

# Concordia Theological Quarterly



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## Book Reviews

*Man and Woman, One in Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul's Letters.* By Philip B. Payne. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009. 511 pages. Softcover. \$29.99.

Gymnastics can be a truly enjoyable athletic competition to watch. The flexibility and power of such athletes is often breathtaking. Yet, while gymnastics may invite the interest of spectators, it does not often move them toward participation. The mere thought of turning around the high bar or leaping upon a balance beam is terrifying. Philip Payne's book, which considers the relationship between man and woman in Paul's letters, is truly clever and ingenious in the intellectual gymnastics it demonstrates. His work claims to be both an exegetical and a theological analysis of Paul; yet, his offering is certainly heavy on the exegetical aspect. In this regard, Payne's exegesis offers much that is intriguing, insightful, and thought-provoking. Yet, the moves he makes, while interesting to observe, did not inspire this reader to a similar participation. The following are a few examples of my engagement with Payne's work

Payne's work is structured around those Pauline texts that relate most directly to the issue of women's roles in the church. Payne begins with Galatians 3:28 and 1 Corinthians 11:11–12. In these texts, Payne argues against any hierarchical interpretation of man's relation to woman. He emphasizes that Paul uses *kefalh*, in the sense of "source" rather than "authoritative head." This reader certainly resonated with much of Payne's argument; however, Payne's conclusion seemed to go beyond Paul when he maintains that man is "merely the instrumental source" of the woman (197). As "instrumental source," man bears an essential equality with the woman. Indeed, Payne interprets 1 Corinthians 11:11 to mean that woman is source of the man in the same way that man is the source of the woman. Yet, Paul never speaks of the woman as *kefalh*, of the man. Man is not just the instrumental source; he is the ontological source out of whom God forms the woman.

Thus, while this reader agrees with Payne that, for Paul, man and woman are essentially equal and interdependent; nevertheless, they are not interchangeable. *Kefalh*, does not merely establish an essential unity, but also expresses a hypostatic distinctiveness. While both the man and the woman are equally essential to the procreative relationship, they are not interchangeable. The man is the source of procreative life in an ontologically different way than the woman. For Paul, this relation is connected to the Father's relationship to the Son (1 Cor 11:3). While the Father and the Son are equally divine on the level of essence, they are not interchangeable on the level of *hypostasis* or person. The Son is God in a different way than the Father is God. Hypostatically,

the Father is and will always be the source of the Son through the mystery of begetting. Thus, the Father never becomes Son nor does the Son interchange with the Father as was suggested by the second- and third-century Modalists. In the same way, while equally human on the level of essence, the man and the woman are absolutely distinct *hypostases*; the man cannot be mother nor can the woman be father. In such a relation, the office of the ministry finds its identity. In his efforts to repudiate the view of Arius that man and woman relate in a hierarchy of will or power, Payne tends toward the modalist error that the essential equality of the man and the woman implies functional interchangeability.

Payne continues with a discussion of 1 Corinthians 14:34–35. His argument is passionate but somewhat tedious, including a fourteen-page section analyzing textual marks in codex Vaticanus. His analysis even includes a comparison between apricot-colored distigmai and those of the chocolate brown variety. Yet, such detail is necessary to support his argument that 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 is a foreign interpolation. The strongest evidence that these verses are alien to Paul's original text would be their actual omission from early manuscripts. The other two comparable interpolations mentioned by Payne are John 7:53ff and Mark 16:9ff. Yet, while both of these texts are missing from early manuscripts, Payne cannot show the same for 1 Corinthians 14:34–35. Thus, Payne must emphasize the evidence he has, and he certainly makes the most of it.

