

CONCORDIA
THEOLOGICAL
QUARTERLY

CTQ

Volume 55: Numbers 2-3

APRIL-JULY 1991

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Book Reviews

CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN DOGMATICS. VOLUME VI: CHRISTOLOGY. By David P. Scaer. Fort Wayne: International Foundation for Lutheran Confessional Research, 1989.

Hermann Sasse says, "Always it is from the cross that everything is understood, because hidden in the cross is the deepest essence of God's revelation" (*We Confess Jesus Christ*, p. 39). Christology apart from the cross degenerates into abstract speculation. It is from the perspective of the cross that we see Christ's birth, preaching, atonement, resurrection, ascension, and return. Scaer's exposition of the doctrine of Christ is by way of the cross. Justification is reduced to a bloodless theory if it is severed from the reality of the incarnation: "If the doctrine of justification by grace through faith is the center of Christian theology, then Christology is the foundation upon which rests justification and all other articles of faith. Only that doctrine of justification is Christian which is based on the Christology revealed in the New Testament and later confessed in its creeds and councils" (p. 1). It is only through the theology of the cross that Christology "from below" and Christology "from above" rightly converge. Such a perspective informs Scaer's prolegomena in chapter 1, "Christology in the Post-Enlightenment Era." Growing out of this prolegomena is a chapter which summarizes past and present christological controversies. Scaer aptly tells the story of past attempts to pull apart the two natures in Christ, noting how these heresies resurfaced in the Reformed insistence on the *finitum non capax infiniti* in the debate with Luther on the Lord's Supper as well as in the later attempts to split the "Jesus of history" from the "Christ of faith."

One of the most outstanding features of this volume is the author's treatment of Christology in the preaching of Jesus. Evidence for the virgin birth is seen not only in the classic texts that attest to this fact, but also in the words of Jesus Himself (pp. 35-38). Scaer sees the virgin birth as "a sign of divine monergism in the work of conversion" (p. 39). Scaer notes that "the threefold distinction of the offices of Christ as prophet, priest, and king has not been without difficulty in the history of Lutheran theology" (p. 50), yet argues on the basis of Matthew 12 that each of these three offices is expanded and fulfilled by the Lord. In this treatment the author demonstrates his skill as an exegete as well as a systematician.

The death of Christ is set by Scaer within its trinitarian context: "The cross is an affirmation of God's triune essence and not incidental to it. Only when God is thought of in majestic and transcendental categories and not in terms of love and compassion is the cross with its suffering a contradiction or a paradox" (p. 75). The work of atonement is accomplished in Calvary, but Calvary is seen within the framework of the Trinity: "Jesus' death as sacrifice is a Trinitarian

event" (p. 79). It comes as no surprise that Scaer's critique of the "moral example theory of atonement" is thoroughly trinitarian.

Like the crucifixion, the resurrection of Jesus is also seen in the light of the doctrine of the Trinity. Scaer aptly notes: "Christ's resurrection confirms to His followers that His death for sins was necessary and that it was satisfactory atonement offered to God. The resurrected One presents Himself as the One who was crucified and this provides the church with its foundation. The church has no immediate access to the meaning of the death of Christ by crucifixion except through the resurrection" (p. 99). Following Luther and the Formula of Concord, Scaer's exposition of the ascension underscores the fact that the ascension does not strip Christ of His humanity, but rather puts our flesh at the Father's right hand.

The classic catholic and confessional christological vocabulary (the three *genera*) is concisely and helpfully defined. Luther is quoted just often enough to whet the appetite for more. Those desiring a more ample treatment of Luther's Christology should consult Ian Siggins' *Martin Luther's Doctrine of Christ* (Yale, 1970) and Norman Nagel's "Martinus: 'Heresy, Doctor Luther, Heresy!' The Person and Work of Christ," in *The Seven-Headed Luther*, edited by Peter Newman Brooks (Oxford, 1983). In the light of Scaer's critique of Calvinism it is interesting that he tilts his hand in favor of a covenantal understanding of the Lord's Supper (p. 73) rather than a testamental one. Dogmatics stands as a servant of pulpit and altar. *Christology* should prove to be a very useful servant as the church continues to confess and proclaim the incarnate Son of God as Savior of the world.

John T. Pless
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DIE THEOLOGIE MARTIN LUTHERS NACH SEINEN PREDIGTEN. By Ulrich Asendorf. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1988.

In exploring the theology of Luther the preacher, this volume by the distinguished founder of the *Lutherakademie* in Ratzeburg, Germany, renders a genuinely ecumenical service. Strange as it may seem, no systematic study of the thirty-odd volumes of Luther's sermons—nearly one third of the Weimar edition—had as yet been undertaken. Monographs on particular themes have, of course, dealt with Luther's sermons, but in tackling this material as a whole, Asendorf has broken significant new ground. While it is to be hoped that an English translation of this book will appear before long, a good sample of Asendorf's method and work in English may be seen in his charming opening contribution to the *Festschrift* of 1985

honoring Robert Preus, *A Lively Legacy*, under the heading, "Luther's Sermons on Advent as a Summary of His Theology."

In our age of shallow sermonizing Luther has much to give us preachers both for our own nourishment and for that of our hearers. The freshness and vigor of Luther's preaching leap up at the reader from virtually every page. One example will have to suffice. Preaching on the gospel for Trinity XVI (concerning the young man of Nain), Luther brings out the resurrecting power of Christ's word: "So those in the cemetery sleep much more lightly than I do in my bed. I could be called ten times and still not hear it. But they are awakened with one word. So we sleep much more soundly than those in the cemetery, for as soon as the Lord calls, 'young man,' or 'young maid,' they hear it at once" (p. 126).

Asendorf does not, however, simply string together a catena of illustrations of Luther's concrete and vivid imagery, in the manner of an anthology. His is rather an incisive *systematic* treatment, which brings out the connections and complexities in Luther's theology. Luther's "theology is itself essentially preaching" (p. 22). But this is nothing to do with the thoughtless cliché that "Luther is no systematician." On the contrary, says Asendorf, "Luther is in fact a systematician of imposing power and consistency" (p. 16).

Ebeling is right in seeing the "*exclusively* christological interpretation as the basic hermeneutical principle" already in Luther's lectures on the Psalms. The "literal sense," therefore, "aims exclusively at Christ" (p. 20). But this assertion does not mean the thin verbalism of a "kerygma" (in Bultmann's sense) divorced from "dogma." On the contrary, the whole trinitarian-christological dogma is the absolutely indispensable presupposition for justification in Luther's sense (pp. 75 ff., *passim*). Moreover, Luther's understanding of preaching as an act of war, whereby Christ presses and imparts His victory here and now, differs *toto caelo* from Barth's false objectivism-universalism, which sees preaching simply as the imparting of information (p. 20).

