

Book Reviews

A Seminary in Crisis: The Inside Story of the Preus Fact Finding Committee. By Paul A. Zimmerman. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007. Hard cover. 444 Pages. \$51.00.

This review of a narrative of the events before and after the St. Louis Seminary faculty walkout on February 19, 1974, is appearing thirty-six years after they happened. Of special note is that this account is provided by the chairman of the Fact Finding Committee appointed by then LCMS president J.A.O. Preus to ascertain the validity of allegations that the faculty's theology did not conform to LCMS doctrinal standards. Like *Memoirs in Exile* (1990), by former St. Louis seminary president John H. Tietjen, a major player in these events, *A Seminary in Crisis* is written from the inside.

Direct involvement with the events leading up to the walkout began with Zimmerman's appointment to the committee in May 1970 described in the second chapter. His committee's carrying out the task and its report to Preus in June 1971 are the subjects of chapters three and four. Chapters five through eight describe events from the completion of the report to the seminary walkout. After the narrative (13-144) with end notes (145-151) follows a bibliography (152-153). The bulk of *A Seminary in Crisis* (155-444) consists of the *Report of the Fact Finding Committee* and *Report of the Synodical President* to the 1971 LCMS Milwaukee convention in which are included the transcripts of committee interviews with the individual professors. Majority and minority reports from the seminary's regents are also included as are statements and letters from the synod president, the seminary faculty, and its president. Also found here is "A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles" adopted by the synod in response to the faculty's theology.

Those desiring to examine or reexamine those tension-filled times have here the necessary documents. Those acquainted with Kurt Marquart's *Anatomy of an Explosion* (1977) and Tietjen's *Memoirs in Exile* already know the events of these times, but as an insider, Zimmerman also is positioned to provide details known only to him. While Marquart's approach is theological and Tietjen's is autobiographical written with pathos, Zimmerman's style is matter-of-fact. He takes issue here and there with Tietjen, e.g., on whether the student walkout was really spontaneous (126). Now nearly two generations have passed and many of the principals in the controversy have gone to their eternal reward, but should rapprochement be possible for those who are still at odds with one another, it could begin by an in-depth study of the committee's "Summary Statement of the Positions Held by Professors at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri" (160-168). While the faculty claimed that biblical authority depends on the Scriptures presenting the gospel, the synod view was that Christ is revealed in the Scriptures as the written word of God (162). Though the faculty accepts the virgin birth, some were not willing to

condemn those who for exegetical reasons could not (166). If the virgin birth is up for grabs, then so are the miracles and the resurrection. Still-living faculty members might provide a reason, other than tradition, that these articles should not be dropped from the creeds. Discussion could start there.

In the final chapter of the narrative section, chapter ten (142-144), Zimmerman speaks to future generations. First, "the Church's leaders must be willing to take action without paralyzing delays or hoping the problem will go away without any decisive action being taken." Second, "we must continue to produce educated seminary graduates." Third, if seminaries do not receive support from congregations, they will move away from the church. Less certain is that the church will take these words to heart. Doubtful is whether any pastors younger than their mid-50s have a living memory of events in the early 1970s. Only the author and Karl Barth, later St. Louis seminary president, whom Zimmerman consulted, remain from the five-member Fact Finding Committee. Martin Scharlemann, J.A.O. Preus, his brother Robert, John Tietjen, Arthur Repp, Richard Caemmerer, Eugene Klug, George Wollenburg, E.J. Otto, all who played a role on one side or the other, have passed away. Paul A. Zimmerman, now in his 90s, has performed an admirable service in leaving us an eyewitness account of those times and in collecting the necessary documents. At the beginning of my seminary-student days in 1955, I was hardly concerned with what happened in the synod in 1918, thirty-seven years before. Here's a prayer that this generation will not be so complacent. Endnotes which consistently refer to the proceedings and minutes are used. Footnotes would have provided unnecessary clutter. The titles "Dr." and "President" are inconsistently used and should be omitted altogether in a second printing. We are too obsessed with titles.

David P. Scaer

At Home in the House of My Fathers: Presidential Sermons, Essays, Letters, and Addresses from the Missouri Synod's Great Era of Unity and Growth. Edited by Matthew C. Harrison. Fort Wayne, Indiana: Lutheran Legacy Press, 2009. 826 Pages. Hardcover. \$19.95.

Matthew Harrison, Executive Director of LCMS World Relief and Human Care, has distinguished himself as a pastor, author, translator, administrator, and humanitarian. This large book (over 800 pages!), a collection of writings of C.F.W. Walther, Friedrich Wynecken, Heinrich Schwan, Francis Pieper, Friedrich Pfotenhauer, and others, is a remarkable volume by any standard. While not the translator of every essay, Harrison introduces each essay with candor and warmth. Nostalgia is one of the most powerful of human emotions, but these essays are not offered in wistfulness—they are offered for thought-provoking guidance. We tend to look at our problems as unprecedented. Harrison shows that this belief is not true. We can look to the leaders of the

past for help, since the similarities between challenges faced in the past and today outweigh the differences.

Harrison desires to cultivate unity and direction for the LCMS through wisdom, not through a denominational program. As noted, the choice of essays indicates remarkable parallels between the young LCMS and that of today. The early leaders of the LCMS faced technological advances, religious pluralism, economic catastrophes, social problems, cantankerous leaders, and other vexing matters. This volume is especially valuable for those theologians and pastors seeking integrity for their ministry.

Naturally a review of such a large volume cannot deal with every essay included. We will focus on some important highlights. This reader especially found those letters and essays dealing with Walther's break with Loehe of great interest. Harrison indicates that Walther's questioning of Loehe's confessional integrity does not present Walther at his best since Loehe advocated closed communion at some risk to his ministry in the Bavarian Lutheran Church. However, Harrison notes that Loehe's apparently weaker confessional stance—as it became embodied in the Iowa Synod—perhaps contributed to current problems in the ELCA (224). Certainly Loehe's development of institutions of mercy indicates that a confessional stance naturally harmonizes with a charitable disposition for those in need. This spirit was echoed by Walther and continues in the LCMS.

Walther's response to the Norwegian American pastor J.A. Ottesen, who asked about the appropriateness of lay preachers (used by the Norse Pietists in this country), wisely counsels that we should steer a course between "*Pfafferei*" (priestly rule) and *Schwaermerei* (lay revivalism) in the church.

In his office, Harrison has significantly brought to the fore the problem of clergy depression. Here, Harrison does not step away from the breakdowns of both Walther and Wyneken due to the stress of their workload. While a slight setback for their ministries, such melancholy did not prevent these leaders from carrying on in their leadership—though a sabbatical to Germany was most helpful for Walther. Counter to all accusations that confessionalists are indifferent to social welfare, Walther's concern for social ministry is evidenced in "The Pastor's Responsibility for Care for the Physical Needs of Members of His Congregation." To be confessionally true is not to be socially indifferent—as it is so often caricatured by liberal versions of Lutheranism. Likewise, in light of current heretical trends in the ELCA, Walther urged confessionally faithful pastors and candidates for ministry not to bolt from unorthodox church bodies, but instead to fight for truth from within (176–82).

Harrison notes that Walther alighted on a reference to Missouri's strength in a quote from a General Council pastor: "Now I understand why the Missourians are so unified. The reason is that they always spend a great deal of time in the thorough study of doctrine. They don't merely discuss it

thoroughly, but they always try to get down to the basic principles and prove everything on the basis of Scripture. That is the secret of the Missourians. With that kind of approach, they cannot help being unified" (299). There is much to be learned today from this observation!

A potent essay of Walther's deals with whether the use of Methodist hymns in Lutheran Sunday Schools is permissible. Given today's "praise band" culture, the response is most helpful: "For, first of all, the true Lutheran spirit is found in none of them; second, our hymns are more powerful, more substantive, and more prosaic; third, those hymns which deal with the Holy Sacraments are completely in error; fourth, when these little sectarian hymnbooks come into the hand of our children, they openly read and sing false hymns" (332). How even more true of "praise songs" and the like in current "contemporary" services!

The same Spirit empowering Walther empowered the other leaders in this volume. Hence, Wyneken defends the doctrine of justification as the "beginning, middle, and end" of Christian truth (409), and Schwann seeks for the synod to find a path between "faddishness" (again think church-growth ideology) and sluggishness (541). Pieper charges us to do no "whoring with the spirit of the times" (571) and sees the weakness of an "ecumenical Lutheranism" willing to sell its birthright.

All in all, this volume is highly recommended indeed, not only for the professional scholar, historian, and theologian, but especially for the parish pastor seeking strength to carry out his ministry based on truth and consistency of practice.

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At Home in the House of My Fathers: Presidential Sermons, Essays, Letters, and Addresses from the Missouri Synod's Great Era of Unity and Growth. Edited by Matthew C. Harrison. Fort Wayne, Indiana: Lutheran Legacy Press, 2009. 826 Pages. Hardcover. \$19.95.

A Daystar Reader. Edited by Matthew L. Becker. Fountainhead Press, 2010. Softcover. 245 Pages.

Editors of each collection of essays want to call the attention of LCMS readers to critical periods in its history, Harrison on the synod's first leaders and Becker on events leading to 1974. First to Harrison's volume.

Beyond Walther's *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel* and his *The Form of a Christian Congregation*, his writings and those of the LCMS's other founders are largely unknown. Harrison rectifies this with translations of Walther's other writings along with those Friedrich Wyneken, Heinrich C.

Schwan, Francis Pieper, and Friedrich Pfotenhauer, all LCMS presidents. Selections are fascinating. Described is a trip with Wyneken to Germany in 1851 in which Walther meets with such leading university theologians as Hoefling in Erlangen and Loehe. Provided with each selection is a preface explaining the context in which it was written. We learn that breakdowns from stress and hard work were common. Wyneken preached one-and-a-half-hour sermons from notes and so left few manuscripts. Schwann and Pieper speak of their distress for the synod's future as they contemplate Walther's impending death, a reappearing theme in their funeral orations. Pieper was a pallbearer at Walther's funeral and John Behnken preached the funeral sermon for Friedrich Pfotenhauer, whom four years prior he had unseated as president, the first but not the last time this would happen.

Harrison's introductions provide a narrative of the synod from 1848 to 1939. Written with conviction, the intimate thoughts of the founding fathers will evoke a bit of emotion not only from the blue-blood clergy descended from the synod's first members, but also from the ever-increasing majority of "Gentile" clergy who by choice and not only by heritage have attached themselves to the synod's confession. Problems pastors face today are hardly different from the first leaders and so this collection could easily substitute as a pastoral theology. These men were more open minded than what might be thought. When requested, pastors are to marry and bury those with only tangential ties with the church. Students in churches with inadequate confessional commitments should remain until they are removed. Pieper chastised congregations who gave their pastors measly salaries. Over and over again the forefathers urged commitment to the truth, but in these essays they do provide extended or in-depth theological and biblical expositions. These probably are accessible elsewhere. 826 pages is a lot of reading, but each of the approximately 100 items can be read separately. Walther accounts for roughly 40% of the content. An initial offering price of \$20 seems too good to be true and the volume may no longer be available at that price, but even at double the amount, it is a bargain that cannot be passed up.

As the preface explains, *A Daystar Reader* is a collection of essays coming from a movement within the LCMS self-identified as the *Daystar Network*. Without dates and no citation in the bibliography, a fair but imprecise guess is that they were written from about 1970 to 2005. The nine-page introduction lays out the historical origin and theological platform for the movement and summarizes the twenty-two chapters, which are subdivided into six sections (xvi-xvii). The first four sections set down the theological bases: I. For the Sake of the Gospel; II. Preaching the Gospel; III. Church and Ministry; and IV. Church Fellowship. Section V, entitled "The Ordination of Women" and comprising six chapters, indicates its importance (103-156). Four chapters make up the sixth and final section, "Science and Theology," whose first chapter, "The Scandal of the LCMS Mind," presents the case for evolution as compatible with divine creation. The existence of vestigial organ parts as an

argument for evolution might have to be reevaluated, since a use for the appendix has been found. This argument can be eliminated in the next edition by which time a function may be found for wisdom teeth (171). Since the writer offers seven arguments for evolution, he is unlikely to change his mind (170-171). The final chapter, "The Neurobiology of Gender: Cultural and Religious Dilemmas," urges a reevaluation of homosexuality (205-210). The August 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly did just that and earned a note of displeasure from the LCMS president. End notes from all the essays are lumped together with continuous numbers for a total of 216 (215-238). For discussion and reference each essay is entitled to its own notes. In the table of contents, twenty-two chapters are numbered (iii-iv), but the numbers do not appear next to the chapter titles. Also, the Roman numeral for 9 is "ix" not "ixi." These matters can be adjusted in the second edition. As mentioned, an introductory paragraph with the historical context for each essay, as Harrison provided, would allow readers to better engage the arguments. A lengthy "who's who" pedigree for the Daystar Network includes Walter A. Maier, only surprising because an equal claim is in *Walter A. Maier Still Speaks* (New Haven, MO, 2008). This may not measure up as a crusade for relics between competing armies, but it comes close to the Lutheran counterpart to Mormon baptism in behalf of the dead. Though the context of the essays is missing, names of the contributors with degrees and professional accomplishments are listed in the forefront. Thirteen of the twenty-two contributors graduated from Saint Louis before 1973, as did the undersigned, and one from Seminex. A glimpse into synod's life in this period can be found in Mary Todd's valedictory in leaving the synod (153-156).

Neither *House of My Fathers* nor *A Daystar Reader* gives place of publication and in the case of the latter only in the "Acknowledgements" is the name of Fountain Press discovered as the printer. This belongs on the opposite side of the title page alongside Daystar.net as the copyright holder. "Acknowledgements" (iii, x) is an acceptable spelling, but the dictionary and the word processor prefer "Acknowledgments." Readers may want to contact the respective editors or call a CPH bookstore for copies. Both are worthwhile, full-length portraits of different parts of Missouri's past. Nominations for awards from the Concordia Historical Institute are in order.

David P. Scaer

***Fighting for the Cross: Crusading to the Holy Land.* By Norman Housley. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008. 357 Pages. Hardcover. \$38.00.**

Tremendous advances have been made in crusade scholarship over the last forty years. There is, however, still much to be learned. And paving the way is Norman Housley and his recent contribution to the field, *Fighting for the Cross*.

The book focuses entirely on the crusades sent to the Holy Land. It starts by masterfully summarizing the events that unfolded after Pope Urban II's well-known, though not well-documented, sermon at the Council of Clermont (AD 1095) and continues to the fall of Acre in 1291. But this is only covered to establish the backdrop for what follows: the social and intellectual history of the crusades. Motivations and preparations for crusading, details of travel and combat, logistics, and the mental world and accomplishments of crusaders are then examined with exacting detail.

Aiding the reader, Housley also provides numerous maps and several truly remarkable illustrations. But the greatest strength of the book, perhaps, is—in addition to its exclusive use of primary sources—its elegant prose untainted by modern biases. Accordingly, it does a fantastic job of drawing readers into the medieval world and describing the crusades in light of that world.

The one weakness is that it does not cover other theaters of crusading activity in the Middle Ages, such as the notorious Albigensian crusade against the Cathars of southern France. Nor does it cover the later crusades in defense of Europe from the Islamic imperialism of the Ottomans. This would require a volume at least twice the size of this one, and Housley has covered and continues to cover this in other studies. Nevertheless, for anyone seeking to understand the events and ethos of the crusading enterprise in the Holy Land, *Fighting for the Cross* is highly recommended.

Adam S. Francisco

***The Rising of Bread for the World: An Outcry of Citizens Against Hunger.* By Arthur Simon. New York and Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2009. 168 Pages. Paperback. \$16.95.**

LCMS pastor Arthur Simon uses his life story as an outline for the account of his organizing Bread for the World in 1974, his turning over the reins of that organization to David Beckman in 1991, and his involvement in the Christian Children's Fund in 1997. Bread for the World crosses denominational lines to arouse public attention and obtain government support to relieve starving populations throughout the world. Its goals are set down in chapters ten through twelve, "The Right to Food," "The Fight for Food," and "Hunger at Home."

The first half of the book is autobiographical, leading up to how the author became involved in Bread for the World, the subject of the second half. Upon seminary graduation, his father, the Rev. Martin Simon, Ed.D., who would go on to write children's literature, was assigned as a missionary to China (1926). As a pastor in Eugene, Oregon, he preached a radio sermon against President Roosevelt's internment of Japanese American citizens. This courage to stand up against overwhelming odds was inherited by Arthur and his older brother

Paul, who took on the Illinois political machine to win seats in the Illinois assembly and senate and then to become lieutenant governor. (Residency in the capital city brought him to our Springfield seminary campus several times.) He later became a U.S. senator and was unsuccessful in his bid for the Democratic presidential nomination.

My acquaintance with Arthur Simon goes back to 1955-57 at the end of his seminary days and the beginning of mine. Reference to tumultuous seminary times is made generously without names. Martin Scharlemann, who is commended for supporting Simon's theological position and for introducing a more evangelical view of the Scriptures into the LCMS, is held responsible for the disruption at the St. Louis seminary in 1974 (38-39). After a two-year stint at the LCMS college in River Forest and a pastorate in Denver, Simon became pastor of Trinity in New York City, where with cousins Richard John Neuhaus and Erv Prang and John Puelle, a long time friend of mine, he became active in civil rights causes. Simon recounts successes and failures in acquiring government funding from American presidents. George Bush comes out a little bit better than Bill Clinton (158, 169), if I read this correctly.

Because he, his father, and his brother were significant LCMS figures in the middle of the last century, Simon's narrative will be of particular interest to our readers. In the nearly half a century since our seminary days, the world has changed. So has the LCMS, which today is engaged extensively in relieving hunger and assisting in natural catastrophes through its Board for World Relief and Human Care and Lutheran World Relief, both headed by LCMS pastors. So Art Simon's work continues in a way he may not have anticipated. Art Simon worked to sustain life in feeding the poor. Sadly, his brother's support for abortion allowed lives to be snuffed out before they could join those who could help feed others or be fed by groups in which Christ's love to the poor could come to fruition.

David P. Scaer

***Signature in the Cell: DNA and the Evidence for Intelligent Design.* By Stephen C. Meyer. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2009. 611 pages. Hardcover. \$28.99.**

2009 is the two-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, patron saint of the believers in evolution. This has given rise to renewed interest in the theory of evolution and its meaning. On September 12, *The Wall Street Journal* in its Weekend Journal section published an article by Richard Dawkins, prominent English atheist. Dawkins asserted, "Evolution is the creator of life." He added, "Evolution is God's redundancy notice, his pink slip." However, it is refreshing to note the recent publication of a definitive book that makes a compelling new case for Intelligent Design theory based on recent revolutionary discoveries in science. In *Signature in the Cell*, Stephen C.

Meyer exposes the weakness of Darwin's theory of evolution. He effectively shows the evidence that points to an intelligent designer, a creator.

Stephen C. Meyer received his Ph.D. in the philosophy of science from the University of Cambridge. A former geophysicist and college professor, he now directs the Center of Science and Culture at the Discovery Institute in Seattle. He has written and spoken widely and is one of the leaders in the Intelligent Design movement.

Meyer's book has been called a blueprint for twenty-first-century biological science. In years past, the cell, the basic unit of all living organisms, was considered to be fairly simple in structure and operation. That all changed, however, with a discovery by James Watson and Francis Crick in 1953. Using X-ray studies, they discovered in the nucleus of cells a giant molecule known as deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA). Watson and Crick discovered that this giant molecule provided the blueprint and means of cell reproduction together with the many proteins that need to be manufactured. It was found to have the structure of a double helix joined together by a series of chemical bases that act like a computer program. The helix is similar to a twisted ladder. When it unwinds and splits into two segments, each single chain acts as a template for the synthesis of a new one. Some DNA molecules contain as many as 4 million base pairs or units. Meyer's book provides a series of diagrams to make this bit of biochemistry understandable.

Meyer tells the interesting story of the research that followed Watson and Crick's discovery. As the years progressed, scientific experts on the origin of life attempted without success to explain how DNA could have first arisen by chance from non-living materials. Then, in 1985, Charles Thaxton, Walter Bradley, and Roger Olsen published a book called *The Mystery of Life*. They suggested that the information that guides reproduction in DNA might have originated from an intelligent source. The information in the DNA molecule is "mathematically identical" to a computer code. It points to a programmer, an intelligence. This was a death blow to evolutionary theory, which cannot explain the origin of the complex genetic information in DNA.

Signature in the Cell tells the story of how further research showed that genes in the DNA interacted with other molecules such as RNA. The process is even more complicated than Watson and Crick thought. Meyer describes how the support for Intelligent Design increased. He relates interesting stories of his contacts with leading scientists studying the question of the origin of life. As evolutionists tried to show how blind chance could have produced first life, Meyer writes, "Model after model failed to explain the origin of biological information, the DNA enigma" (294–295). Meyer quotes experts Orgel and Joyce. In 1993, they concluded, "The *de novo* appearance of oligonucleotides (i.e., specifically sequenced RNA bases [large protein complexes that copy the DNA text]) on the primitive earth would have been a near miracle" (322).

Signature in the Cell devotes a chapter to demonstrating that Intelligent Design is scientifically based. Critics frequently allege that it is mere disguised "creationism." But Meyer competently shows that the theory is based on the latest research. It does, however, have powerful philosophical implications. Meyer writes, "The scientific case for intelligent design is fraught with philosophical significance and poses a serious challenge to the materialistic worldview that has long dominated science and much of western culture" (449).

The author writes that he is a Christian. He says, however, that "Intelligent Design does not answer questions about the nature of God or even make claims about God's existence" (442). He adds, however, "Intelligent design, arguably, has specifically theistic implications because intelligent design confirms a major tenet of a theistic worldview, namely that life was designed by conscious and intelligent being, a purposive agent with a mind" (443).

Psalm 53:1 says plainly, "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.'" The Apostle Paul writes in Romans 1:20 of God's "eternal power and deity," which are clearly seen "in the things that have been made." We call this the natural knowledge of God. But we must ever emphasize that Holy Scripture is the source of our knowledge of the true God, of all His works, and especially of the gospel of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

Signature in the Cell is a valuable resource for the pastor who counsels with his youth, who are certain to encounter evolution and its materialistic philosophy in high school, college, and university.

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***Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense.* By N.T. Wright. HarperOne, 2010. 256 Pages. Hardcover. \$24.99.**

Most books of this nature are often categorized as spiritual theology and are ridden with anthropocentric overtones, sounding more psychological and sociological than theological. The few, however, that maintain a theological thrust (e.g., Henri Nouwen's numerous works) often operate from a very modern perspective, working from Scripture to the world. These are, it would seem, less appealing to the postmodern reader, who appears to be a bit more naturally given to being and belonging than knowing and discerning.

Simply Christian, however, proposes a fresh way of looking at the current cultural milieu in which we live. In effect, N.T. Wright turns modern spiritual theology on its head by beginning with the world and the world's struggles, only then to proceed to the text of Holy Scripture and the way in which it engages human beings in every aspect of life.

Wright's first section, "Echoes of a Voice," explores four areas—"longing for justice, the quest for spirituality, the hunger for relationships, and the delight in beauty" (x)—in which he proposes that in the recesses of human existence, we can hear an echo, even if it be ever so faint, of the voice of Jesus Christ, the one who speaks with a *viva vox*, a living voice. And it is through these echoes that we are plunged "into the center of the story which, according to the Christian tradition, makes sense of our longing for justice, spirituality, relationship, and beauty" (51).

Wright's second section, "Staring at the Sun," begins to reveal to us the person behind the voice which has been echoed throughout creation beginning in Eden. Here, Wright sees the story of Scripture as one grand narrative whose God is so deeply and personally connected to this world that he is willing to hand over his Son in order to "put the entire creation back to rights" (86). Indeed, Wright is thoroughly christological here because, for him, "Christianity is about something that *happened*. Something that happened *to Jesus of Nazareth*. Something that happened *through Jesus of Nazareth*" (91). For Wright, the way back to Eden begins, continues, and ends in Jesus.

His third and final section, "Reflecting the Image," summons the reader "to become more truly human, to reflect the image of God into the world" (140) by joyfully living within the story of Jesus, echoed in section one and explicated in section two. This is where Wright pushes the reader beyond the simple desire to get to heaven and instead to live as "instruments of God's new creation, the world-put-to-rights which has already been launched in Jesus and of which Jesus' followers are supposed to be not simply beneficiaries but also agents" (xi). It is as though Wright is calling all Christians to live as a means of grace, a tangible point of contact between the living Christ and this dying world.

Throughout *Simply Christian*, one can see at least two patterns at play. First, there is the father-theologian-bishop pattern. In other words, in section one, we see Wright as a dad who desperately wants his children and his children's children to hear and rejoice in the echo, and more, the one whose voice is behind it (xii). In section two, we see him as a biblical scholar, unmatched in his ability to read the text of Scripture in its totality as the all-encompassing story of Jesus. And in section three, we see him as a bishop, one who cares deeply for the flock entrusted to his care, and who longs for the day when they come to the full realization that "the point of Christianity is not 'to go to heaven when you die'" (217), but to be put to good use *now*, as those who have been fully forgiven and fully joined to the life of Jesus.

