's gifts, especially God's Word, through unfaithfulness in the fall, and the resultant abuse of language and of every gift of human relationships permeates man's nature, God offers His Son as the new "Speaker, the Expression, the



Logos who is one with God and was in the beginning with God" (p. 11). Accordingly, the speaking God, the Father and the Son with the Spirit hovering over the waters, who called the universe into existence, forms the original community or society. This Triune Family recalls man to life and light through the Eternal Word in the Gospel of John. In the next four chapters, which trace the Divine Family recalling the fallen human family (based on John one through seven, chapters eight through twelve, chapters thirteen through sixteen, and chapters seventeen through twenty-one), Dr. Gruenler explicates this theme on the basis of the text of the gospel.

I am personally impressed with the content of Gruenler's book. The author carefully avoids the distortions and misdirections in the trinitarian controversies of the early church. He never for a moment suggests that the Holy Trinity as the Divine Family is anything less than "Fully God." He does not lessen God's essence or works by discussing the "social nature" of God. He extols the work of the Son in repudiating the sword as a shortcut to the kingdom and instead drinking the cup of divine wrath against sin and rebellion according to prophecies of old. He clearly delineates the lines between the powers "from below" and the way of God, who works "from above." And in an appendix he shows the relationship between authenticity of authorship and a high christology, thus rejecting the ambivalent conjectures of more critical scholars. I am waiting for Dr. Gruenler's next two volumes.

Waldemar Degner

DIE THEOLOGIE MARTIN LUTHERS NACH SEINEN PREDIGTEN. By Ulrich Asendorf. Göttingen: Vanderhoeck und Ruprecht, 1988.

Pastors who have kept their German (and perhaps even their Latin) in usable condition will find in this volume a mine of information, illustrations, and guides for their own work in the pulpit. Here are *precis* and lengthy direct quotations of Luther's own sermons with citations of the full texts from a variety of critical and modernized German editions. Hence, one can discover quickly how Luther treated a particular text and how he employed it with respect to individual theological and pastoral issues. For more than the sake of convenience, the work is organized according to the headings of "The Triune God," "Creation," "Jesus Christ," "The Holy Spirit," "The Word of God," and "Anthropology." At its very end is an indexed list of the scriptural passages on which Luther was preaching.

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However useful the book may be, users must be warned that Asendorf is very much in the tradition of Gerhard Ebeling and others who claim to be able to reconstruct “the theology of Martin Luther” without respect to exact place, time, and circumstance. The author even goes out of his way (p. 16) to declare “false” the “assertion that Luther was no systematician.” He grants that Luther was not systematic in the sense of Aristotelian logic but insists that the “*coram*-relationship” is the heart of a fully trinitarian and systematic theology, which appears in his sermons rather like a Bach fugue with a strong theme and “*einer schier unerschöpflichen Fülle der Phantasie.*”

Whatever these words may mean, they amount to the chief justification for organizing the work according to theological *topoi* that are not specifically evangelical in the sixteenth-century sense of the term. Asendorf rightly points out that these topics overlap among the various sermons and are not to be treated as separate elements in Luther’s preaching. Luther did not use his sermons—any more than he used his biblical lectures—for the purpose of grinding theological axes but to confront his hearers again and again with the central theme of law and gospel that he found in the Scriptures. The systematic *topoi* of evangelical theology thus appeared in various sermons as text and theme warranted.

But Asendorf, having made these concessions, goes on to extract (or should one say, “extrude”?) Luther’s “systematic theology” from his sermons and to do so without respect to date and circumstance. It should be clear that this procedure does not do justice to Luther the preacher, and maybe not to Luther the theologian. As theological “system,” it amounts to *Luftgebilde* in the sense that it never existed all together in any particular place, time, or text. As sermons, they are drained of life for the sake of the “system.” The unfortunate result is that the living faith of evangelical theology appears in the clothing of closely related but nonetheless dry *dogmata*. Hence, the best way to use (not “read”) this book is to begin with the last page, find the scriptural passages of interest, see how Asendorf’s systematic Luther treated them, look at the notes, and go to Luther himself.

James M. Kittelson