One-dimensional or even merely paradoxical schemes fail to capture the richness of Luther's grasp of the biblical reality. The gospel as Luther understood it is a multidimensional whole, full of cross-references and dynamic relations among constitutive constants like the Trinity, the two natures, justification, law and gospel, sacraments, and eschatology (p. 16). In other words, textual vividness and concreteness in Luther do not create striking little masterpieces standing in splendid isolation from each other and from the dogmatic whole. Rather, just because "preaching is the preaching of Christ in the eminent sense, therefore every sermon is *in nuce* the entire Holy Scripture" (p. 16).

There is, of course, much more. We close with the simple hope that this work will soon be available in English, and this this sort of serious thinking about preaching will become widespread also among American Lutheran pastors. Only so shall we escape the frightful judgment of a creeping famine of the word, in which preaching and worship are "renewed" to death in a grotesque imitation of pop-entertainment.

Kurt Marquart

THE CONCISE DICTIONARY OF THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION. Edited by J.D. Douglas, Walter A. Ellwell, and Peter Toon. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989. Hardcover, \$19.95.

Many find that dictionary-type reference books can be a blessing in getting definitions or basic information quickly and efficiently. Two of the editors of the volume under review have already proven themselves to be very capable in producing this kind of reference work. J.D. Douglas has edited *The New Bible Dictionary* (Inter-Varsity Press), a resource for biblical studies, and *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Zondervan Publishing House), a resource for studies in church history. Walter Ellwell edited the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Baker Book House) as an aid in the fields of "systematic theology, historical theology, biblical theology, philosophical theology, and theological ethics." All of these have been excellent theological reference works with entries signed by expert contributors. This new dictionary gives concise, unsigned definitions and descriptions of "nearly three-and-a-half thousand terms and names from the history, the teachings, and the liturgy of the church." One of the goals is to treat "terms and names that are difficult to find in standard dictionaries."

This dictionary does well in achieving its goals. The entries are well chosen and reasonably comprehensive. It is probably impossible to have articles on everything that someone might seek. There is, for example, no entry on *tenebrae*, the two kingdoms (although there is an entry entitled "Two Swords"), unionism, or hypocrisy. The book is, however, very thorough, and the entries on significant names and events are very good, including coverage of important names connected with the Reformation. Lutheran names and events have not been overlooked. There are, for example, entries on Chemnitz, the Galesburg Rule, Marburg, Muhlenberg, and Walther. The choice of the names included and those excluded might be challenged at some points, but basically the selection is quite good. Although brief (as advertised), the entries often contain significant information about problems, controversies, and other viewpoints regarding the subjects they treat. There is also information about the etymology of theological terms.

Errors in the dictionary include the failure to note that the title "archangel" is exclusively bestowed upon Michael in the Bible and not on Gabriel as is done in extra-biblical literature. The term "consubstantiation" is applied to the Lutheran view of the Lord's Supper (as is done in various reference works, such as Peter Angeles' *Dictionary of Christian Theology*, published by Harper and Row) in spite of the protests of Lutheran reference works (e.g., Lueker's *Lutheran Cyclopedia*) (Concordia Publishing House) and Bodensieck's *Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church* (Fortress Press). Other minor weaknesses include the mention of only English concordances in the article on concordances and the omission of Strong's *Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* in the same article. The article on calendars is very narrow and does not give the reader an awareness of the many different calendars used in the ancient world. Of more serious concern is the notion that the condition of homosexuality is not sinful, only the practice of it. These criticisms, however, do not deny the value of the book. It is a good purchase for anyone interested in a serious study of theology, although those looking for terms connected specifically with biblical theology should consult instead *A Student's Dictionary for Biblical and Theological Studies* by F.B. Huey, Jr., and Bruce Corley (Zondervan Publishing House), *A Handbook for Biblical Studies* by Nicholas Turner (Westminster Press), and *A Handbook of Biblical Criticism* by Richard N. Soulen (John Knox Press).

Robert A. Dargatz
Irvine, California

HOPE FOR ALL SEASONS. By Daniel J. Simundson. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988. 174 pages. Paperback, \$9.95.

The author received his doctorate from Harvard University and is professor of Old Testament exegesis at Luther Northwestern Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. He has written a number of books on different aspects of suffering by believers; now he concentrates on the related concept of hope. Dr. Simundson reveals a pastoral heart and proves himself to be a keen observer of life's events. He distinguishes between law and gospel fairly well. These points are countered by his many allusions to literary, form, and redaction criticism, which he utilizes in the biblical study underlying this book.

The book poses three stages in life with regard to hope. The first stage is naiveté, an optimism that everything in this life will work out well if we walk in the path of God. The second stage is disillusionment when problems plague the righteous. The third stage is one that gives up the hope of the ideal in this world but which looks

with confident hope toward the life which Christ promises in the resurrection. This paradigm is applied to the many hopes that people have in life (e.g., justice, health, life's necessities). A number of worthwhile spiritual insights are shared. Dr. Simundson reiterates a point made in one of his previous books, a commentary on Job—that well-meaning Christians in the first stage of naiveté can hurt those undergoing trials by applying a simplistic idea of how God works with people in this world. There are problems of injustice in this world that people must face without trying to defend God at the expense of the reputation of the ones undergoing trials. Another especially helpful thought is the encouragement that is given to those in the midst of suffering to keep the lines of communication with God open, even if it means arguing with Him and complaining to Him. Such communication is itself a sign that faith has not entirely died.

On the other hand, the Book of Proverbs is demeaned when it is seen as largely a "stage one" book and described as sometimes "too simple, too naive, perhaps even too authoritarian," a book that "is like Job's comforters," and a book that "could be valuable for premarital counseling" but "would not be so useful for marital counseling" (p. 88). Simundson assails the unity of Amos (p. 116), dates Job very late (p. 86), seems to apologize for the imprecatory psalms (p. 95), and sees the "writer" of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 as mistaken about the timing of the events of which he writes (p. 151). Those sharing Dr. Simundson's hermeneutical principles will find the work an excellent one. Those holding to biblical inerrancy will find some good pastoral thoughts here, but a number of other books deserve priority in terms of the investment of time and money.

Robert A. Dargatz
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PAUL AND THE TORAH. By Lloyd Gaston. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987.

The chances are that the reader has always interpreted, "he believed the Lord; and he reckoned it to him as righteousness" (Genesis 15:6), to mean that God reckoned Abraham's faith to Abraham as righteousness. Gaston has news for us. As the "natural" translation he proposes: "And he [Abraham] put his trust in YHWH. And he [Abraham] counted it to him [YHWH] righteousness" (p. 47). There are many similar exegetical surprises in the book. Toward the beginning of the chapter in which this exegesis of Genesis 15:6 is to be found, Gaston concedes that he is proposing an interpretation "against a major thrust of the entire Christian exegetical tradition." One may ask: why bother with such radical exegesis, which Gaston

himself characterizes as “playful”? There is an answer: one can learn a lot—perhaps not a lot of positive, acceptable interpretations, but at least one can learn the character of recent, liberal Pauline studies and interpretation. Also, jousting with the erudite author just might help to firm up flabby cerebral muscle, which has a way of showing up in some “conservative” heads.