After considering Payne's argument, this reader was certainly ready to admit that the textual questions surrounding 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 are intriguing and the answers unclear. Yet, Payne seems overzealous; the weakness in his argument is that, while Payne argues the serious nature of the textual difficulties against his opponents, his own solution seems too self-assured. For instance, on the one hand, Payne chastises his opponents for suggesting "that Western scribes had the audacity to change the order of Paul's argument" (231). Here Payne emphasizes the faithfulness of the scribes to reject any explanation for the fact that these verses (1 Cor 14:34–35) appear in two different positions. Some manuscripts place these verses after 14:33 and others place them after 14:40. Yet, while the faithfulness of the scribes works for Payne against his opponents, his own solution accuses an early scribe of a male chauvinism that compels him to insert a foreign thought into Paul's letter. Thus, Payne writes, "It is not at all surprising that a scribe copying 1 Cor 14 would want to clarify the text . . . Male chauvinist editorial patterns evident in the Western text demonstrate that these attitudes pervaded the church as well as society in general" (264). For Payne, when it comes to explaining the textual issues surrounding 1 Corinthians 14:34–35, a chauvinist conspiracy is easier to believe than scribal error.

Finally, Payne's argument concerning 1 Timothy 2:12, like his consideration of 1 Corinthians 14, is thorough to the point of exhaustion. His con-

clusion is that Paul's words forbidding women to teach does not represent a universal prohibition. Payne's interpretation demands that "women (*gunaiki*)" must be understood in a qualified sense. Thus, Paul does not mean women in a universal way, but those particular women who are troubling the Ephesian church with false doctrine. Yet, Payne's argument is precisely the kind of proposal he rejects in his discussion of 1 Corinthians 14. In his analysis of 1 Corinthians 14, Payne argues against any interpretation that reads Paul's command about women's silence in "some qualified sense" (219). For Payne, the obvious meaning of "silence" is a universal, unqualified silence. It is for this reason that he rejects these verses as authentic to Paul, originating instead through scribal chauvinism. However, this obvious sense does not prevail in Payne's interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:12, even though Paul himself roots his own command in the relationship between Adam and Eve established by God in Genesis 2.

Payne's analysis on Paul's argument is rich in exegetical and historical detail; abundant insights can be gleaned from the pages of this monograph. However, the limited scope of this work seems to be a weakness. Payne's emphasis on the specificity of these texts may blind him to the catholicity of Paul's letters. Payne seems to forget the most fundamental of presuppositions, namely, that Paul writes as an apostle. Paul sees himself as a member of a theological community. For Paul, this apostolic college has its ontological root in the narrative of Jesus. Thus, Paul does not intend his letters to be read as independent opinions, but as the authoritative traditions that originate in the apostolic preaching of Christ. Thus, the roles of man and woman must be interpreted from within the narrative of Christ's incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension. The exclusion of woman from the apostolic office does not have its root in a chauvinist scribe, but in the person of Jesus and his sending of the twelve. One must either engage Paul within the framework of Jesus' evangelical narrative or launch into the terrifying realm of gymnastics.

James G. Bushur

***Perspectives on the Sabbath: 4 Views.* By Charles Arand, Craig L. Blomberg, Skip MacCarty, Joseph A. Pipa. Edited by Christopher John Donato. Nashville: B&H Academic Press, 2011. 420 pages. Softcover. \$24.99.**

*Perspectives on the Sabbath* is the tenth book of a very interesting series. The idea is simple: take up a theological topic, in this case, the Sabbath, and then hear what the representatives of various Christian traditions have to say about it. Each author offers up an essay to which the other three essayists respond, after which the original essayist is afforded an opportunity to respond to the responders. There are a number of reasons why the format has been successful. First, the reader can learn what a person believes by actually reading what he has to say. Second, the tone of the series is irenic, and the debate, while

vigorous, is not heated. What results is a discussion that is lively, but without acrimony. Third, though—and this is what is especially intriguing—is that it affords a window into the way people think about larger theological and biblical issues. Sometimes, it is the discussion of smaller, seemingly peripheral issues that offers a better window into a person's worldview.

Skip MacCarty, who represents the Adventist tradition, clearly has much at stake and knows the issue very well. From his work we learn that Adventists take the Scriptures seriously and see that the Genesis account tells us something about our God as creator and who we are as a people. In a day when same-sex marriage is promoted and the understanding of man and woman is debated, this is refreshing. And indeed, one learns rightly from MacCarty the various ways in which the Sabbath functioned to the benefit of God's people, promoting worship, as well as rest and delight in God. If there is any glaring weakness to MacCarty's approach it is that the Sabbath day rest does not find its completion in Christ. Thus, when McCarty concludes that "The Sabbath Provides Rest," he nowhere in that section mentions that it is precisely in Christ where that rest is found.