But we also see this pattern at play in the three sections of *Simply Christian*: our story-Christ's story-living within Christ's story. Strikingly, this is the same pattern found in the ancient catechumenate, in which catechumens pass from inquiry to catechesis (including intense pre-baptismal catechesis) to mystagogy. And if Wright's book is written for a postmodern audience, and if

postmoderns are drawn to the ancient (see James K.A. Smith, *Who's Afraid of Postmodernism?*), then maybe *Simply Christian* has something to offer those who are looking for new and fresh ways (while actually being quite ancient!) to make disciples of Jesus and make them stronger.

In the spirit of full disclosure, it should be noted that for many readers the most troubling section will undoubtedly be the first. And yet, I would propose that these echoes should not come as a surprise to the church. For what is justice but the normal ebb and flow of confession and absolution? What is spirituality but the normal rhythm of the church's liturgy? What is relationship but a community of believers bound concretely by the eucharistic meal? And what is beauty but what the Scriptures have always called beauty—the incarnational presence of the Lord on His sacrificial altar? Indeed, these echoes, while being thoroughly postmodern, find their origin and truest expression in the church and her liturgy, and so Wright's plea for us to tend them is one well taken.

To that end, I conclude with a short bit from the end of *Simply Christian*, which sums up the intent of Wright's work, and which should whet the appetite of those interested in discovering the totality of the Christian life, even if it be from a thoroughgoing Calvinist:

Made for spirituality, we wallow in introspection. Made for joy, we settle for pleasure. Made for justice, we clamor for vengeance. Made for relationship, we insist on our own way. Made for beauty, we are satisfied with sentiment. But new creation has already begun. The sun has begun to rise. Christians are called to leave behind, in the tomb of Jesus Christ, all that belongs to the brokenness and incompleteness of the present world. It is time, in the power of the Spirit, to take up our proper role, our fully human role, as agents, heralds, and stewards of the new day that is dawning. That, quite simply, is what it means to be Christian: to follow Jesus Christ into the new world, God's new world, which he has thrown open before us (237).

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***Forgiveness and Christian Ethics.* By Anthony Bash. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Hardback. 208 Pages. \$85.00.**

Anthony Bash of Durham University takes up the question, "What does it mean to forgive?" Recognizing the complexities that surround the practice of forgiveness, Bash examines philosophical, psychological, social, and legal dimensions to the question. He relates his own theoretical explorations to issues raised by such high-profile events as 9/11, the Holocaust, and the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. In short, Bash

wishes to articulate how forgiveness is moral response to a morally wrong act. Along the way, he takes up a variety of accompanying items, such as the issue of self-forgiveness, forgiveness without repentance, forgiveness as psychological therapy, and forgiveness in relation to reconciliation.

Leading off with Nietzsche's claim that forgiveness is a sign of impotence that exalts weakness and is therefore both unhealthy and immoral, Bash enters into a conversation with a variety of philosophers (Derrida, Kierkegaard, Kant, Lévinas, Milbank) that moves through the volume. Only one chapter (Chapter 5, "Forgiveness and the New Testament") devotes itself explicitly to a theological understanding of the forgiveness of sins. Bash argues that "forgiveness is a characteristic ethic of the kingdom of God" (99). He never comes to see that in the New Testament forgiveness of sins is linked to the atoning death of Jesus and is therefore eschatological in nature, that is, it spells an end to the old and brings about a new reality that transcends moral categories as God actually justifies the ungodly. Bash contends that "despite Lucan suggestions to the contrary, Jesus did not absolve sins," though he did embody forgiveness in his life (99).

Above all, Bash wants to articulate forgiveness as "an elusive gift" that is complete with "moral richness" and "transformative power" (186). Hence he continually attempts to squeeze forgiveness into ethical and therapeutic categories which is much like trying to pour new wine into old skins, to use a biblical metaphor. Lutherans would insist that forgiveness is not directed simply to wrongdoers but to sinners. The biblical teaching is not merely about forgiveness but the forgiveness of sins. This is missing in *Forgiveness and Christian Ethics*. What is missing in Bash may be found in Steven Paulson's essay, "The Forgiveness of Sins," in *Exploring and Proclaiming the Apostles' Creed*, edited by Roger E. Van Harn (Eerdmans, 2004), 240–253.

John T. Pless

Catechismus Minor Martini Lutheri [The Small Catechism of Martin Luther]. Notes by Edward Naumann. Washington, DC, 2009. Paperback. 79 + xv Pages.

Several years ago, Edward Naumann produced a Latin text of Martin Luther's Small Catechism because a pastor wanted to use one for students in his parochial school. Now, with students of his own, Naumann has republished the text with grammatical notes on each page and a Latin vocabulary list at the end. His aim is to make more readily available one of the versions of the Small Catechism used by many children in Reformation times when Latin was a spoken language. The educational objective of this book is "reactionary" (xiii):

It is an education that refuses to follow modern fashions and theories, and instead tries to reach back to the rigorous standards of a Golden Age long

forgotten. While I am under no illusions as to the possibilities for the actualization of such a dream . . . , my sympathies must abide with those who see the potential for brilliance in the minds of our youth and who wish for them the opportunity to rise above the mediocrity of their surroundings (xiii-xiv).

Thus, one either favors the Latin of the Small Catechism and the educational agenda presupposed or leaves well enough alone. Naumann has adopted this take-it-or-leave-it approach in the way he published the book: though professionally bound in durable paperback (the front cover sports an austere prie-dieu), there is apparently no publisher other than Naumann himself.

Gene Edward Veith's Preface (viii-xii) explains that a certain Johannes Sauermann actually Latinized Luther's *Small Catechism* in 1529 "by the advice and order of the author himself" (viii). The Latin text is based on the readings of two prior editions, first, the *Concordia Triglotta* (originally published by Concordia Publishing House, 1921) and second, *liber Concordiae* (Breitkopf and Haertel, Leipzig, 1846). The notes at the bottom of each page are designed for novice Latinists.

John G. Nordling

***The Righteousness of Faith According to Luther.* By Hans J. Iwand with an Introduction by Gregory A. Walter. Translated by Randi Lundell and edited by Virgil F. Thompson. Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2008. Paperback. 116 Pages. \$16.00.**

Hans Joachim Iwand (1899-1960) was a professor of theology at Göttingen and Bonn. A student of Rudolf Hermann (1887-1962), Iwand would chart his own path in Luther studies in reaction to Karl Holl and before him Albrecht Ritschl. Iwand's work on the *theologia crucis* would be important for his student Jürgen Moltmann's book, *The Crucified God*. Gregory Walter, whose Princeton doctoral work focused on Iwand's Christology as a response to Karl Holl, provides a lucid introduction to Iwand's life and work in the context of the Luther Renaissance.

The appearance of this book in English is long overdue. Prior to the appearance of these essays in *Lutheran Quarterly* and Jacob Corzine's translation of "The Freedom of the Christian and the Bondage of the Will" in *Logia*, little of Iwand had been rendered into English and he was largely unknown in North America, except, perhaps, from his influence on the thinking of Gerhard Forde. James Nestingen has spotted Iwand as a key source in Forde's theological development (see James Nestingen, "Examining Sources: Influences on Gerhard Forde's Theology," in *By Faith Alone: Essays in Honor of Gerhard O. Forde*, 10-21).

Hans Joachim Iwand's theological career was forged by an early and ongoing critical engagement with Barth, the necessity of confessional witness in the face of Hitler, and a profound grasp of the heart of Luther's theology. Like Luther, Iwand's theological work is geared toward the proclamation of the righteousness of faith found only in Christ Jesus. The fundamental and critical distinction for theology is thus the distinction between the law and the gospel. Here Iwand is radically and refreshingly Lutheran in a way that deconstructs moralisms of the left and the right so that Christ alone is preached as the end of the law for all who believe. *The Righteousness of Faith According to Luther* is more than just another historical study of a Reformation theme; it is a vigorous exercise in pastoral dogmatics. Iwand teases out the nuances in Luther's distinction of the law from the gospel with provocative insights on nearly every page. For example, Iwand asserts,

An evangelical church that views the teaching of the righteousness of faith as self-evident—but about which no one should trouble himself any further because other issues are more important—has in principle robbed itself of the central solution by which all other questions are illuminated. Such a church will become increasingly splintered and worn down. If we take the article of justification out of the center very soon we will not know why we are evangelical Christians or should remain so. As a result we will strive for the unity of the church and will sacrifice the purity of the gospel; we will have more confidence in church organization and church government and will promise more on the basis of the reform of Christian authority and church training than either can deliver. If we lose our center, we will court pietism and listen to other teachings and we will be in danger of being tolerant where we should be radical and radical where we should be tolerant (18).

Iwand's discussion of antinomianism is incisive: "With the question of Antinomianism, we are dealing with a problem at the inner core of Protestantism and one that has perhaps shaped contemporary Protestantism more than any other" (43). Noting that antinomians say almost exactly the same thing as Luther yet ultimately make the end of the law an ideology which reduces the gospel to lawlessness, Iwand demonstrates the necessity of the law's proclamation for the sake of the gospel. "Only angels don't need the law anymore" (45).

This is a volume not simply for Reformation scholars but for seminarians, pastors, and thoughtful laity. I look forward to using it in the classroom and beyond.

***Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Christ.* By Robert M. Bowman Jr. and J. Ed Komoszewski. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007. 392 Pages. Paperback. \$18.99.**

Recent years have seen a large number of studies of early Christology which have challenged the prevalent view that the belief in Christ's divinity is a later development under pagan influence. Bowman and Komoszewski have managed to bring the results of many of these studies together in this very readable volume. They show not only that the earliest Jewish Christians believed in Christ's divine identity, but that the entire New Testament in many and various ways gives witness to this belief. Readers may be surprised by the amount of evidence that can be adduced. This book will certainly assist pastors in teaching the Scriptures' witness to Christ's divinity in sermons and Bible classes. Endnotes and bibliography give references for further readings. Furthermore, it is a book to recommend to interested laypeople and those whose belief in this basic doctrine has been challenged, whether by the Jehovah's Witnesses, popular literature such as *The Da Vinci Code*, or skeptical literature at universities.

Daniel Johansson
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***God's War: A New History of the Crusades.* By Christopher Tyerman. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006. 1024 Pages. Paperback. \$22.95.**

Christopher Tyerman is a brilliant historian of the crusades, but he is prone to write history in a condescending and polemical manner. This is all too easy but all too inappropriate for scholarly historiography, particularly when it purports to remedy gross misunderstandings and subsequent misappropriation of allusions to the crusades in contemporary European and Middle Eastern socio-politics. Nevertheless, Tyerman's most recent work, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades*, is in many ways a *volte-face* to the indignant ranting and raving found, for example, in his 2004 book entitled *Fighting for Christendom*.

God's War is much more historical, too (whereas *Fighting for Christendom* was particularly conceptual). It begins with a disclosure: "this study is intended as a history, not a polemic, an account not a judgment, an exploration of an important episode of world history of enormous imaginative as well as intellectual fascination, not a confessional apologia or witness statement in some cosmic lawsuit." And Tyerman more than accomplishes this. First, he quickly moves into the medieval world by honing in on the geopolitical realities of Europe and the Mediterranean rim in the eleventh century. Then, he masterfully and elegantly weaves his way, providing numerous maps and illustrations, through every ideological, logistical, and military front of the crusades up until the early sixteenth century. After 900 pages, he then wraps

up his study with a short yet incisive assessment of how, from the standpoint of Europe's religious and political legacy, what was once an "edifice of papal pretensions" soon "looked increasingly awkward in the face of sixteenth-century scriptural theology" and was finally and totally discredited by the rise of international-law theory in the seventeenth century.

A book of this magnitude written by so eminent an author is hard to criticize. If there is one point worth a pedantic note, though, it would be Tyerman's take on jihad (which played a big part in the initial Muslim conquest of the Holy Land). He is correct in his description of it as a compulsory duty in Islam, but he is wrong when he asserts (on page 53) that from early on the greatest form of jihad was conceived of as an "internal struggle to achieve personal unity." The opposite is actually true. Jihad is and has always been defined—in classic Islamic thought—as a political and military struggle to advance the geopolitical domain of Islam; the so-called greater jihad (*al-jihād al-akbar*), routinely peddled by duplicitous Muslim theologians and uninformed western scholars and journalists as the original understanding of jihad, is an historical and theological innovation advocated by very few in historical Muslim thought. Despite this small, yet significant, oversight, *God's War* is highly recommended to those who have the time and stamina to read this massive tome.

Adam S. Francisco

***Image and Word in the Theology of John Calvin.* By Randall C. Zachman. Notre Dame, IN.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007. 548 Pages. Hardcover, \$55.00. Paperback, \$40.00.**

The traditional Reformed or Presbyterian view of worship, governed by what is sometimes called the "regulative principle," says that God requires "that we in nowise make any image of God, nor worship him in any other way than he has commanded in his Word" (Heidelberg Catechism, q. 96; cf. Westminster Confession of Faith 21.1; Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom* 3:343, 646). Classic Calvinist worship is an auditory experience, not a visual one.

But Randall Zachman, associate professor of Reformation studies at the University of Notre Dame, contends that this way of approaching worship (and religion in general) is not faithful to the theology of John Calvin. After an important introductory chapter, in which Zachman interacts with Calvin scholarship, the other chapters consist of diachronic presentations of Calvin's thought on the following issues: the universe as a living image of God, the image of God in humankind, providence, God's self-revelation in Scripture to Israel and the church, the sacraments, ceremonies, interpersonal communication, and signs of one's predestination to salvation.

Zachman's four objectives are, first, to show that for Calvin, God reveals Himself not only through the word but also through creation, not just through

proclamation, but also through manifestation. This move, being explicitly against Barth and Bultmann, is motivated by ecological concerns. Second, he aims to foster theological aesthetics and liturgical renewal among Reformed and Presbyterian congregations. Third, he aims to encourage gestures as vehicles of liturgical communication. Fourth, and most importantly, he aims to portray Calvin's theology as ecumenically open toward the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox traditions.

The diachronic arrangement of the chapters resolves many of the cognitive dissonances in Calvin's statements as a change over time, but other contradictions in Calvin's thought remain, most especially, according to Zachman, on the issue of God's invisibility and visibility (through "living images"), and on the issue of the sacraments. Zachman explains these as an intentional dialectic on Calvin's part.

Lutheran readers may find this book to be a helpful introduction to various themes in Calvin's thought with a few unexpected turns along the way—such as that Calvin taught the imposition of hands in ordination to be a sacrament and to bestow the Holy Spirit (315–318). Zachman's work will undoubtedly be important for evangelicals and Calvinists who seek to remain faithful to Calvin's theology and yet also move in ecumenical and liturgical directions.

Benjamin T.G. Mayes
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***The Pastoral Luther: Essays on Martin Luther's Practical Theology.* Edited by Timothy J. Wengert. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009. 380 Pages. Paperback. \$45.00.**

The Reformation had its origin in a crisis of pastoral care and Luther's reforming work would leave no aspect of ministerial practice, church life, catechesis, or piety untouched. In eighteen informative essays drawn from the work of an international array of recognized Luther scholars, the Reformer's evangelical understanding of issues ranging from preaching and Christian education, sacramental practice and consolation in the face of suffering, art and piety, are presented in view of challenges faced by twenty-first-century pastors. Most of the essays originally appeared in *Lutheran Quarterly*, and the book is a companion volume to the earlier *Lutheran Quarterly* book also edited by Timothy Wengert, *Harvesting Martin Luther's Reflections on Theology, Ethics, and the Church*, published in 2004.

Wengert provides an introductory essay observing that the pastoral aspect of Luther's work is often missed both in biographical studies and in surveys of his theology. Wengert rightly notes that Gerhard Ebeling's magisterial study, *Luthers Seelsorge: Theologie in der Vielfalt der Lebenssituationen an seinen Briefen*

dargestellt (1997), which deals with the Reformer's pastoral care from the perspective of his letters, is an exception to this trend. More recently it might be noted that Neil Leroux's *Martin Luther as Comforter: Writings on Death* (2007) and *Luther as Spiritual Advisor* (2007) bear evidence to a retrieval of the ministerial significance of Luther's work.

Wengert observes that for Luther, pastoral care

is by definition always a matter of distinguishing law and gospel (that is, terrifying the comfortable and comforting the terrified). Moreover, this distinguishing takes place under the shadow of the cross: the Word itself, the pastor who delivers it, and the ones who receive it are weak and live by grace alone. At the same time, pastoral acts arise for Luther out of God's gracious declaration justifying the ungodly, a Word received by faith alone. Furthermore, this declared righteousness must always stand over against the external righteousness of this world (justice) to which pastors also call their flocks. Thus, Luther conceived pastoral admonition and care (*Seelsorge*; literally, care of souls) as defining all aspects of pastoral ministry, rather than as a separate specialty of the pastor tied to therapy and personal well-being and separated from Word and sacrament. (4)

Echoing Gerhard Ebeling, Wengert sees Luther proceeding "out of his regular encounter with God's Word and human need in prayer" (6). Whether in public preaching and teaching, literary endeavors, correspondence, or personal conversation, Luther works as a pastor setting human life before God's law and gospel.

The essays in this book are divided into five categories: The Theological Heart of the Pastor; Preaching the Living Word; The Teaching Ministry; The Pastor and the People's Piety; and The Pastor in the World. It would exceed the scope of this brief review to attempt to summarize or engage each of the essays. Several essays, however, are worthy of note. Robert Kolb's essay on "Luther on the Theology of the Cross" is a fine, concise introduction to this theme as a "conceptual framework" (34) for Luther's confession of the work of God and what this means for human suffering in the world. The third section of the book, devoted to "The Teaching Ministry," is composed primarily of articles that treat the parts of the Catechism. Pastors and other catechists will find Wengert's essays on the Commandments and the Lord's Prayer and Charles Arand's article on the Creed rich resources for their own teaching of the Catechism.

Also included in this section are fine essays by Reinhard Schwarz on the Lord's Supper and Ronald Rittgers on private confession. Schwarz demonstrates how Luther articulates the testamentary character of the Lord's Supper, tracing his development of this theme from his exegesis of Galatians 3:15-18 in 1519 through his polemical writings of 1520-1521 and into his later sacramental writings. Further, Schwarz points out how Luther's confession of

the Lord's Supper as testament was echoed by Urbanus Rhegius and Johannes Bugenhagen. The significance of the Lord's Supper as testament would apply to Luther's rejection not only of the Roman teaching of sacrifice but also of Zwingli's view of the Supper as a communal remembrance of thanksgiving, drawing out appropriate implications for contemporary ecumenical discussions.

Drawn from material in his earlier book, *The Reformation of the Keys: Confession, Conscience, and Authority in the Sixteenth Century*, Rittgers examines Luther's critique of the medieval practice of confession and his reformation of the rite according to the gospel. Especially informative is Rittgers' account of the conflict between Luther and Osiander over the retention of general absolution and the subsequent ambiguity of the sacramental status of absolution in the Lutheran Confessions.

Dorethea Wendebourg provides an interesting treatment of "Luther on Monasticism," noting that Luther's negative appraisal of monasticism often fails to give attention to positive elements which he inherited from his time in the cloister. Here Wendebourg recalls Luther's knowledge of the Psalter and the way monastic prayer offices shaped morning and evening prayer in the Catechism. H.S. Wilson offers a solid introduction to Luther's assertion that preaching is God speaking. Christoph Weimer shows how Cranach used images to express Luther's teaching on justification. Robin Leaver examines Luther's use of music, while Eric Gritsch has a delightful chapter on Luther's humor, which could be both profoundly earthy and theological. Jane Strohl examines Luther's *Fourteen Consolations* as an example of literary pastoral care. Robert Rosin probes the Reformer's concept of education. James Estes treats Luther's relation to secular authority. Mickey Mattox explores Luther's writings on women, while Beth Kreitzer comments on Luther's views on Mary. Vitor Westhelle investigates Luther's use of language.

The Pastoral Luther: Essays on Martin Luther's Practical Theology will be an indispensable tool not only for Reformation scholars but also for pastoral theologians who seek to understand and anchor contemporary practices in the ancient yet ever-lively confession of God's grace articulated by the Wittenberg pastor. Luther's pastoral theology has been a neglected theme; this volume happily fills that void with first-rate scholarship that will serve both academy and church.

John T. Pless

***The Theology and Life of Robert David Preus.* Edited by Jennifer H. Maxfield and Bethany Preus. St. Louis: The Luther Academy, 2009. 142 Pages. Paperback.**

A collection of essays about Robert D. Preus, the late seminary president and a widely admired theologian, were given as lectures in 1999 to

commemorate the seventy-fifth year of his birth. Robert and his older brother J.A.O. ("Jack") had name recognition throughout American Lutheranism, especially in connection with events at the St. Louis seminary in the 1970s. A moving tribute by an ELCA Luther scholar Kenneth Hagen, now professor emeritus at the Jesuit Marquette University, has the first position in the collection in showing that Preus's theology of the cross was lived out in his life. Oliver Olson, former *Lutheran Quarterly* editor and now its president, places Preus in the tradition of Norwegian Lutheranism in America. Jobst Schone, formerly bishop of the Independent Lutheran Church of Germany, outlines Preus's contribution to confessional Lutheranism throughout the world. Reformed scholar Michael Horton lays out Preus's place in the resurgent Evangelical movement at the end of the twentieth century. Two essays are offered by sons Daniel and Rolf. Kurt E. Marquart, now deceased, shows how Preus understood church fellowship confessionally. Since these essays were written by those who knew him and in some cases worked with him, they provide details from his life that would be otherwise unknown. They will stir the memories of those who knew him and for others they will introduce a man who made a difference in our church's life. At the time of the lectures, less than four years had passed since his death. Now that the years have reached fifteen, the essays serve an even more important purpose. A similar volume is needed for his brother. Lest we forget.

David P. Scaer

***Martin Luther as Comforter: Writings on Death.* By Neil Leroux. Leiden: Brill, 2007. 336 Pages. Hardcover. \$147.00.**

From the somber opening line of his *Invocavit* sermon of 1522 where he asserts that the summons of death comes to all and no one can die for another we see that Luther is not reluctant to speak about death. In fact, Luther's reformatory work is done in the face of death both personally and theologically. His own close encounters with death are almost too numerous to list, including the deaths of his parents, two children, Wittenberg students, victims of the plague and persecution, and various colleagues. Death would leave its imprint in Luther's preaching, treatises, and correspondence, not simply as a factor in life's story but as a theological event. Death for Luther was both worked by God and an enemy defeated by the same God. Neil Leroux has carefully worked through key Luther texts on death, observing the Reformer's use of rhetorical devices to bring confidence to those preparing for death and consolation to those grieving the loss of loved ones.

While his aim is rhetorical analysis, Leroux is attentive to the theological themes that Luther is working out as he seeks to pastorally prepare people for death and bring comfort to those who mourn their dead. Leroux rightly observes that Luther understands death in light of God's judgment and grace, law and gospel. Humanity's problem is not simply mortality but sin

characterized as the failure to fear, love, and trust in God above all things. Hence, death brings judgment, which is the consummation of the law. It is only through the forgiveness of sins that human beings can be delivered from the terror of death. Unfortunately, Leroux makes only a slight reference to Luther's monumental treatment of death in his lecture on Psalm 90, which might well be Luther's most thoroughly worked out theological treatment of death and which is then given pastoral expression in Luther's consolatory letters, tracts, and sermons, which are treated in such a masterful fashion by Leroux.

Martin Luther as Comforter: Writings on Death makes an excellent companion to Theodore Tappert's anthology, *Luther: Letters of Spiritual Counsel*, as this volume contains many of the texts treated by Leroux. Leroux moves from Luther's writings designed to comfort people in affliction and prepare them for death ("Fourteen Consolations" and "Sermon on Preparing to Die," both of 1519), to martyrological literature (letters to those imprisoned and persecuted for the faith such as Lambert Thorn and Leonhard Kaiser and more open letters to cities or regions that had witnessed the martyrdom of young Lutherans such as Henrik van Zutphen), to funeral sermons (two sermons from 1532 preached on the occasion of Elector John's unexpected death), to consolatory letters written to bereaved parents, spouses, and siblings, to a tract on ethical behavior in the face of potential death ("On Whether One May Flee from a Plague"). Examining a good cross-section of Luther's pastoral and practical writings, Leroux is able to provide readers with an insightful study of Luther's use of language in preaching and soul care.

Leroux recognizes that Luther's Reformation left no dimension of life or death untouched. The older Catholic approaches to *ars moriendi* gave way to evangelically oriented sermons and tracts designed to focus the dying on the promises of the crucified and risen Christ. Leroux demonstrates how Luther uses verbal imagery to comfort the dying and the bereaved, such as a picture of "death as a short journey" in a letter to his dying father. While he does not work directly with Gerhard Ebeling's expression of *memorierbare Glaubenssätze*, or "memorizable faith sayings," in Luther's *Seelsorge*, Leroux does observe how Luther uses specific scriptural texts, formulaic expressions of Christian faith that the dying could learn by heart and repeat to themselves for comfort.

Martin Luther as Comforter: Writings on Death is thoroughly researched and carefully documented. The bibliography is extensive. Leroux draws on the work not only of Luther scholars and theologians but of social historians, grief therapists, contemporary pastoral theologians, and homileticsians. Leroux notes the impact of the death of his own teenage son as giving an existential impetus for the writing of this book. This is a book that will inform, edify, and strengthen Lutheran pastors in caring for the dying and comforting the bereaved. I highly recommend it for this purpose.

***The Historical Jesus: Five Views.* Edited by James K. Beilby and Paul Rhodes Eddy. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009. 312 Pages. Paperback. \$16.71.**

The historical quest for Jesus has been going for about three hundred years, but involved the LCMS first in the St. Louis seminary crisis in the 1970s. Ironically, with their firm commitment to biblical inspiration and inerrancy, Evangelicals have been fully engaged in the quest and have taken the lead in bringing five scholars from across the spectrum to face off against one another. Each contributor presents his own view to which the others respond. Zondervan used the same format with *Baptism and the Lord's Supper* and IVP with *Baptism*, but these volumes had no real surprises, since Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist, and Catholic differences have remained in place since the Reformation. Since the quest for the historical Jesus is not a denominational issue, *The Historical Jesus* is arguably the most intriguing of these kinds of studies. John Dominic Crossan's reputation as a radical critic was assured by his positing Jesus as a peasant philosopher, but he comes across as a conservative at the hands of the skeptic Robert B. Price. At the other end of the spectrum is Darrell L. Bock, who argues for the connection between the Christ of faith and the historical Jesus, a view that is attractive to James D.G. Dunn, who stands a bit to the left but not much. Bock defends the historical reliability of the Scriptures and Dunn promotes the near-inviolability of oral tradition. His argument that documents are more susceptible to alteration than traditions is a bit specious. Luke Timothy Johnson is suspicious of historical reconstructions of Jesus from the gospels, but still sees them as excellent witnesses to his humanity. This middle position seems the least tenable. Majority scholarship dates the epistles before the gospels, a bit of a problem for me, since Paul's churches would have had documents outlining doctrines and ethical exhortations, but no writings about Jesus. Dunn overcomes this problem by proposing that these early churches had an almost inviolable oral tradition about Jesus before they had copies of Paul's epistles. Left unexplained is why these churches made copies of Paul's writings but did not put oral gospel tradition down on papyrus. College students will most likely get their first introduction into the New Testament through books like those written by Bart D. Ehrman that cast doubts on the historical reliability of the New Testament's testimony to Jesus. Some students pass through this fire unscathed. Others do not. For those who want to see the options, *The Historical Jesus: Five Views* does the job. It is a debate on paper. With discussions over the Gospel of Judas out in the public square, the question of the place of Jesus in history can hardly be ignored.

Martin Luther's Catechisms: Forming the Faith. By Timothy J. Wengert. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009. 196 pages. Paperback. \$18.00.

Reformation scholar Timothy Wengert has produced a primer, sprightly written and conversational in style, for those who would teach the Catechism. Peppered with insights from Charles Arand, Gerhard Forde, James Nestingen, Oswald Bayer, Robert Kolb, and Albrecht Peters, Wengert has condensed the fruit of his considerable Reformation scholarship into an accessible format. His book is an unabashed apologetic for the use of the Small Catechism in contemporary North American Lutheranism. It brings new insights for seasoned catechists even as it whets the appetite for those who are preparing to teach it for the first time. Laced with remembrances from his own life with the Catechism as a child and later on as a parish pastor and seminary professor, Wengert opens the world of the Catechism with clarity and often with humor.

Martin Luther's Catechisms is not a "how-to-teach-the-Catechism" manual, nor is it a workbook that runs the risk of interposing yet another text between the Catechism and the catechumen. Instead, Wengert has provided a historically grounded overview of the Catechism's structure and contents. In the first chapter, Wengert sets Luther's catechisms—both Small and Large—in the context of Christendom's variegated catechetical traditions and squarely at the center of Luther's reforming work. The catechisms distill Luther's theology in a form that enables the teaching to be handed over to learners in a way that is memorable and that they in turn can pass on to others, particularly their children. Wengert tells the story of how Luther came to craft the catechisms in 1529, taking into account the controversy between Melanchthon and Agricola over the place of the law in the Christian life, the Saxon Visitation in 1528, which revealed the deplorable shape of doctrinal literacy in the evangelical congregations, and the pleas of others for a catechism for children and the laity. Wengert provides a cogent argument that the ordering of the six chief parts of the Catechism reflected the sequence of repentance, faith, and vocation over and against Agricola's faith, repentance, and good works. Agricola's sequence was, in fact, a return to the medieval ordering of Creed, Ten Commandments, and Lord's Prayer. Wengert is rightly critical of catechetical handbooks that change Luther's ordering, beginning with Baptism or perhaps the Creed. Luther knew what he was doing when he began with the Decalogue.

Wengert devotes a chapter to each of the six chief parts. He shows how Luther understands each of the commandments in light of the first commandment as God's law functions theologically to diagnose sin as unbelief. Wengert understands Luther's confession of the Apostles' Creed as a "reversed Trinity" as the Spirit brings to the Son and the Son gives us the knowledge of God's fatherly heart. A chapter on the Lord's Prayer demonstrates how Luther understood prayer as "rubbing God's promises into

His ears" when believers are confronted by their own neediness. The chapter on Baptism, reworked from an earlier essay, "Luther on Children: Baptism and the Fourth Commandment" (published in *Dialog* in 1998), is weighted with material from the Large Catechism on baptizing infants (a topic not made explicit in the Small Catechism), although Wengert does not neglect other baptismal themes. Wengert makes it clear that Luther did not see Baptism as one link in a sequence of initiation rites but as the sacrament of justification enveloping the believer's whole existence, brought to fulfillment only in the resurrection. Chapter 6 connects Absolution to Baptism as the practice of private confession was reclaimed by Luther in light of the reality of the Christian at the same time righteous and sinner. An added *bon mot* in this chapter is Wengert's lucid exposition of the *simul iustus et peccator* in the face of those who would claim that it is a later interpretation read back into Luther which ought to be jettisoned today for reasons of ecumenicity or ethics. The chapter on the Lord's Supper shows how Luther fought the battle for the Sacrament on two fronts, against both Rome and the Sacramentarians, accenting its promissory character. In many ways, the strongest chapter in this book is the final chapter, "The Catechism as a Vocational School," where Wengert deals with the most-neglected aspects of Luther's Catechism, the daily prayers and the table of duties.

The book concludes with a bibliography of significant books and articles on the catechisms published within the last century. Wengert's text is supplemented by Reformation-era catechetical woodcuts. *Martin Luther's Catechisms: Forming the Faith* would be a fine addition to congregational libraries. It could easily be adapted as a study text for an adult Bible class. Pastors and other catechists will find their teaching of the Catechism enriched by Wengert's insightful work.

John T. Pless

***Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary and Theological Survey.* By Mark Allan Powell. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009, Hardcover. 559 Pages.**

To make New Testament introductions more attractive to college and seminary students, they are more likely to come with photographs of biblical sites, ancient and modern paintings, and diagrams. This volume is no exception, and so the reader is led into a very easy-to-read account of how New Testament books came into existence. Powell is a first-class scholar and well equipped for this task, and not unexpectedly he marches right in the middle of the mainline of scholarly thought (e.g., the tiresome ideas that Matthew is dependent on Mark and the Q source and that the Pastoral Epistles are pseudepigraphal). Powell places himself with the majority scholarship on nearly every issue, but does include traditional views, so the reader knows what once the church thought. A more attractive introduction to the New

Testament can hardly be imagined, but for a change of scenery, someone should tackle the long-held views of scholars. Without Jesus' death and resurrection, Q does not have the minimum qualifications for a Christian manuscript, but somehow Matthew and Luke were so drawn to it as to include it in their Gospels. You explain. A glossary and index makes this book as useful as it is attractive, even if surprises are few and far between.

David P. Scaer

***The Convergent Church: Missional Worshipers in an Emerging Culture.* By Mark Leiderbach and Alvin L. Reid. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2009. 302 pages. Paperback. \$19.99.**

There is little doubt that the last fifty years have seen vast changes in Western culture, and the church is no stranger to the effects of those changes. As culture echoes with the shift from modernism to postmodernism, the church struggles to maintain missional relevancy on the one hand and to preserve its fundamental doctrines on the other. The rise of interdenominational and often anti-denominational movements in recent decades has laid the foundation for what many are calling the "Emerging Church."

As members of the Southern Baptist Convention, Leiderbach and Reid have a firm basis in the traditional institutional church, yet hear some very legitimate needs expressed in the work of many emerging-church leaders. In this volume they set out to paint a middle way between the emerging and the traditional churches.

The text is divided into three sections. The first of these is undoubtedly the most useful within the text, especially for those who have trouble wrapping words around the cultural transition occurring around us. The authors spend three chapters in this section tracing the rise of modernist thought through the works of Descartes to its apex in the writings of Kant. From that framework they then begin to expand on the philosophical transition which has resulted from Descartes' original theology of doubt and spills over into full-blown relativism in postmodernity. These are samples only, however, and a more serious scholar will find them most useful as a sampler to compose a reading list.

Having established the relativist nature of postmodern culture, the authors turn then to how the church might best address the needs of that culture while at the same time remaining what it has always been, the church. Unsurprisingly, given the reformed background of the authors, this conversation plays out in the form of how the postmodern Christian church goes about living a life of complete worship and submission to God. The bias is subtle, but echoes throughout the remainder of the text. The end goal of man for Leiderbach and Reid is not simply to be justified by Christ, but, having

been justified, to reveal the sovereignty of God by living out a life that worships Him in all things.

Having accepted this bias, however, the discerning reader will find much here of value. While we might differ in focus, we acknowledge substantively the Christian life of sanctification lived out as one of the ways in which the glory of God is revealed in our world. As such, then, the remaining chapters, which focus first on developing a theology of worship as a life of sanctification and then on what that life looks like lived out in our cultural context today, are of great value for those seeking to interact with a rapidly changing world.

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***Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke.* By C. Kevin Rowe. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006. 277 Pages. Paperback.**

The prominence of the title "Lord" (ὁ κύριος) in the Gospel of Luke has not gone unnoticed by scholars. Its significance and purpose within Luke, however, have not, in the opinion of C. Kevin Rowe, assistant professor of New Testament at Duke University Divinity School, received adequate exegetical attention. Thus, Rowe sets out to bring his readers up to speed on the importance of this title for Lukan exegesis and for the study of early Christology.

Rowe's argument, which he develops through multiple examples from Luke, is that the occurrences of the title ὁ κύριος and its vocative κύριε cannot be read in isolation from each other. That is to say, because they all occur in the same narrative, and because they are used of the same *character* within the narrative, there ought to be a unified approach to their interpretation. Essential to Luke's Christology is the purposeful ambiguity with which the title is used in the narrative, at times referring to the God of Israel, and at other times to Jesus, the Son of God.

Evidence of this ambiguity can be found already at the beginning of Luke, which for Rowe sets the tone for how subsequent uses of κύριος should be interpreted in the Gospel. In Luke 1:6, for example, speaking of Zechariah and Elizabeth, Luke says that they "were both righteous before God (τοῦ θεοῦ), walking blamelessly in all the commandments of the Lord (τοῦ κυρίου)," obviously referring to YHWH. A few verses later, in 1:9, Luke says that Zechariah entered the temple of the Lord (τὸν ναὸν τοῦ κυρίου), again a clear reference to the God of Israel (34-35). Luke's readers are, however, alerted early on that the God of Israel is not the only referent of κύριος. When Elizabeth greets Mary (1:43), she exclaims: "And why is this granted to me,

that the mother of my Lord (ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ κυρίου μου) come to me?" The same title is used both of God (YHWH) and of Jesus, implying a shared identity between the two. By introducing Jesus as κύριος from the very beginning of his life, indeed, from his mother's womb, Luke makes it clear that there was never a time at which Jesus was not κύριος.

Another example of this pattern is found in the quote from Isaiah 40:3 in Luke 3:4–6, "A voice crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord (LXX: κυρίου)." In its Old Testament context, Rowe asserts that this verse "clearly refers to YHWH" (71). Yet, since John the Baptist actually does prepare the way for Jesus, it also can and should be taken as a reference to Jesus. In preparing the way for Jesus, John the Baptist prepares the "way of the Lord." Once again, by applying a term originally referring to YHWH to Jesus, Luke demonstrates a shared identity between the God of Israel and Jesus. Throughout subsequent chapters, Rowe consistently employs the same hermeneutic, examining each occurrence of ὁ κύριος in light of its narrative context.

While showing evidence of a shared identity between Jesus and the God of Israel through the title κύριος, Rowe is careful to observe how Luke preserves the distinction between the Father and Son. In Luke 10:21, Jesus the "Lord" prays to his Father, saying: "I thank you Father, *Lord* (κύριε) of heaven and earth." The Son and the Father, while remaining distinct, share the same identity as κύριος. This exegetical truth is reflected in dogmatic form in the Athanasian Creed: "The Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, and the Holy Spirit is Lord, and yet there are not three Lords but one Lord." Summarizing this distinction of persons, Rowe writes: "To put it briefly: what it means for the Father to be κύριος of heaven and earth is fleshed out, or given content, in the sending of the κύριος Jesus his Son—told via Luke's διήγησις. There is a correlation of υἱός and πατήρ through the word κύριος such that the former reveals the latter, and, indeed, that the coming of the latter is embodied in the life of the former" (141–142).

Throughout his work, Rowe confidently dismisses the common reading of κύριε as "sir" or "milord" and insists on the inner-connectedness of the different uses of the term in Luke. While acknowledging that *outside of* the Lukan context the vocative κύριε has various meanings, including the more polite address, it is simply inadequate, argues Rowe, to read those meanings into Luke's narrative, especially given the christological significance of κύριος in other parts of Luke. For example, in Peter's address to Jesus in Luke 5:8, after witnessing the miraculous catch of fish, the Apostle says: "Depart from me κύριε for I am a sinful man!" For Rowe, this first occurrence of the vocative is "indisputably far more than 'sir'" (204). Rowe applies the same principle to the other occurrences of the vocative in Luke, arguing persuasively for a "religious" reading of κύριε. Whether or not the characters in Luke's story who

use the vocative to address Jesus always understood the deeper significance of it, the point remains that for Luke's readers, who have already encountered the word multiple times throughout the narrative, the christological implications would be unmistakable: for Luke, κύριε means Lord.

Suffice it to say that Rowe leaves no exegetical stone unturned. He looks at every occurrence of κύριος in Luke, engages past and present scholarship through extensive footnotes, offering fair criticism where it is due, and maintains his focus throughout the entire book. In many cases, Rowe shows the importance of variant readings of the Greek text, adeptly making use of the critical apparatus. Also helpful are several appendices, one of which includes a comprehensive list of occurrences of various forms of κύριος in Luke, its vocative case, and its authorial/editorial uses. From beginning to end, Rowe provides ample evidence in support of his thesis that in the Gospel of Luke, the title κύριος is developed in such a way as to bind the identity of Jesus to the identity of the God of Israel. Readers of this volume will not be disappointed.

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Treasures Old & New. Daily Readings From the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. By John C. Jeske. Edited by Glen L. Thompson. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Northwestern Publishing House, 2009. 384 + vi pages. Paperback.

Many pastors—strapped for time, but desirous of maintaining language skills honed in college and seminary—use for daily devotions Heinrich Bitzer's *Light on the Path* (and its successor *More Light on the Path*). Bitzer's resources contain a daily Old Testament selection in Hebrew and a New Testament selection in Greek, both with basic lexical notes for the reader. Jeske's *Treasures Old & New* adheres to Bitzer's format, but overcomes several weaknesses in Bitzer. Instead of featuring unusually difficult Old Testament passages that have little to do with the church year, *Treasures Old & New* displays Hebrew passages that are less difficult, intentionally adhere to the church year, and possess a gospel emphasis, so that the text selections speak not merely to "a language scholar but to a child of God" (iii). Jeske first identified 366 Old Testament passages, then matched these with appropriate New Testament passages, and finally wrote up the grammatical and lexical helps for each day of the year. An additional and especially welcome feature is a small daily excerpt from the *Book of Concord* that the editor, Glen L. Thompson, added in 2008, the year he was asked to help see the project through to completion. These latter passages, too, fit the overall themes of the Old and New Testament lections and allow pastors to maintain brief, yet daily appreciations of the Lutheran Confessions. The citations of the confessional material derive from

Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions – A Reader's Edition of the Book of Concord, published by Concordia Publishing House.

The volume represents the fruit of Prof. Jeske's many years of biblical study and teaching at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WELS). Let us hope that this "labor of love" (iii) may continue Jeske's legacy of teaching the Scriptures to seminary students and pastors for many years to come.

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