One is aware of the guilt-ridden obsession with the holocaust and anti-semitism haunting many contemporary Christian theologians. Gaston’s “Retrospective Introduction” clearly and emphatically places him in this distraught company. He states that “it is the task of exegesis after Auschwitz precisely to expose the explicit or implicit anti-Judaism inherent to the Christian tradition, including the New Testament itself” (p. 2).

After this programmatic definition, the reader is prepared to encounter some radical interpretations. He is not disappointed. The reader will be told, for instance, that Paul’s opponents are not adherents of Judaism but “seem to be in every case rival Christian missionaries”; “even if some to Paul’s argumentation should be directed against individual (Christian) Jews, Judasim as such is never attacked”; “Justification is not a central Pauline *doctrine* (emphasis original) but language which is used whenever the legitimacy of the status of his Gentile converts is being discussed”; “Jesus is then for Paul not the Messiah.” Such and similar radical theses are explicated and defended with massive erudition and much exegetical subtlety in a series of essays subsumed under the book’s title, *Paul and the Torah*. To these essays is appended a translation of Romans.

How can a scholar undertake to vindicate such radical conclusions? Broadly speaking one can do so by engaging in some radical hermeneutics. For instance, in making his case Gaston totally rejects the witness of Acts, rules out the Pastorals, and admittedly places himself in opposition to the history of Christian exegesis. In high-handed fashion he dismisses biblical evidence that confounds his theories. Here are some instances from chapter 9, “Israel’s Missteps in the Eyes of Paul.” Every one of Paul’s letters is said to be addressed explicitly to Gentile Christians so that it cannot be known what he would have said to Jews. Acts should be put “rigorously to one side,” and “there is no evidence from Paul’s own hand that he ever preached to Jews.” Galatians is discounted, since the troublemakers are Jewish *Christians*. Also in 2 Corinthians Paul’s rivals are supposed to be Jewish *Christians*. Philippians does not count. 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16 is rejected as an interpolation. Romans 11 is not a good chapter on which to base a Christian theology of Israel, purportedly because of its “many tensions.” One wonders, however, whether the

concessions by the scholars quoted in note 26, to the intent that in Romans 11 Israel has been somehow displaced, may not indicate the real reason for Gaston's dismissal of the chapter. The citation of Psalm 69:23-24, which clashes with Gaston's exegesis, is arrogantly rejected because he believes it is a scribal interpolation after 70 A.D.

What then is the thesis being defended with this bewildering argumentation and sometimes giddy exegesis? Gaston is intent on demonstrating that the traditional understanding of Paul as witnessing to Jesus as the one and only Savior for both Jew and Gentile has misread Paul's authentic epistles. Gaston concedes that Acts attempts "to present Christianity as true Judaism" (p. 20). But then he describes the witness of Acts as secondary and hence to be rejected. According to Gaston, Paul's passionate concern was with the legitimacy of his mission to include Gentiles as full-fledged members of the people of God. "Paul's major theological concern I understand to be not justification of individuals by their faith but the justification of the legitimacy of his apostleship to, and gospel for, the Gentiles" (p. 57). "What is at issue between Paul and Judaism is not the Torah of Israel but Paul as apostle to the Gentiles" (p. 138). And then the enemy turns out to be, not Judaism, but certain aberrant individuals guilty of flagrant violations of the Torah (cf. pp 139, 152).

After hearing this, one is not surprised (although surely not in agreement!) when Gaston contends, in his interpretation of the veil in 2 Corinthians 3:15, that the Corinthian *Christians* "are the one whose thoughts have been dulled and over whose heart lies a veil" (p. 164). The book bristles with similar provocative exegesis. A brief review cannot enter into a detailed *Auseinandersetzung*. Suffice it to note a broad principle and one exegetical illustration.

Broadly speaking, one finds Gaston intruding *disjunctions* where Paul preaches *conjunctions*. Gaston's repeated disjunctions between Jews and Gentiles clashes with Paul's repeated conjunctions. Noteworthy are Paul's *te kai* (for instance, Romans 1:16; 10:12) and how Paul proclaims the abolition of theological disjunctions between Jews and Gentiles (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11).

One example of startling exegesis is the chapter, "Works of Law as Subjective Genitive." If the *erga nomou* are what the law does to us rather than what we do in response to the requirements of the law, and if *erga nomou* refers to "a positive power which works disastrous consequences" (p. 104), one wonders how the temptation to boast ever became a problem. Does one boast because some power has worked "disastrous consequences" on him? Gaston's *locus classicus* for this novel exegesis is Romans 4:15, "the law works (*kat'ergazetai*) wrath."

In a previous book, *No Stone on Another*, Gaston undertook to reconstruct an earlier tradition underlying the Synoptic Gospels. In

a footnote (16, p. 222) he concedes: "My attempt. . . has not seemed convincing to very many." For all its display of erudition, I wonder whether a similar fate does not await *Paul and the Torah*. In the attempt to sustain his novel theses Gaston indulges not only in "playful" (p. 47) exegesis but actually turns to violent exegesis. As noted above, he arbitrarily discounts much of the New Testament witness and proclaims interpolations when encountering evidence that confounds his propositions. In effect, he eviscerates the witness (the New Testament), slashes its throat, and then finds that it cannot contradict his novel interpretations. This is hardly a convincing procedure. Besides, this witness, the New Testament, has a way of recovering from murderous assaults and rising up again to speak its message another day. (There is, for instance, Stephen Westerholm's recent defense of more traditional exegesis in his *Israel's Law and the Church's Faith, Paul and His Recent Interpreters*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmann, 1988. Despite his problems with antinomianism, Westerholm proves most helpful.)

A *prima facie* reading of Paul leaves one with the definite impression that Paul is convinced Jesus is the one and only Savior for one and all, Jew and Gentile. During the centuries the church has so understood Paul. After reading Gaston one may at first find his head spinning. But then, after re-reading Paul, one is convinced that it is Gaston's head that is spinning.

H. Armin Moellering
St. Louis, Missouri

EZRA-NEHEMIAH: A COMMENTARY. By Joseph Blenkinsopp. Old Testament Library. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1988.

This commentary by the noted Notre Dame scholar represents a welcome addition to the library of scholars, pastors, churches, and others interested in the Old Testament. The post-exilic Old Testament books are neglected largely because they are considered inferior to the lofty theology of the pre-exilic prophets. Blenkinsopp argues persuasively that the great importance of these books is brought into focus through the canonical approach pioneered by Yale's B.S. Childs.

Theologically, Blenkinsopp argues that Ezra-Nehemiah continues the Priestly theme that the world was created as a temple for the worship of God. Though mankind is exiled repeatedly because of sin, from the sanctuary of Eden, from the earth of the flood, and then from Jerusalem, Ezra-Nehemiah chronicles the history of individuals who sought to restore the original purpose of creation by reconstituting the community of faith centered in temple worship. While the

Deuteronomic History (Genesis through 2 Kings) narrates mankind's history from creation to catastrophe, the post-exilic history of Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah narrates the return, the rebuilding of the temple, and the restoration of the community of faith around the law of Moses. Ezra-Nehemiah interprets these as salvation events parallel to the exodus, conquest, and establishment of the first sanctuary in the promised land. Though Blenkinsopp stops here, it is a small additional step to interpret these events as also parallel to our own salvation in Christ.

Isagogically, Blenkinsopp stresses the structural unity of Ezra-Nehemiah with Chronicles, allows for the authenticity of the first-person narratives by Ezra and third-person accounts by Nehemiah, and dates the arrival of Ezra (458 B.C.) prior to that of Nehemiah (445 B.C.), against those critics who in recent years have argued for a reverse order of Nehemian-Ezra. Hermeneutically, the canonical approach presupposes the validity of historical-critical reconstructions. The conservative reader certainly will want to disregard such reconstructions when they appear in this commentary. However, the canonical approach emphasizes that it is the final form of the text which is theologically significant, and it interprets the text in the light of the rest of the canon, letting Scripture interpret Scripture, and expounding the message off the canon for the community of faith. For this reason, commentaries such as this one are helpful for the conservative reader seeking to comprehend the message of the text and its relevance for us as members of the Christian Church today.

Christopher Mitchell
St. Louis, Missouri

THE MIRACLE STORIES. By Herman Hendrickx. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987.

In this study the author attempts to develop a methodology for interpreting synoptic miracle stories and illustrate it with representative exegesis. The opening pages are filled with warnings regarding "how-to" and "how-not-to" interpret miracle stories: we are to view miracles in a "biblical" sense rather than a modern sense; miracles are signs of God's saving activity, not violations of nature; the evangelists were concerned with faith and not history; we need to distinguish between the miracle *event* and the miracle *story*; and, theological meaning does not depend on historicity. From such warnings the nature of the exegesis that follows is readily apparent.

Father Hendrickx, in this sixth volume of his "Studies in the Synoptic Gospels" series, relies heavily on form and redaction criticism to demonstrate how the evangelists shaped miracle

tradition. The result is that these miracles are often divorced from the historical roots given them in the gospels. Hendrickx is not bothered by this and even asserts: "The miracle stories are not really true for us when what they tell us really happened in Jesus' time, but only when what they proclaim happens today" (p. 32). With the author's so-called "prophetic approach" to miracle stories, one seeks to understand the salvific and spiritual meaning apart from their historical base. While Hendrickx does not deny the historicity of some of the miracles, he does grope for meaning for those considered post-resurrection creations. For example, to explain the stilling of the storm in Matthew 8:23-27 he uses allegory by asserting that the boat saved by Jesus, in the mind of the evangelist, is the ship of the church!

While the effort expended by Hendrickx to put this volume together is very visible, his writing is not lucid and easily understood. Perhaps the most ironic statement of the study is that faith is not based on the historicity of every miracle, but is based in the truth that Christ has been raised from the dead (p. 22). Is this not a miracle, too? Fortunately, for the reader, Father Hendrickx does not address the resurrection accounts in his exegesis.

Charles A. Gieschen
Traverse City, Michigan

JESUS: ONE AND MANY: THE CHRISTOLOGICAL CONCEPT OF NEW TESTAMENT AUTHORS. By Earl Richard. Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1988.

The title of this volume is a window to its content: an anthology of the diverse christologies of New Testament authors. Richard lays aside many questions related to historic christology by espousing the classic dichotomy proposed by M. Kähler between the "Jesus of history and the Christ of faith." While affirming the importance of the former, his focus in this study is an exposition of the latter. He states: "Since the proper approach to these books is a literary-critical rather than a historical-critical one, the focus of the reader and scholar's effort should not be the quest of a historical event or authentic saying, but rather appreciation of early Christian works and comprehension of their message" (p. 51).

Earl Richard, from the faculty of Loyola University in New Orleans, employs the tools of source criticism, form criticism, redaction criticism, composition analysis, and the sociological approach to discern an array of christologies within the New Testament and give readers an introductory textbook on the subject. Because this volume is written for the non-specialist, specific christologies are explained in the much broader context of the

isogological and theological issues of each New Testament document. Following a lengthy introduction, Richard delineates the christological concept of the gospels, Paul and "Paulinist authors," the General Letters, and Revelation. The study concludes with an epilogue discussing the presentation of Jesus in the opening centuries of the Christian era.

Surprisingly, christology does not dominate the contents of this volume. At times the reader finds it buried among the discussions of introductory questions. Some fine insights arise from these discussions—for example, the role of Wisdom in the development of christology, Luke's concern with Hellenistic biographies, and the central nature of "Christ crucified" in Paul's christology. Some unbalanced judgment is also visible; for example, the author states that the Johannine readers would not connect the "I AM" sayings with the septuagintal usage and Paul adhered to a low christology centered on Jesus as divine agent. It is certain that Richard's treatment will be lauded in many circles because it is very representative of the current state of New Testament studies. While his focus on the text (rather than what is behind the text) is commendable, he probes with critical presuppositions that lead to some unacceptable conclusions. Perhaps the most bizarre of these is his composite proposal for 2 Corinthians, which is the supposed compilation of five separate documents (see p. 277).

No attempt is made to synthesize these christologies. This is understandable. With such an approach the New Testament is no longer a revelatory word that presents Christ, but is an illustrative word presenting Christian perspectives. The reader of this volume will learn much more about the New Testament authors who shaped christological tradition than the Christ who brought the tradition into being.

Charles A. Gieschen
Traverse City, Michigan

COUNSELING AND SELF-ESTEEM. By David E. Carlson. Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1988.

When one attempts to combine the nuances of psychology with the nuances of theology one inevitably reaches an impasse. David Carlson's offering, *Counseling and Self-Esteem*, is an example of such an impasse. His text is basically an effort to wed a few faulty constructs of social work to even faultier—indeed illiterate, understandings of basic biblical truths. The result is yet another annoying confusion of law and gospel, a mishmash of "do this and you, too, can have self-esteem."

Carlson's basic "pick yourself up by the bootstraps and try harder" approach to self-esteem is evident in his five-stage process to greater self-esteem. The author sees change, and hence a greater self-esteem, as an intentional process undertaken by intelligent people. "Plan your work and work your plan" underscores much of his thesis. People change, he maintains, as they learn new ways of thinking, perceiving, expressing, and believing. The basic "man can help himself" approach to gaining greater self-esteem involves suffering, understanding, choosing, acting, and maintaining. His twelve-step implementation of these stages includes such sage-like pieces of advice as "Believe God Chooses to Need You," "Validate Yourself," and "Give Yourself." To the author's (or editor's) credit there is an occasional reference to God's grace, but even that discussion comes across as another "help yourself" witticism that sadly drains the real content and the real significance of God's act in Christ. As is the case with many contemporary "Christian" offerings, this text lacks insight into the true nature of man, the means by which God rescues man, and the resources God uses to forgive and to sustain failure-fraught people.

The editor, Gary Collins, prefaces the text with these words: "Committed believers who sincerely seek to obey the Scriptures should and can have healthy self-concepts..." How trite! Unfortunately, this offering in the "Resources for Christian Counseling" series is, indeed, trite. Carlson offers a familiar combination of self-help suggestions, legalistic prescriptions, a token reference or two to Jesus, and the always popular step-by-step simplistic "Here's How to Do It Yourself" diagram. It would seem that any attempt to integrate such a presentation with an accurate understanding of God's good news would be futile. The results would be neither "Christian" nor "Counseling." For my money this one is not worth the price of admission.

Jan Case

A NEW CHRONOLOGY FOR THE KINGS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR BIBLICAL HISTORY AND LITERATURE. By John H. Hayes and Paul K. Hooker. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988.

These two capable academicians lead the reader through the tangled maze of historical datings in 1 and 2 Kings with a thoroughness that few Bible students could muster. The conservative exegete must respectfully decline the authors' interpretive methods, in which they presuppose the Documentary Hypothesis and often discount the biblical text because of perceived strata of editorial work.

Likewise, many of their conclusions cannot be accepted: it is supposed, for example, that the "Book of the Covenant" (Exodus 21-23) was a product of King Ahaz' time, that under political pressure Ahaz used this document to initiate religious reform, and that Ahaz is given a fitting tribute in Isaiah 11:1-6. However, this booklet contains much historical raw material which can be used in the reader's own investigative work. Each chapter is headed by an extensive bibliography, and particularly helpful are the reconstructions of the respective falls of the northern and southern kingdoms, accounts that weave together the Mesopotamian annals and the biblical record.

James Bollhagen

THE COUNSELING SHEPHERD. By Armin W. Schuetze and Frederick A. Matzke. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1988.

Many Lutheran pastors have, undoubtedly, longed for a pastoral counseling textbook written from a confessional Lutheran viewpoint. Professor Armin Schuetze and a professional counselor, Mr. Frederick Matzke, both from the Wisconsin Synod, have attempted to fill this need. In preparing the volume, the authors have also included comments from over forty Lutheran parish pastors. In some cases these comments can be viewed as mini-case-studies.

The book is clearly written. It is printed on paper of good quality, and is well-bound to stand up to years of use. Chapters are included which cover many of the counseling situations which a parish pastor will typically encounter. The theology of the volume is of the conservative, confessional Lutheran type. The book is filled with Bible verses that can be used in a variety of counseling situations. Counseling insights are also provided from contemporary psychological theory.

My reactions to this book are mixed. On the one hand, I am pleased to see a Lutheran counseling text in print. On the other hand, I think there is still a need for a similar book to be written and published within our synod. (Is there no one in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod who is willing to provide us with a contemporary textbook of pastoral counseling, as well as a new textbook of pastoral theology?)

Certainly there must be a major place for the confrontational use of Scripture in pastoral counseling. Yet Schuetze and Matzke seem to have embraced the counseling approach of Jay Adams. In their counseling system the pastoral counselor seems, in general anyway, to function mostly as a directive "theological answer-man" who provides just the right Bible verses to "solve" the counselee's problem.

Such an approach to pastoral counseling makes me uncomfortable. My years of counseling experience would indicate that such an approach is likely to alienate the counselee early in the counseling process. It is also unlikely to lead to lasting insight or problem-resolution.

At the same time, Matzke and Schuetze have provided Lutherans with a major counseling textbook. Pastors can definitely profit from this book. The volume can also find use in seminary-level counseling courses. (Hopefully students will also use *Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling* by Clinebell to learn a less directive counseling approach.) The authors seem to confuse pastoral counseling and pastoral care. Schuetze also appears to advance an almost "sacramental" view of marriage, in what is, otherwise, a helpful appendix on marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Despite these reservations, *The Counseling Shepherd* is a book Lutheran pastors should purchase, read, and consult in their counseling efforts.

Gary C. Genzen
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NARRATIVE AND MORALITY: A THEOLOGICAL INQUIRY. By Paul Nelson. University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1987.

Theologians and ethicists alike have come to a renewed appreciation of the formative role played by a community's founding narrative or story. In today's jargon this is a postliberal phenomenon and one which finds George Lindbeck's cultural-linguistic approach to church doctrines preferable to the cognitivist assumptions of orthodoxy or the experiential-expressive model of liberalism. Paul Nelson assumes that narrative is indispensable to self-understanding and that the history of moral philosophy is intelligible only when comprehended within such a larger, coherent narrative. In short, narrative affords a community a single, commonly acknowledged conceptual framework within which moral themes are an integral component.

Two of Nelson's chief paradigms are Alasdair MacIntyre and Stanely Hauerwas, the former notable for his philosophical study of narrative and morality, and the latter celebrated for his narrative theological ethics. MacIntyre's refurbished Aristotelianism argues that virtue is fundamental to morality, and virtue in turn depends on a conception of the human *telos* or an account of the meaning and purpose of life. Narratives, at once historically and culturally diverse, provide this account. Hauerwas, more than any of the other Christian writers considered (e.g., James Gustafson, James Childress, Charles Curran), seizes narrative as the vehicle through which virtue and

character might be restored to their appropriate places of prominence. Narrative provides the metaphors, categories, and concepts requisite to an overall vision of life. Further, narratives show the “connectedness” of intentional actions (or their lack) and in this way display character.

Nelson correctly notes that narrative is no methodological panacea, nor will it conclusively resolve moral conflicts. While Hauerwas’ emphasis on character is a corrective to MacIntyre, neither writer successfully confronts the issue of narrative diversity and its concomitant pluralism. In ethics a “plurality of readings” easily devolves to relativism. To be sure, none of Nelson’s subjects countenances relativism, but such potential liabilities lead him to opt for a combination of narrative-dependent and narrative-independent elements in a concluding anticipation of his own moral theology. The narrative-independent elements, while not diminishing the contributions of one’s narrative, provide the basic rules that admit the possibility of moral discourse across communities with competing narrative traditions. (For Nelson, such narrative-independent components are particularly important in forging a coherent social ethic.)

Narrative and Morality is not a primer in either narrative theology as a movement or in normative ethics. Nelson does not even broach the perennial moral dilemmas *per se*. Difficult going in places, it is a sophisticated and challenging study of how the “resourcement” characteristic of postliberal writers can help inform theological ethics. Numerous issues still cry for resolution—biblical hermeneutics vis-a-vis an endemic multiplicity of narrative readings, to name the most obvious. Nevertheless, Nelson succeeds in introducing knowledgeable readers to an ethic rooted in the story of creation, fall, redemption, and resurrection.

David A. Lumpp
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INTRODUCING THE OLD TESTAMENT. By John Drane. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989.

John Drane, a lecturer in religious studies at Stirling University in Scotland, has made a worthy contribution to the numerous introductions currently available. It is one of the most lucid, engaging, and well-organized books of this sort that I have ever seen. Drane has a knack of bringing the Old Testament to life by forthright presentations of pertinent topics, succinct summaries of recent scholarly opinions, and dramatic use of maps, charts, and photographs which are well-correlated with the text. This introduction is a vast improvement over all critical introductions of the past.

The book consists of two parts which originally appeared separately: *The Old Testament Story* and *The Old Testament Faith*. Drane's focus in the first section is on understanding the Old Testament in its original historical, cultural, and social context on the basis of contemporary, "scientific" scholarship. He makes especially good application of recent archaeological data to highlight and support the biblical material. In this respect he is much closer to the "Albright" (American) approach than to more radical (German) critical scholarship. Herein lies the greatest strength of the book. It is very useful for reviewing the Old Testament and for considering it in the context of the ancient world.

But Drane is not totally "conservative" or orthodox. While he does not uncritically adopt typical critical positions and is quite aware of conservative alternatives, his conclusions often cautiously lean away from the latter while maintaining strong reservations about the critical positions. He basically views the Old Testament as "story" which is more factual than fictional, yet without insisting on full accuracy. While generally capturing the mood, message, and setting of the Old Testament books, he fails the big isagogical litmus test regarding date and authorship of Isaiah and Daniel. This book, therefore, may not serve well as an introductory textbook, especially since insufficient details are presented for a full understanding of either the critical or conservative conclusions. At the same time this relative lack of specific technical detail limits its use in more advanced contexts (seminary). The layman at times may have difficulty in sorting out fact from fiction in Drane's discussion.

The last part of the book presents much good and useful information on Old Testament faith and worship. This presentation is mostly descriptive and basically free from presuppositional prejudices. Drane makes frequent reference to New Testament connections and Christian applications. In discussing the connections between the two testaments, he rightly rejects a dichotomy of Old Testament as law and New Testament as gospel, a view which he unjustly attributes to Luther. Drane affirms a Christian reading of the Old Testament but is cautious about reading things into the Old Testament from a New Testament point of view. Drane's work would have been greatly enhanced for evangelicals had he affirmed the unity of both testaments as equally the inspired and authoritative revelation of God, the primary message of which is the gospel of Christ.

Paul L. Schrieber
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ISAIAH THE EIGHTH-CENTURY PROPHET: HIS TIMES AND HIS PREACHING. By John H. Hayes and Stuart A Irvine. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987.

Twentieth-century scholarship has left the Book of Isaiah in a state of fragmentation unparalleled in almost any other piece of literature. After dissecting the work into First, Second, and Third Isaiahs, critics have further divided each Isaiah into various strata and layers. The net result of this process is a book of which the existence in its present form can only be explained by divine intervention or inspiration, a concept contradictory to critical presuppositions.

Several scholars have entered the fray to argue for a different way of reading Isaiah. One of the latest entries is *Isaiah the Eighth-Century Prophet* by John H. Hayes and Stuart A. Irvine. The authors propose ten theories about Isaiah 1-39, all of which depart in some degree from critical orthodoxy. The first and broadest of these is the thesis that practically all of Isaiah 1-39 derives from the eighth-century prophet. The major exception to this is 34-35 which, according to the authors, is from the same period as Isaiah 40-66. Thus, while the authors certainly do not adopt a traditional, non-critical approach, new arguments for the unity of Isaiah 1-39 are arising within the critical camp itself.

One of the most helpful sections of the book is chapter one, "The Historical Background—750-700 B.C.E." This section functions well on two levels. First, it serves as a good review of the history of the eighth century. Second, it becomes the point of departure for the authors' subsequent arguments that the bulk of 1-39 comes from the eighth century. In broad strokes Hayes and Irvine use the historical situation to propose the following order of chapters: 1-5,6 (Isaiah moves to a new phase of ministry), 7-18, 28-33, 19, 20-22 (contemporary with 38-39), 23-27, and 36-39. The attribution of the bulk of 1-39 to the eighth-century prophet arises from the alignment of the chapters to historical events of the century.

Hayes and Irvine have made a substantial contribution to the ongoing debate on Isaiah. Using critical methodology, they nevertheless display an ability to criticize the manner in which such methodology has been used by others. While traditional interpreters of Isaiah can still rightly find much about which to differ with the authors, we will also find much which is worthwhile and helpful.

Isaiah the Eighth-Century Prophet is especially recommended for those who wish to keep up with the current debates on Isaiah. Each chapter is preceded by a concise, current bibliography of primarily critical literature. The major problem for many readers will be access to a theological library in which to find the bibliographic entries, many of which are in German and French. The serious student of

Isaiah will find the effort worthwhile because Hayes and Irvine's book will undoubtedly play a role in the future scholarship on Isaiah.

Daniel L. Gard

ISAIAH. By Wolfgang Roth. Knox Preaching Guides. Edited by John H. Hayes. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988.

In the introduction Professor Roth of Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary paraphrases Ecclesiastes 12:12 with these words: "Of the making of commentaries on Isaiah there is no end!" To this massive and growing body of literature we now can add Roth's own contribution. Part of the critically oriented *Knox Preaching Guides*, this brief homiletical commentary may still be used judiciously and profitably by preachers within more conservative traditions. Judicious use is called for by Roth's mainstream critical views of Isaianic authorship and dating. It is maintained that the book of Isaiah was composed shortly after the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple in 520 B.C. by "prophetic visionaries" who were responsible for the redaction of their master's work into the longer work of Isaiah 1-66 (p. 16). The eighth-century Isaiah is more mythological than historical. "In short, the presentation of Isaiah, man and prophet, is not so much biographical-historical as thematic-theological" (p. 14). Roth's methodology is quite at home with this; through his discourse analysis (semiotics) Isaiah and his disciples themselves are "signs and portents" in Israel (p. 14).

The conservative reader of this commentary might be further frustrated by Roth's non-christological reading of the text. Classical messianic prophecies (e.g., 7:14 or the Suffering Servant of chapter 53) are not truly prophetic but merely texts interpreted by the New Testament authors as illustrative of their own christology. Roth includes five suggested sermon series on Isaiah; the fifth, entitled "The Work of Jesus in Isaiah's Words" (pp. 23-4), cites several texts from Isaiah with New Testament parallels. Yet the body of the commentary on the Isaianic material either neglects or downplays the messianic nature of the texts themselves.

On the positive side Isaiah is less atomized by Roth than by other modern commentators, both internally and in its relationship to the broader work of the law and the prophets (Genesis-Malachi). While conservative interpreters might take issue with Roth's critical presuppositions, it is refreshing to read a critical interpretation which takes seriously the "vision of the whole."

There is much which is insightful and thought-provoking in this homiletical commentary. Roth identifies a central theme in Isaiah, the Lord's deliverance of Jerusalem (p. 4), developed through Isaiah's

portrayal of three successive escapes by Jerusalem due to the Lord's intervention. From the point of view of preaching (which is, of course, the purpose of the commentary) Roth offers suggestive comments on each pericope. Particularly helpful are the numerous citations of biblical parallels and the author's suggestions for homiletical application. With careful use and a little creativity on the part of the homilist, those comments can prove to be quite stimulating and useful and well worth the purchase of the book.

Daniel L. Gard

MELANCHTHON'S BRIEFWECHSEL, 5: REGESTEN 4530-5707 (1547-1549). Edited by Heinz Scheible. Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 1987.

Historians delight in the correspondence of their subjects since letters can provide access to the thought and emotions behind public deeds and published works. However, such letters are not always extant, and where they are, especially for early modern figures like Melanchthon, it is often difficult to determine their chronology since dating private correspondence was not so customary as it is today. Therefore, the publication of a critical edition of Melanchthon's correspondence is a major undertaking in Reformation studies and promises students of the period of wealth of new data for interpreting the role of Melanchthon and his correspondents in the great events of the sixteenth century.

In his introduction to the first volume (1977), the editor of the work, Heinz Scheible, outlined the background and plan of the project that includes, in addition to publishing the texts of 9200 pieces (not only letters to and from Melanchthon but also prefaces, acknowledgements, legal instruments, and *Gutachten*), producing a critical apparatus in four other parts as well: (1) summaries (*Regesten*) of the letters; (2) indices of persons, places, and subjects; (3) a catalog of the manuscripts upon which the work is based; and (4) commentaries on the texts themselves. Since a major goal of the work is to make sense of each letter by determining its date and provenance as accurately as possible, the decision was made to publish the fruits of that labor even before the texts. Accordingly, the five volumes to appear thus far have been the *Regesten* of Melanchthon's correspondence from 1514 to 1549. When this part is complete, the publishers will proceed to the indices and the catalog of manuscripts and only then to the actual texts.

Of what value, then, is the work at hand, volume 5 of the *Regesten*, summaries of letters from 1547 to 1549? Actually, it is of great value since the date of each letter permits us to place it in its precise

relationship to the tumultuous events of these years (e.g., the defeat and capture of Elector John Frederick at Muehlberg by the forces of Charles V, the imposition of the Augsburg Interim, and the negotiation of the Leipzig Interim). Furthermore, the contents' summaries enable us to see at least somewhat Melanchthon's reactions to and involvement in such great events. Finally, for each letter the editors have also included a brief discussion of their rationale for dating and the like and references to earlier editions where the printed text is available.

For example, number 5130 is a summary of a *Gutachten* by Melanchthon, Caspar Cruciger, Georg Maior, and Johannes Pfeffinger to Duke Moritz regarding the Augsburg Interim. The editors concisely summarize the opinions of these theologians under headings like justification, the sacraments, and intercession of the saints and include the theologians' fears regarding persecution and schism if the interim is not changed. Moreover, for anyone desiring the complete text there is a reference to the appropriate volume in the *Corpus Reformatorum*. Obviously, summaries like these are an excellent guide to any one doing research on Melanchthon's attitude toward the interims or anything else in this period. Of course, one longs for the completion of the entire project; but we rejoice in the publication of yet another volume since it provides a wealth of information regarding three critical years in Melanchthon's life and gives promise that the whole work is still on course.

Cameron A. MacKenzie

LUTHER'S SCOTTISH CONNECTION. By James Edward McGoldrick. Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1989. 192 pages.

John Knox, the Calvinist reformer of Scotland, followed in the footsteps of several precursors "who had laid the foundations upon which he built" and who "were, for the most part, disciples of Martin Luther," the author states in his preface. Without claiming originality, McGoldrick continues, he wishes to support his thesis with information gathered by other scholars. He succeeds in doing so. After two chapters sketching the background of Scottish political and ecclesiastical affairs in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the stories of Patrick Hamilton and several of his countrymen who were influenced by Luther demonstrate Luther's early appeal to young Scots of his time. The fact that persecution kept some, such as John Gau and Alexander Alesius, in exile for most of their careers may partially explain why the Lutheran movement failed to gain momentum in Scotland.

More stories could be told. It is regrettable that McGoldrick only mentions John and Robert Wedderburn and their *Gude and Godlie Ballatis* and does not show in what ways "its theological character is Lutheran." The reader also wishes that McGoldrick would develop his intriguing hints of Lutheran leanings in John Knox's thought.

Twice errors muddle McGoldrick's presentation slightly. His description of German Lutheran controversies following the Smalcald War confuses the Majoristic and the Crypto-Calvinist controversies and at the same time misrepresents them both. He suggests that the Ave Maria remained a part of most Protestant catechisms. I know of no Lutheran catechism which retained it. Readers interested in the spread of Luther's influence will find here a handy compilation of accounts of his contributions to the Scottish Reformation and a helpful analysis of them in easily readable and edifying form.

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CONCORDANCE TO THE BOOK OF CONCORD. Edited by Kenneth Larson, with the assistance of James R. Schoech (computer programmer). Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Northwestern Publishing House, 1989. xx + 602 pages. Cloth, \$24.95.

Only a profound love of the gospel, as one finds it so evidently believed, taught, and confessed in the Book of Concord, could motivate a busy parish pastor, his parishioners, and a dedicated computer programmer, to complete a Herculean labor like this *Concordance to the Book of Concord*. The introduction provides a clear explanation of the code used to list the occurrences of each entry in the concordance. For example, under the word "concord" on page 98 we find the following: "AL:28:071:(093):[0093] that the bishops restore concord at the expense of." Thus we learn that the word "concord" is found in the Latin version of the Augsburg Confession (AL), in Article XXVIII (28), in paragraph 71 (071), on page 93 of Theodore Tappert's translation of *The Book of Concord* (093), and on page 93 of the *Concordia Triglotta* ([0093]). The word is then placed in its context, set off in bold type. It is a very manageable system.

While it is unfortunate that the concordance does not refer to the original German and Latin of the Book of Concord, it is still very helpful to those studying the book in original languages. The *Concordance to the Book of Concord* will remain an indispensable tool for the study of the theology of the Lutheran Confessions. The serious

student of the Lutheran Confessions will want to acquire this concordance for his library.

Paul T. McCain
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AUGSBURG COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT: 2 CORINTHIANS. By Frederick W. Danker. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1989. 223 pages.

The author of this commentary, Frederick Danker, is best known to biblical students as the most recent contributor to a prominent tool of New Testament exegesis, the lexicon of New Testament Greek descending from Walter Bauer through William F. Arndt. In this study Danker attempts to bring new light to the words and message of 2 Corinthians with a myriad of illustrative references to Greco-Roman literature. It is problematic that this volume was included in a basic homiletical commentary series written for "laypeople, students, and pastors" (p. 7). It fails the criteria of such a series for at least three reasons. First, there is an inordinate number of citations from Greco-Roman literature within a limited treatment of the text. Some of these citations prove interesting and enlightening; others detract from the flow of Paul's argument or seem to have little relevance (e.g., the nine-point connection between Nero's Corinthian Declaration and 2 Corinthians on pages 21-23). Secondly, Danker loses sight of the necessary balance between Judaism and Hellenism in expounding the Pauline letters. Certainly Paul was writing to a hellenic congregation and was himself "hellenized," yet his roots in Judaism and the Old Testament which surface in the letter are not adequately addressed. Thirdly, the philological emphasis of this commentary leaves "laypeople, students, and pastors" wanting more theological reflection to ponder. For example, where is a discussion of the theology of the cross in the treatment of 2 Corinthians 4? In addition, a minor irritation for this reader arises from the author's abundant use of "benefactor" terminology (and numerous citations of his own work by that title).

The strength of this commentary is visible in Danker's impressive command of word meaning and etymology. The author is at home in the philological world and shows it. Often the meaning of words or phrases is enhanced with reference to primary source documents of the first-century Hellenistic world (e.g., Danker contrasts Paul's "boasting" with that of Empedocles, p. 60). This volume could withstand much of the above criticism if it stood outside a basic commentary series and was entitled, *Understanding 2 Corinthians in the Light of Greco-Roman Literature*. As it is, the author's treatment is incongruent with the stated objectives of his series.

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ORDNUNGEN DER ALLMACHT. PAUL ALTHAUS DER JUENGERE UEBER DIE ORDNUNGEN. By Walther Mann. Arbeiten zur Geschichte und Theologie des Luthertums, founded by Werner Elert and Karl Heinrich Rengstorf and edited by Bengt Haegglund, Heinrich Kraft, et al., Neue Folge, Band 7. Hannover: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1987. 149 pages.

A pupil of Herbert Olsson at Uppsala and of Bengt Haegglund at Lund, Mann offers here the publication of his Swedish doctoral dissertation. Although it suffers from having been written in rather heavy language and style, it is a brilliant study of Althaus' doctrine of revelation together with criticisms of that teaching by Werner Wiesner, Kurt Leese, Richard Hauser, Rudolf Gebhardt, Paul Knitter, and others, whereby much light is shed on the reasons for accepting and rejecting various forms of natural religion or natural theology. Of course, the position of Karl Barth and the Barmen Declaration is considered as well as the theology of other contemporaries, such as Emil Brunner, Walther Kuenneth, and, more sparingly, Werner Elert. As a German expatriate living in Sweden, Mann also brings useful insights from Scandinavian thinkers such as Anders Nygren and Herbert Olsson.

Althaus' doctrine of revelation distinguished between *Ur-Offenbarung*, a kind of natural revelation, and the special revelation of God in Christ. A theology of *Ordnungen* ("orders") has to do with social institutions anchored in divine creation, such as the family, marriage, nationality or race, the state, society, and the church. Such an order is something like a "given" quality—one's estate in life, one's calling, one's place in life as given by God and as measured by His act of creation. A theology of orders has to do with conditions under which people live, conditions that are a part of God's creative action, past and present.

In the 1920's Althaus, politically a conservative and a supporter of the monarchy, like many other Germans had rejected the Weimar Republic forced upon them by their conquerors after World War I. During the rise of Hitler after January of 1933 Althaus thought that the new leader would deliver Germany and give it prosperity and dignity again, and he became an enthusiastic supporter during the first years of the Third Reich. He updated his theology of orders with special emphasis upon family, folk, and race in a way which made his thinking seem to support National Socialism. Although Althaus withdrew his support of Hitler around 1937, after World War II he was blamed for the course he had followed. Statements such as these were criticized: "State and politics are orders given and willed by God. However, something of the demonism of power clings to them, and this in itself is somewhat evil" (Mann, p. 36). "Therefore, in the

political power struggles of the peoples, most things are allowed, even things which we should otherwise find dishonorable and immoral" (p. 56). The Roman Catholic critic, Hauser, noting that in Althaus these "demonic powers" became needful and progressive powers of historical development, complained that this development implied ". . . a strangely divided conception of the term of *Ordnungen*, according to which God's creative will and the might of sin occur simultaneously in the same view" (Mann, p. 87). As Mann notes, this conception is connected with Althaus' basic antinomy in the person of God as hidden and revealed. Here, the reader may also recall some statements in Luther's *Servitude of Choice*.

A number of studies critical of Althaus have come out in recent years. However, he is to be blamed more for political naivete than for malice, considering that he also accepted risks when he openly rejected Nazi concepts of eugenics, euthanasia, and abortion. Perhaps the underlying error in Althaus lay in his misunderstanding of Luther's doctrine of the *zwei Regimente* as a distinction of "two kingdoms" in which the secular "kingdom" is placed outside of God's jurisdiction. This misunderstanding of Luther, based upon Troeltsch, was widespread among Germans, and it influenced even so renowned an opponent of Hitler and Rosenberg as Walther Kuenneth (Mann, pp. 77-79).

The loudest critics of Althaus have come from the camp of Karl Barth. Althaus, like Elert and Sasse (also at Erlangen after 1933), had been critical of the *Barmen Declaration* because it identified the gospel with the law and made of Christ the giver of a new law. At stake was therefore the whole confessional Lutheran concept of the distinction of law and gospel. During the Third Reich mistakes were made by Lutherans as well as others. But such mistakes do not justify attempts to discredit all who rejected the *Barmen Declaration*, nor do they give us any reason to canonize the teaching of Barth. Lutherans need to show the fallacies of these tactics and to support sound doctrine. This book by Mann can be a helpful resource in upholding the proper distinction of law and gospel.

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