The next essay by Joseph Pipa, a Presbyterian who holds to the Christian Sabbath view, is also illuminating. Many of his arguments are very similar to those of MacCarty, with the result that he tends to view the debate as an accounting error, as if the Seventh-Day Adventists had not taken into account the new data that demonstrates that Christians in fact had made Sunday their new Sabbath. If anything, Pipa emphasizes the law of the Sabbath more than MacCarty, speaking of it as a "Creation Ordinance" (119) which has a strong "Moral Ground" (123). Pipa shows that whatever one thinks of the Sabbath law, the New Testament does give evidence that Christians did gather for worship regularly on the Lord's Day, that is, Sunday. If a pastor lived in an area where the Adventists thrived, Pipa's review of the New Testament and early church evidence would be useful.

The final two essays are written by Charles Arand, a Lutheran, and Craig Blomberg, an evangelical with Lutheran roots. What is striking is that both Arand and Blomberg emphasize the role of Christ, who is the Sabbath. Arand's essay, "Luther's Radical Reading of the Sabbath Commandment," emphasizes Luther's "radically Christological hermeneutic." This is, of course, delightful to Lutheran ears. If there is anything in the essay that should urge caution, though, it is how little time Arand spends in the biblical text. The other three authors explore the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, hitting on key passages. Arand, instead, spends much of his essay quoting from Luther and explaining the reformer's position. Thus, we are told in great detail how Luther understood the Ten Commandments. This fact is noted by all his respondents, who criticize Arand for not appealing vigorously enough to Scripture. Arand responds by saying that he is simply laying his cards on the table, showing more broadly how Lutherans approach the issue. Arand's essay does include many

points of interest, including Luther's emphasis on hearing the word of God, which is the essence of the Sabbath command. He also speaks about the Ten Commandments as a way by which we can "embrace the creaturely." Thus, Arand notes that the Ten Commandments are not arbitrarily given, but are "woven into the very fabric of creation and written into the heart" (223). Arand notes that it was Luther's genius to embrace the God of creation and to move "away from a Neoplatonic way of life in which the spiritual was deemed to be of greater importance than the material" (222). As evidence of this, he notes that while in the 1520s Luther referred to daily bread in a spiritual or eucharistic sense, after 1529 he never did so again, instead emphasizing the physical gifts of creation given to us by God. I wonder though whether Arand's critique is helpful, as if the Eucharist were a spiritual as opposed to a physical gift. Similarly, Arand's understanding of the Ten Commandments seems to speak of the creaturely, practical aspects of the Ten Commandments, as if that precluded a spiritual dimension.

Finally, Craig Blomberg offers his essay, which among the four has to rate the highest in being both biblical and Christological. In many ways, his essay complements and compliments Arand's work, strengthening Arand's position with the biblical evidence. Bloomberg shows how the Sabbath is clearly fulfilled in Christ, who is our Sabbath rest, but also speaks about creative and practical ways in which we might incorporate little Sabbaths into our life that might accomplish the goal of resting in the Lord and hearing his word.

In summary, this book, representative of much of the series, is well worth the investment. In fact, it might be a good template for ecumenical meetings and discussions with others in our communities. In this way we can both learn from others as they truly are and are able also to offer a witness to that which we ourselves believe.

Peter J. Scaer

***Discovering Intelligent Design: A Journey into the Scientific Evidence* by Gary Kemper, Hallie Kemper, and Casey Luskin. Discovery Institute Press, Seattle, WA, 2013. 285 pages. Softcover. \$34.99.**

Science textbooks explain the origin of the universe and living things typically in terms of Darwin's theory of evolution. Materialists teach that the universe somehow came into existence, followed by the formation of the first living cell, which then produced all living things by mutations and the survival of the fittest. However, in recent years a new theory has emerged. It is called Intelligent Design. It uses recent research results to prove that living things are far too complicated to have arisen by chance. Rather, the scientific evidence points to a design. That means there must be a designer.

Defenders of Intelligent Design theory say that it is not a religion. It does not seek to identify the designer. But evolutionists are furious. Recently, the President of Ball State University (Muncie, Indiana) censored what the university's science instructors may say, ordering them not to discuss the evidence for Intelligent Design in science classes. The claim is that it is a religion and therefore has no place in public institutions.

*Discovering Intelligent Design* is a unique text in that it is designed for middle-school students and adults who are not familiar with the science underlying the theory. Each chapter closes with discussion questions. DVDs that coordinate with the book are also available.

The book begins with a discussion of theories regarding the universe. There is evidence that the universe had a beginning. It is finite in size and age. It originated with a single powerful expansion event called the Big Bang, and appears to still be expanding. The authors point out that our friendly earth is no accident. Our sun is in a good place. We are just the right distance from the sun. Any closer and it would be too hot for life; any farther away and it would be too cold. Our earth has a rich supply of heavy elements as iron and copper. Other planets are largely gases. We have just the right balance of oxygen, nitrogen, and carbon for living things to exist. We live on privileged planet. All this points to design, not just good luck.

A basic problem for any theory of evolution concerns how life first appeared. In Darwin's day, biologists regarded a living cell as just a blob. They supposed that life came spontaneously from non-living matter. Today, however, the problem of the origin of the first living cell is a major problem. We now know that every cell is a complex chemical factory. Amino acids, sugars, fats, proteins, DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid), RNA (Ribonucleic Acid), molecular machines that move chemicals about in the cell, and others all combine to make the cell function. A simple cell is said to contain bits of necessary information comparable to a hundred million pages of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. To say that this complicated self-operating factory came into existence by evolutionary chance is to expose the utter weakness of Darwinian evolution.

The authors also show that the fossil record does not provide proof of evolution. Studies of the fossil record show that new species typically appear without similar precursors. Darwinism cannot explain the fossil record of the Cambrian period, dated at 530 million years ago. During this era an explosion occurred. The fossils record shows that nearly all the major animal phyla, including many diverse body plans, suddenly appeared. This is contrary to the slow, gradual development that Darwin's theory calls for. The abrupt appearance of new fully formed body plans in the fossil record is best explained by intelligent design.



*Discovering Intelligent Design* provides many examples from nature that evolution by slow gradual changes cannot explain. For example, evolutionary theory teaches that birds descended from reptiles. But here too there are serious problems. For example, reptile hearts have three chambers; bird hearts have four. Evolving a four chamber heart would require a rerouting of blood flow through the system. Again design appears to be the better answer.

The authors have a section answering the critics of Intelligent Design. They also state that there is no problem with the concept that mutations may produce changes within a species. This is called "micro-evolution." The difficulties begin when evolutionists attempt to prove "macro-evolution," the development of new species, genera, families, and phyla. Here Intelligent Design is the better answer.

The closing section of the books contains many treasures for those seeking to study more. These include a list of nine web sites, seven DVDs, and thirty books.

*Discovering Intelligent Design* is truly a remarkable book, one of a kind!

In closing, it is well to note once again that the Christian knows who the great cosmic Designer is. Hebrews 11:3 states, "By faith we understand that the world was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear." Other references to the Creator are found throughout Scripture. Psalm 94:9 asks "He who planted the ear, does he not hear, He who formed the eye, does he not see?"

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***Ezekiel, Daniel.* Edited by Kenneth Stevenson and Michael Gleru. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Old Testament vol. XIII. Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2008. 380 pages. Hardcover. \$40.00.**

The Ancient Christian Commentary series styles itself a "Christian Talmud" that attempts to collect in one place the comments of the church fathers on each text of scripture. The stated purpose of the series is to give pastors, students, and laity easy access to the way in which Christian preachers and teachers of the first seven centuries of the church engaged a pericope. The comments span from Clement of Rome to John of Damascus and include such teachers as the Venerable Bede. The editors have supplied very helpful introductions for each book, in which they give overviews of the message of the particular prophet or apostle, followed by the main patristic interpreters who have substantial comments or homilies on the text. An interesting insight offered herein is that much of the Christian commentary on Daniel is shaped as an apologetic against the Jewish demotion of Daniel from prophet (note the location of his book in the LXX and in the Dead Sea Scrolls) to writing (where

he now resides in the MT). Theodoret of Cyrus (c. 393–466) specifically challenges this canonical movement in the preface to his commentary.

The formatting is very helpful for quick reference, with the biblical text beginning each section, followed by a brief overview/summary of the fathers' comments. This overview is followed by longer excerpts that are headed by what the editor understands as the key point, so that one can quickly jump from the overview to the specific comment.

As a student I have found this commentary invaluable. I would recommend it to anyone who is interested in how these texts have been used and interpreted by the church. Yet this volume is not without weaknesses, the most frustrating of which is Stevenson's propensity to offer only very short quotations from Origen and Jerome, whose commentaries and homilies still remain largely intact. For example, twenty-two of thirty comments on Ezekiel 16:1–14 are of two sentences or less. Significantly, Stevenson completely omits Origen's wrestling with the suffering of God contained in his sixth homily on Ezekiel. The overall effect is that, at least for this pericope, one is not given the opportunity for an authentic encounter with one of the chief commenters on this text. Fortunately, Origen's homilies on Ezekiel are now in English in the Ancient Christian Writers series.

Yet, in spite of this weakness, the Ancient Christian Commentary on Ezekiel and Daniel remains a valuable tool and serves as a great beginning for further study, especially by indicating who has commented on this text. One is then easily able to access the context through sources cited in the footnotes.

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***Isaiah 40–55.* By R. Reed Lessing. Concordia Commentary Series. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2011. 737 pages. Hardback. \$49.99.**

In Martin Luther's preface to his *Lectures on Isaiah*, he insists that "two things" are necessary to explain the prophet: "The first is a knowledge of grammar, and this may be regarded as having the greatest weight. The second is more necessary, namely, a knowledge of the historical background, not only as an understanding of the events themselves as expressed in letters and syllables but as at the same time embracing rhetoric and dialectic, so that the figures of speech and the circumstances may be carefully heeded. Therefore, having command of the grammar in the first place, you must quickly move on to the histories, namely, what those kings under whom Isaiah prophesied did; and these matters must be carefully examined and thoroughly studied." (See "Preface to the Prophet Isaiah" in AE 16:3.)

Unfortunately, the deconstructive tedium of the last century's examination leaves today's student of Isaiah in poverty, straining under the weight of grammatical arbitrage that bankrupts any attempt to gain the more necessary knowledge of the prophet's histories, nearly all of which have been exiled to the realm of poetic license and redaction.

But how beautiful upon the mountains of solid exegesis and faithful scholarship are the feet of him who brings good news and publishes salvation. R. Reed Lessing (Professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, when this commentary was written and now once again a parish pastor) prepares the way for precisely that with his volume on Isaiah 40–55. Promising “to pay careful attention to the chapters’ literary, historical, and canonical contexts,” Lessing seeks “to equip God’s servants for the great task of preaching and teaching Isaiah 40–55 in ways that are relevant, meaningful, and applicable to life in the twenty-first century” (4, 11–12). The equipping begins with a ninety-nine page introduction that proves to be worth the effort.

After a few comments on his method, one that focuses on the gospel in Isaiah finding fulfillment in the Suffering Servant who hung dead upon a tree, while also pointing toward the eschatological consummation of Isaiah’s promise, Lessing unapologetically announces his conviction of a single author, Isaiah ben Amoz, that rests in no small part upon the book’s own superscription and bolsters the arguments for Isaiah’s literary unity and historical honesty. Though an exhaustive treatment of the subject is not provided (and, I think, ought not be expected of a commentary that modestly acknowledges its penultimate place both in the church’s work and interpretive task), Lessing does offer a brief overview of the scholarship surrounding Isaianic authorship and then continues with a quick but informative survey through the history of Isaiah studies.

Consistent with Luther’s advice, Lessing’s introduction moves “quickly on to the histories,” providing a wonderfully written biography of Israel through exile that enlightens his readers with insights into Babylonian beliefs, policies, and tactics and leads into the theology of Isaiah that describes Israel’s Yahweh as unique among the gods of the nations. Not only is Yahweh personally active in time and space, depicted with human imagery, but he is shown also to be affected by his creation, even to the point of suffering. To that end, