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Book Reviews

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER. By Wayne Grudem. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988. 239 pages. Paper, \$5.95.

In an effort to remain current with the Bible versions now in use and with the secondary literature, many publishers are releasing revised or updated volumes in their commentary series. This book is a recently updated volume in the Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. It replaces the original volume by Stibbs and Walls. This commentary stays with the traditional purpose of this series both in content and cost—to provide the non-technical reader with inexpensive tools that are neither "unduly technical or unhelpfully brief" (p. 5).

Wayne Grudem is Associate Professor of Biblical and Systematic Theology in Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. His approach is focused prominently on the grammatical exegesis of the text itself. His command of the original text is visible in his frequent notation of the force of the perfect tense, his careful nuancing of word meaning in translation, and his extensive cross-referencing of word usage in the Septuagint. This commentary is virtually free of secondary literature outside of footnotes and is lucid in its presentation. While Grudem shows awareness of arguments against Petrine authorship in his introduction, he refutes them in his limited space and demonstrates a high respect for the text throughout his exegesis. His comments reflect a sensitivity to modern translations and will prove helpful, especially to the layman.

One of the most thought-provoking proposals of this volume is Grudem's position on 1 Peter 3:19-20 (Christ's descent to hell). While acknowledging five views that have certain credence, the author argues the following position: "When Noah was building the ark, Christ 'in spirit' was in Noah preaching repentance and righteousness through him to unbelievers who were on the earth then but are now 'spirits in prison' (people in hell)" (p. 204). While the appendix on this matter may fail to convince the reader, it will nonetheless stimulate him to probe the text more carefully.

Two weaknesses of this volume are apparent, both dealing with theological interpretation. First, recognition of sacramental allusions—especially to baptism—in 1 Peter is lacking, perhaps because of Grudem's Reformed background (e.g., there is no mention of baptism in discussing "born anew" in 1:3; baptism is excluded from the context of 2:2, "like newborn babies long for pure spiritual milk"; nothing is said of the Lord's Supper in regard to 2:3, "for you have tasted the kindness of the Lord"). Secondly, the theology of the cross is replaced with more of an emphasis on sanctification in the theological exegesis of the text (e.g., the exegesis of 1 Peter 2:24 and the chart of blessings that *result from*

sanctification on page 149). Nevertheless, this volume will prove a worthy addition to the libraries of pastors, students, and congregations.

Charles A. Gieschen
Traverse City, Michigan

MEDITATIONS FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS. By James G. Kirk. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1989.

Publishers assert that the market is glutted with prayer books and that they are not selling. (Is it the high cost of books, or do people read less, or is there an eroding of piety among our people?) It is surprising, then, that this work should appear at all. But it is even more of a surprise that Kirk's offering is a cut above the usual generic devotional book.

Meditations for Advent and Christmas provides an insightful reflection for each day in Advent through Epiphany on the themes of watchfulness, promise, preparation, fulfillment, and celebration. Kirk's meditations include down-home illustrations from the flesh and blood lives of the people to whom he ministered. That approach provides refreshing reading and also helpful fodder for the preacher's homiletical bin. It is worth buying. One more surprise is that Presbyterian Kirk closes his book with a prayer which includes this sentence: "We remember our baptism and rejoice in the refreshing waters that washed away our sins, thanks to your grace."

Donald L. Deffner

THE BOOK OF RUTH. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. By Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989. 317 pages. Cloth, \$26.95.

Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., of Denver Seminary, has produced for the NICOT series a major commentary and an invaluable tool for the study of Ruth in depth. He exposes the literary artistry of the narrator, provides his own translation, and treats text-critical and literary problems in detail. The introduction discusses the text, canonicity, literary criticism, authorship, purpose, setting, legal background, themes, theology, and bibliography. Valuable indices cover subjects, authors, Scripture references, and Hebrew words.

The greatest weaknesses of the commentary are in theology. Although accepting Lutheran Ronald M. Hals' insight that God works in a hidden way through human actions as the implicit cause of events (pp. 32, 70),

Hubbard presents God as the sovereign ruler of the universe (e.g., p. 68). The second major doctrine for Hubbard is retribution: God becomes indebted to Ruth (!) to reward her and Boaz for their loyal deeds (pp. 70, 194). Thus, a theology of glory infused with works-righteousness emerges.

What Hubbard misses is, first, that God appears as omnipotent sovereign to highlight His ability to overcome all obstacles in fulfilling His real purpose, salvation by grace. Secondly, the confessions of *faith* in God by Ruth and Boaz (1:16-17; 2:4, 12; 3:10, 13) were the foundation for their sacrificial loyalty (*hesed*). This faith led them to recognize and exploit the opportunities which God gave them to "redeem" a tragic situation—which on no account amounted to "luck," "coincidence," or "chance" (pp. 140, 143, 153). Talk of rewards (2:12) is meant figuratively, for disbelief neither recognizes nor accepts divine blessings. Hubbard also reduces Israel's belief in an afterlife to existence in descendants on ancestral soil (p. 244).

Nevertheless, Hubbard's *Ruth* is very worthwhile. First, he thoroughly referees the various viewpoints fairly on all issues, although his presentations are repeated too frequently. Secondly, his conclusions in most cases are well taken, including his answers to such thorny problems as the roles of Ruth, Naomi, the other women, Obed, the genealogy, and especially Boaz as *go'el* ("redeemer")—Boaz voluntarily restores the land of a family of the clan and provides an heir for such a family without one (p. 246). Thirdly, Hubbard rightly identifies the main purpose of the Book of Ruth as giving theological support to David's claims as divinely appointed king, and Hubbard's emphasis on the positive approach to aliens in Ruth is welcome (p. 42). Finally, Hubbard particularly excels in revealing every skillful move of the biblical narrator (e.g., pp. 23, 278). However, one is left wondering whether he (or she, p. 24), who exhibits such consummate literary genius, actually invented the whole story (cf., e.g., p. 186)—or whether historical facts and divine inspiration should be given the credit due them.

John R. Wilch
St. Catharines, Ontario

THE NEW TESTAMENT BACKGROUND: SELECTED DOCUMENTS. Revised Edition. Edited by C. K. Barrett. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987. 361 pages. Paper, \$14.95.

This book is an expanded revision of Barrett's compilation in 1956 of

representative primary sources from the literary milieu of the first century. Essential excerpts of ancient documents are grouped with brief notes within thirteen categories: "The Roman Empire"; "The Papyri"; "Inscriptions"; "The Philosophers and Poets"; "Gnosis and Gnosticism"; "Mystery Religions"; "Jewish History"; "Rabbinic Literature and Rabbinic Judaism"; "Qumran"; "Philo"; "Josephus"; "The Septuagint and Targums"; and "Apocalyptic Literature." Bibliographic information is provided in order that the interested student may be encouraged to probe certain documents more completely than is possible in these excerpts.

This volume is an inexpensive and invaluable window through which the exegete can better understand the cultural, political, and theological context of the Judaism and Hellenism that is often implicit in the text of the New Testament. It is difficult to overestimate the impact of this literature in aiding the exegete's comprehension of the world into which Christianity and its documents were born. With the passage of centuries and the movement of our society from literature to video, the reading of these primary sources is increasingly necessary. The publisher (Harper and Row) has done students a great service in making this volume available once again.

Charles A. Gieschen
Traverse City, Michigan

SERMON STUDIES ON THE GOSPELS, SERIES A. Edited by Richard D. Balge (General Editor) and Roland Cap Ehlke (Manuscript Editor). Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1989. 380 pages. Cloth, \$14.95.

In every religious bookstore, as well as in the catalogue of most religious publishers, one can regularly find volumes of homiletical resources. Northwestern Publishing House, in providing this fifth volume of a sermon study guide series, has added to the plethora of sermonic aids. Yet it is not a contribution without merit. Indeed, it is one of the best volumes of the genre.

The contributors provide an analysis of each gospel pericope of ILCW Series A. The texts are approached with the reverence due the inspired Scripture and are expounded in accordance with sound hermeneutical principles. Attention is paid to the Old Testament and epistle readings for the day in the course of the exegesis, a matter of no small concern to liturgical preaching. Homiletical suggestions, including two, three, or four basic outlines, are included for each text. All is done with a proper

sensitivity to the law-gospel content of the text.

A legitimate question to ask, however, is whether such a book ought to be used by pastors who are themselves trained in exegesis, theology, and sermon preparation. If *Sermon Studies on the Gospels* is used in place of the preacher's own struggle with the text, the answer must be an unqualified "no." Short-cuts around the pastor's study straight into the pulpit rarely make for worthwhile sermons. On the other hand, if the book is consulted after the preacher's personal study, *Sermon Studies on the Gospels* can be a valuable resource. Insights into the text can be gained from the work of others, especially from those who share a common confessional commitment. In the maze of sermon resource material, ranging from the frustratingly critical to the inanely fundamentalistic, it is good to have this solidly biblical and Lutheran option.

Daniel L. Gard

MESSIANIC EXEGESIS. By Donald Juel. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988.

Juel's thesis is that the New Testament references to Jesus as Messiah derive not from Jesus but from exegetes of the early church. He traces this development from Jesus' resurrection to the completion of the New Testament by analyzing selected Old Testament passages. Problematic for Juel is the use of the title "Christ" in the Old Testament for the coming king, not the crucified and exalted king, as in the New Testament. This usage was equally as foreign, at first, to Christians as to Jews. The amalgamation of royal messianic texts with suffering and glorification took place after the resurrection. It is, of course, incontrovertable that the New Testament understood Jesus in Old Testament terms. The crunch comes in seeing this procedure's origins with the church and not Jesus. Juel deals with five topics in attempting to demonstrate this thesis: (1.) 2 Samuel 7, with reference to David's son as king; (2.) the Psalms, with application to the passion; (3.) Second Isaiah, with reference to the suffering servant; (4.) Psalm 110, with reference to God's right hand; and (5.) Daniel 7, with reference to the Son of Man. Juel provides an overview of midrashic exegesis used by the rabbis, Qumran, and early Christians. Jesus' person and not differences in exegetical approaches distinguished Christians (p. 57).

Juel's thesis has placed the major impetus for christology with the gatherers of the tradition incorporated in the New Testament and not with Jesus. This thesis is only a modification of Bultmann's approach to New

Testament theology. Jesus' "ministry of healing and teaching cannot, however, serve as the basis for the claim that He is Messiah. The New Testament makes no such claim Nor can the claim be derived from Jesus' own teaching exegesis," maintains Juel (p. 25). The late John A. T. Robinson in *The Priority of John* took exception to seeing the New Testament as an account of the teaching of the early church and not of Jesus. His strictures still apply to Juel. Juel assumes—as, evidently, any New Testament scholar in good standing must assume—Marcan priority. For this or whatever reason, Juel makes no reference to Matthew 16:16, where Jesus is identified as Christ and Son of God in the same breath. Juel likewise prefers Mark 14:61, where Jesus confesses that He is the Son of the Blessed, to Matthew 26:63, where "Christ" is joined with "the Son of God." This combination would be the work of later exegetes in the early church. Juel does not cite Mark 8:29, the parallel to Matthew 16:16, which has no reference to Jesus as God's Son, but does refer to Him as Christ. If Juel had cited it, then two of his theses would not stand, namely, that Jesus in His ministry did not interpret the Old Testament as referring to Himself and, more importantly, that Jesus' self-identification as Messiah occurred first at His trial. Luke 24, where Jesus interprets the Old Testament as applying to Himself, is dismissed. By placing Mark first, Juel can more easily attribute to Luke's "distinctive 'messianic exegesis'" Jesus' instruction to "His followers about the scriptural necessity of His death and resurrection as Messiah" in chapter 24 (p. 14). Juel's thesis that the church and not Jesus is responsible for seeing Him as the suffering and resurrected Christ is only possible because his ground rules permit him to ignore evidence which would lead to another conclusion. The title *Messianic Exegesis* created more enthusiasm in this reviewer than the contents. The subject still requires discussion by others.

David P. Scaer

LENT: A TIME FOR RENEWAL, SERMON BOOK. By Gerhard Aho, Donald Deffner, and Richard Kapfer. St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.

Combining the talents of three of the finest homileticians of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod should produce a valuable resource for our preachers. *Lent: A Time for Renewal* is, indeed, a valuable resource, but it also has at least one inherent disadvantage. The book is based on the premise that we should do more than simply rehash the events of Christ's passion during these special days of each church year. Lent, the

introduction argues, is a *kairos*, a most opportune—even urgent—time for us to repent and be refreshed to lead anew a redeemed life. Nine homiletical studies for midweek services and Holy Week, including Easter, offer this renewal in such areas as servanthood, witness, priorities, faith, and hope. Five studies were authored by Aho, four by Kapfer. From these studies Deffner has prepared full sermon manuscripts. Finally, Kapfer presents excellent liturgies for each week's theme.

The Aho-Kapfer-Deffner collaboration gives the user the best of three worlds. Aho's legacy to the pulpit is a seldom-paralleled depth of analysis and skillful organization of material. His studies in this work are typical. No two are developed using quite the same methodology, but each is incisive. The result is a tight, memorable textual-analytic outline for each text.

Kapfer's unique contribution is a writing style that seems almost musical. His homiletical studies are less structured, but they themselves read as eloquent sermons. The preacher himself is inspired, renewed in excitement for the text as he digests Kapfer's thoughts.

The homiletical studies Deffner complements with his own personal forte, the illustration. Deffner enlivens his manuscripts especially with pointed anecdotes and observations, no doubt from his own experience. They have that kind of realism.

The one possible disadvantage of a collaborative effort, of course, is the variance in style. The differences from one author to another are marked. If one loves Aho's outlines, for example, one may be disappointed when Deffner's manuscripts take a different tack. If one prefers a more flexible style, one may wish Kapfer had written all nine studies. Even this variation, however, can be useful. The preacher who wishes to adapt these materials to his own style and situation (as any good preacher will) will appreciate having alternatives. Deffner says of the sermon for Good Friday: "The preacher can focus on a variety of applications on the basis of the Romans passage. Aho's classic outline is one more approach. I offer another, stemming from some of the insights in his three sections under 'An Examination of Renewal in Relation to Faith'" (p. 113).

Lent: A Time for Renewal is clearly written to be preached, not just read and shelved. Its applications are direct and pastoral, reflecting sensitivity to the needs of the parish (that is, of people) by all three contributors. The sermons lend themselves well to a pulpit exchange since they may be presented in other than their original sequence without

losing effectiveness. One caution is that the overall theme, *A Time for Renewal*, is not verbally reinforced from week to week as strongly as it might be. The preacher will want to remind hearers of that goal more frequently in order to maintain interest through the series.

As one might expect in this computer age, a catalogue of "peripherals" is available with the *Sermon Book*. Modified versions of Kapfer's liturgies are offered on disk in *Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish* (Series A, Part 2). Bulletin inserts, posters, and daily devotional booklets may also be purchased separately through Concordia Publishing House. When, in its pre-publication days, the material in *Lent: A Time for Renewal* was presented by Aho and Kapfer to a conference of Michigan District pastors, it received a standing ovation. We add our applause.

Carl C. Fickenscher II
Garland, Texas

EUCCHARIST: A THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION. By Leo Hay. Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1989. 159 pages.

This volume is one in a series of books intended to unfold the meaning of each of the sacraments recognized by the Roman Catholic Church. The target audience appears to be chiefly the laity. Like its companion volumes in the "Message of the Sacraments Series," *Eucharist* seeks to cover five aspects of the sacrament: ". . . the existential or experiential meaning of the sacrament in the context of secular human experience; what is known of the historical development of the sacrament; a theological exposition of the meaning, function, and effect of the sacrament in the context of present official Catholic doctrinal positions; some pastoral reflections; and a projection of possible future developments in the practice and catechesis of the sacrament" (p. 9). *Eucharist* is something of an *apologia* for post-Vatican II developments in eucharistic and liturgical theology.

As the presence of the word "celebration" in both the title of the book and the title of each chapter would indicate, "celebration" is the organizing theme and principle for the volume. It is not surprising, therefore, that Father Hay places the primary accent on the eucharist as the church's act of coming together rather than on the sacramental character of the Supper as the gift of God. In consistency with Vatican II, there is a shift from the mass as the sacrifice offered by the priest to the mass as the sacrifice offered by the people of God. For a critique of Roman "celebration theology" and an analysis of its impact on liturgical theology in Lutheran-

ism, the reader would do well to consult Oliver Olson's "Liturgy as Action" in *Dialog* (Spring 1975).

Lutheran pastors will find in *Eucharist* a concise and helpful summary of contemporary Roman Catholic understandings of the offertory, the eucharistic prayer, and transubstantiation. Each chapter concludes with suggestions for further reading and study.

John T. Pless
Minneapolis, Minnesota

HOW DOES AMERICA HEAR THE GOSPEL? By William A. Dyrness. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989. xi and 164 pages.

If one inclines toward the opinion that Anglo-Americans are nearly hopelessly ethnocentric in their understanding of gospel and Scripture, this book will be received most agreeably. Like many other Anglo-Americans who have served in Christian ministries overseas, Dyrness discovered that the message which he intended to take to others was not quite the one which they were prepared to receive. Dyrness concluded that the message which he took to other lands was an "American gospel," one which had a limited usefulness in other cultures. With this book Dyrness intends to set forth the historical roots and sources of this culturally specific gospel. Most of the book is a sweeping flight through American history, touching down here and there for a quote or observation.

In this way Dyrness hopes to show that the gospel was, even at the beginning, pressed into service and made captive to three powerful urges in the American mind: (1.) a pragmatic, expansive materialism, (2.) an energetic optimism, and (3.) a commitment to individualism. The founding Americans arrived with, and instilled in those who followed, a desire for a "gospel that works" in prevailing circumstances. Dyrness attempts to show that, when Calvinist and Puritan theology became wedded to the democratic desires of colonial Americans, the marriage produced an egalitarianism which turned back on the gospel and altered it to American tastes. Two chapters on Walter Rauschenbusch and Robert Schuller are included to show how this process has continued into this century.

Dyrness' conclusions are intriguing, and his extensive bibliography is impressive, but his book is difficult to read for reasons of style. Its goal is not well-defined, and Dyrness' personal interjections are not clearly

separated from the historical data which he sets forth. In addition, if the reader is not conversant with a great deal of American history, Dyrness' use of brief quotes to illustrate grand movements in the American story will contribute little to that reader's understanding of the author's thesis. Some readers, particularly those without Calvinist roots, may wonder whether the gospel for which Dyrness is concerned is the same gospel to which they adhere. Yet, quite apart from these criticisms, this book poses a question which should give pause to anyone who would seek the "christianizing" of any culture: Might any given culture have aspects which will limit its understanding of the gospel of Christ, and might that culture as a result proclaim a truncated gospel?

Andrew W. Dimit
Duluth, Minnesota

MARK 1-8:26. WORD BIBLICAL COMMENTARY. By Robert A. Guelich. Dallas: Word Books, 1989. xliii and 454 pages.

In this commentary on the Gospel of Mark, Robert A. Guelich, professor of New Testament in Fuller Theological Seminary, proposes to break new ground in the study of the gospel, at least in the English-speaking world. The author must regard this work as something of a *magnum opus*, as he provides 436 pages of commentary on only the first half of the gospel. (By way of comparison one notes that the commentary on John in the same series comprises a single volume.) The author takes as one of his primary hermeneutical assumptions the need to distinguish the pre-Markan oral tradition from the way in which the evangelist used this material in writing his gospel. In this way Guelich believes one will see Mark's true intent in writing.

At places Guelich succeeds admirably. The author argues convincingly that the first half of Mark should be outlined as follows:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| I. 1:1-15 | The Beginning |
| II. 1:16-3:12 | New Wine in Old Wineskins |
| III. 3:13-6:6 | The Mystery of the Kingdom of God |
| IV. 6:7-8:26 | "Do You Not Yet Understand?" |

This outline emerges from a recognition that each of the latter three sections opens with an account pertaining to the disciples, winds down with a story about a negative response to Jesus' ministry (3:1-6; 6:1-6a; 8:14-21), and concludes with a summarizing account which recalls the true nature of our Lord's work. As for the commentary itself, in individual

sections Guelich offers satisfying—or, at least, thought provoking—interpretations. Examples are his comments on the term "apostle" and on the "leaven" of the Pharisees and Herod as disbelief of our Lord's "signs." According to Guelich, the statement that Jesus nearly "passed by" the disciples when walking on water is the language of divine epiphany.

Nevertheless, much of the commentary is preoccupied with discussing which material has its origin in the oral tradition, which is an addition by the early church, and which comes from the hand of the evangelist himself. At one point Guelich observes that the question of whether one particular saying came from Jesus or the church "is moot." This statement could serve as a critique of most of the commentary itself. Even if the author's analyses never called into question the authority of the canonical text (and some of them do), they would contribute little or nothing to our understanding of the meaning of the text under consideration. For the reader willing to plow diligently through the commentary, it does offer material of value. However, most busy pastors and students will probably find the value unequal to the cost of the time which would have to be invested.

Paul Deterding
Satellite Beach, Florida

A GUIDE THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Celia Brewer Marshall. Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1989. 158 pages. Softcover, \$14.95.

As the reviewer thumbed through this book for the first time he thought, "At last, an Old Testament workbook which can be used for undergraduate Bible introduction or even adult education." Though this text was developed by the author for high-school-level Old Testament survey courses, it could easily be used on an introductory college level. It contains convenient maps, charts, and timelines throughout.

The majority of the workbook questions are well worded and attempt to draw the student into a deeper understanding of the Bible. The suggested class activities and assignments are creative and reveal the author's experience in capturing the imagination of high school or early-college-age students. The same can be said of the sections which present ancient Near Eastern parallels to the biblical material such as the Gilgamesh Epic, the "code" of Hammurabi, the Hittite suzerainty treaties, and the Baal epic from Ugarit.

Unfortunately, one cannot use this workbook without endorsing the modern critical approach to the Old Testament. Not only, indeed, is the approach critical, but most of the theories presented are outdated even in critical circles. The Hebrews are identified with the *apiru*, even though this identification has been attacked since the work of Mendenhall in the 1950's. The amphictyonic thesis which was advanced in the thirties by Alt and Noth is used unreservedly to describe Israel during the conquest and the period of the judges. The competing views of Israel's entrance into Canaan—conquest, "peaceful infiltration," and "internal revolt"—are not even mentioned.

In addition, there are some bothersome errors and omissions in this work. In explaining dates the author states that the first century A.D. consists of years 1-99, the first century B.C. of years 99-1, and the first millennium A.D. of years 1-999 (two 99 year centuries and one 999 year millennium!). She states that no separation was made between words in the earliest Hebrew manuscripts, whereas many early Northwest Semitic inscriptions (including Hebrew ones) contain, in fact, some type of word divisions (space, line, dot, etc.). The Sumerians are called a Semitic people, whereas the jury is still considering their ethnic origin, and Sumerian is definitely not a Semitic language. The books of 1 and 2 Chronicles are not treated at all.

Despite these criticisms, Marshall's book stirs up feelings of admiration and frustration. The reviewer admires its strengths. He is frustrated that no one has produced a book as attractive as this one to teach Old (and New) Testament introduction on the undergraduate level from a sound, confessional perspective.

Andrew E. Steinmann
Cleveland, Ohio

SANCTIFICATION: CHRIST IN ACTION. EVANGELICAL CHALLENGE—LUTHERAN RESPONSE. By Harold Senkbeil. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Northwestern Publishing House, 1989. 204 pages. Paper, \$8.95.

With the growing dominance of Evangelicals in Protestant circles, it seems as if sanctification as a topic in theology has become their private domain. Pastor Harold Senkbeil, a graduate of this seminary, sets forth the Lutheran doctrine of sanctification in contradistinction to Evangelicalism with a profundity which will meet the highest theological criteria of our Lutheran heritage and a style which will be understood by

lay people. Senkbeil's thesis is evident in the title. The Christian's life is Jesus Christ in action. Sanctification is an extension of christology. The discussion is divided into six chapters. The first deals with the sophistication of the Evangelical movement, its appeal to the modern man, and its attraction to Lutherans. The section on its historical roots traces the origins of Evangelicalism to Calvin, Pietism, and New England Puritanism. The teaching of Charles Swindoll is chosen as an example of the Evangelical view of "how to grow in sanctification." Senkbeil provides a thorough critique from a Lutheran perspective. The author's own position is set forth in another chapter, "Christ in Action: A Lutheran View of Sanctification, More than a Life Style." A final chapter shows how the characteristic Lutheran views on the sacraments, absolution, and worship play a role in sanctification.

Senkbeil's book could not be more timely. Many Lutherans are adopting Evangelical theology and life styles and are convinced that they are still conservative and confessional. Nothing could be further from the truth, as Senkbeil points out in a style which is always easy to read. He uncovers the allure of Evangelicalism: "Sure, God saves me by grace, but then he expects me to perform. With his Spirit he gives me the power I need to get started, but then it's up to me. By continuing in close fellowship with him and my fellow believers, I will be inspired to produce the kind of life that is pleasing to him. Spectacular power is available; all I have to do is reach out and grab it" (p. 119). The center of the Christian life is Christ and not some modified form of synergism in Evangelical form. The subtitle of the book says it all: "Christ in Action." This book is recommended without any hesitation for pastor and people alike.

David P. Scaer

SAVED BY GRACE. By Anthony A. Hoekema. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1989. Index. 277 pages. Hardcover, \$22.95.

Anthony Hoekema's name is familiar to most readers because of his well-received *Four Major Cults*, published in 1963. The reviewer was happy to give that book a favorable review at the time (*The Springfielder*, Summer 1964) and to recommend it to his students in a survey course on religious bodies in America. There is much to commend this present volume on soteriology as well, the third in a series of doctrinal studies

which also includes books on Christian anthropology (*Created in God's Image*) and eschatology (*The Bible and the Future*). In the event, the book was the "swan song" of Hoekema, long-time professor of systematic theology in Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids; he died in 1988, having retired from teaching ten years earlier.

In his prefatory remarks Hoekema candidly states that his theological approach to soteriology "is that of evangelical Christianity, interpreted from a Reformed or Calvinistic perspective" (p. xi). This approach means that in the main, except for contemporary references to views and theologians of a later date, his stance in theology is generally in agreement with that of L. Berkhof, his predecessor at Calvin Seminary and the esteemed author of the classic work of Calvinian theology in America, *Systematic Theology* (first published in 1939 and often reprinted), a study which in its one-volume format was decidedly more academic and attentive to philosophical categories. Both, however, endeavor to remain loyal to the Reformed confessions (Belgic Confession, Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of the Synod of Dort) which are still upheld by many in the generally conservative Christian Reformed Church.

Hoekema allows that "Reformed soteriology has much in common with other evangelical soteriologies," granting at the same time that "it does have certain distinctive emphases." Thus, for example, the decisive factor in a person's salvation is not his own agency but the sovereign grace of God which works toward that end, but not without the decision of faith on each individual's part—a curious bowing in the Arminian direction of the Reformed family. What happens in time has its roots in the eternal decree of the sovereign Lord, whose saving grace is bestowed only upon the elect, upon those who have been chosen by God in Christ to be His own. The gospel itself is to be seen as inviting all hearers to accept Christ as Savior, but it is efficacious only in those who are the elect. The believers who come to faith because God has chosen them will never lose their salvation but will be kept securely with unyielding perseverance under God's sovereign care.

Regeneration is viewed narrowly as the monergistic and irresistible grace of the Holy Spirit working in the individual who is to be saved. It is to be distinguished from conversion and understood as the (instantaneous) beginning of the new spiritual life implanted by the Spirit. Baptismal regeneration is rejected, for "in Reformed theology baptism is not considered a means whereby regeneration is bestowed, but rather a sign and seal of our regeneration" (p. 108). Conversion, faith, and repen-

tance in that order are seen as following upon and evidencing regeneration—a gradual process in the sinner's pilgrimage toward salvation. Repentance—rather than being seen as tantamount to contrition, worked by the law convicting the sinner of his transgressions and so preparing his heart for the gospel's call unto faith—is described as the fruit of conversion, turning the believer away from sin and toward the pursuit of godliness, thus confusing repentance with sanctification (in the narrow sense), which is the fruit of faith. It becomes evident that the proper spheres of law and gospel have been reversed in the way so clearly articulated in Barth's famous formula that the law is the necessary form of the gospel of which the content is grace.

In a long chapter Hoekema traces the scriptural, forensic understanding of justification back to the time when Luther broke through into the clear light of the gospel and saw that the "righteousness of God" in Romans 1:17 referred, not to God's own personal holiness or punitive righteousness whereby He visits judgment upon sinners, but to an imputed righteousness, the forensic declaration to sinners which God pronounces freely upon sinful mankind and which becomes the sinner's treasured possession by faith. Hoekema rightly states: "At that moment the Protestant Reformation was born. Bells began to ring in Luther's soul. Peace and joy now flooded his being. Romans 1:17 now became for him the very gate of Paradise—the key which unlocked the Bible" (p. 152).

In treating sanctification Hoekema rejects the idea that the believer has in him both the old man and the new man (the old self and the new self); yet he ends somewhat ambivalently by acknowledging that thereby he does not wish "to deny that the believer still has an old or sinful nature . . . [and] in addition to his or her old nature, a new nature, by which he or she is now enabled to do what pleases God" (p. 214). The distorted view of perfectionism (as advocated by Wesley) is rightly rejected as out of tune with Scripture and the believer's existential experience in this world. In consistency with Calvin's teaching, the third use of the law is not only upheld but also emphasized as "the *principal* use." A chapter on the perseverance of the true believers closes the book, with emphasis on *true* believers—the elect, those who once they are in faith (by God's sovereign decree) are forever secure.

If we have been critical of Hoekema's theology, it is, of course, because our Lutheran stance in soteriology opposes Reformed predilections at various points. From the Reformed point of view the book is an excellent production, clearly and candidly written. The Christian reader

can find much to uplift the spirit in these pages.

E. F. Klug

PATTERN IN EARLY CHRISTIAN WORSHIP. By Allen Cabaniss. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1989. 112 pages. \$17.50.

This is a slight book, but its suggestiveness gives it an inherent value beyond its size. Cabaniss is emeritus research professor of history in the University of Mississippi and a Presbyterian by confession. He is also a scholar long interested in matters liturgical, both ancient and modern. In a style deceptively simple, Cabaniss presents here an overview of evidence for the "pattern" or shape or order of early Christian worship and concludes, on the basis of this evidence, with his own suggestions for the present day. His voice is moderate and his advice relevant for those interested in adapting Christian worship to present pluralistic contexts while maintaining Christian, confessional integrity.

Cabaniss is aware of the impossibility of divorcing substance and style: "how we pray should reflect our belief and what we believe should be expressed in our worship. If we disjoin the two we make our worship mendacious and our faith intangible" (p. x). The principle of *lex orandi lex credendi* (the pattern of praying is the pattern of believing) is to be upheld. Cabaniss' overarching advice is "maintain the basic structure" and "keep the rationale" (p. x). Yet there is both in Cabaniss' research and in his own suggestions a movement toward simplicity and intimacy which is very much in touch with modern American sensibilities.

Cabaniss does not intend to lay bare a theology of worship from early Christian sources. He is specifically interested in uncovering evidence for an order of worship in early Christian liturgy. He begins with the earliest description of actual Christian worship, the First Apology of Justin Martyr (c. 140 A.D.). A summary of Justin's presentation indicates that early Christian worship consisted of these major parts: (1.) Scripture reading, often lengthy, followed by a homily of exhortation and intercessory prayer, and (2.) the kiss of fellowship, the presentation of eucharistic food, prayers and thanksgivings, and the eating and drinking of the body and blood of Christ (I Apology 65-67). Absent from this description is any mention of singing, place or time, arrangement of the assembled people (although there was a "president"), or length of service—and any explicit connection between the eucharist and the death of Jesus. In a second chapter Cabaniss finds the same pattern of worship indicated in the short description which Pliny, governor of Bithynia, gives in his letter to the

emperor, Trajan (c. 110 A.D.). Again Christian worship is divided into two parts: instructional and eucharistic. The "song" (*carmen*) to Christ "as to a god" mentioned by Pliny may indicate singing, but may just as well denote simply "elevated speech" (pp. 11-18). A brief discussion of I Clement, the Didache, and Ignatius of Antioch concludes the second-century evidence, although they add little to the quest for a pattern. Others may think that Ignatius gives evidence which Cabaniss ignores. Ignatius' talk of the bishop being "in the place of the Father" certainly refers to the bishop's position in the liturgical assembly and, one may suspect, after the pattern indicated in Revelation 4.

Two chapters summarize Old Testament evidence concerning worship practice and worship order (using especially Exodus and Ezekiel) and biblical and pagan evidence concerning the ideal of a celestial liturgy (using especially Ezekiel, Revelation, and Apuleius). Especially helpful in these chapters is Cabaniss' insistence that the temple liturgy was as significant for early Christian liturgy as was the synagogue. Finally, there is a chapter on New Testament evidence concerning the worship pattern or order of early Christian liturgy (pp. 43-53). Here Cabaniss finds confirming evidence that the two-fold pattern of Justin Martyr and of Pliny's letter has apostolic foundation. According to Cabaniss, especially three New Testament passages (Romans 10:14ff.; Philippians 4:6; Acts 2:42) give indications of a worship order in apostolic times. The sequence is simple, even stark: Scripture reading, homily, prayers, eucharist. Aspects of the service which "lent color and appeal" were intimacy (the house church), intense awareness of the Spirit's activity, and the use of hymns and canticles (Ephesians 4:19; Colossians 3:16). There is also within the assembly a consistent differentiation of clergy and laity, "for the early church had from its beginning made that distinction" (p. 52; James, Revelation, Galatians 2:9; 6:6; 1 Corinthians 4:1; 12:27; Philippians 1:1, etc.). Yet, according to Cabaniss, singing does not seem to have been universal in the liturgy, nor was there a confession of sins. The instructional part of Scripture reading and homily was open to all, while the "worship" leading to the eucharist was restricted to the baptized. Speaking of Paul (Romans 10:14), Cabaniss summarizes his findings: "The service begins with announcement of the mighty acts and words of God in solemn readings of Sacred Scripture, followed by adoring expressions of faith in and acceptance of God's revelation, culminating in communion with God by prayer and Eucharist. The earliest unequivocal description of Christian worship by Justin Martyr conforms to Paul's outline" (p. 63).

Cabaniss provides three appendices. The third gives an English translation of the texts of Justin Martyr's First Apology and of Pliny's letter which provided Cabaniss with the primary evidence of early Christian worship practice. This translation is helpful. But it is the first two appendices which have contemporary relevance and serve as serious attempts to make meaningful Christian worship in our day. The first appendix, "A Liturgical Structure for Today," provides Cabaniss' order of service, which is a mild elaboration of the pattern he discerned in the New Testament, Justin Martyr, and Pliny. He divides the service into instruction (the sermon and its concomitants) and worship (the eucharist and its concomitants). The action of worship should be noted by thankfulness, exultation, and joy, yet without ridding the worship of the solemnity of the eucharist. Penitential services with confession of sins should be separate from the worship service. Instruction should be "deformalized and restored to its simpler, original 'conversational' style and content, with opportunity for questions and additions, even for disagreements" (p. 74). This whole appendix has considerable merit, yet clearly the centrality of the sermon is gone. Cabaniss suggests as "most satisfactory" a sermon after the close of the service (p. 77). The second appendix, "One for the Road," describes the eucharist as indicating a journey, a wilderness wandering, a sense of urgency and impermanence. Therefore, "the Eucharist should not be characterized as a formal supper, dinner or banquet; it should be looked upon as one's 'last' mouthful just before a journey." It should then be received standing, even walking! "Nothing should follow it but departure from the place where it was administered. It is a final act in and of itself before this world or another world engulfs us" (p. 85). The reviewer is not ready to admit to "food for a journey" as a sufficient rubric for understanding the eucharist, but Cabaniss' suggestions for practice are an example of how theological understanding can and must be expressed in liturgical form. Without such form theological understanding will be left literally unexpressed. This book deserves a reading, and the reviewer would aver that not much rearranging would be necessary to make its suggestions directly applicable to a Lutheran worship service.

William C. Weinrich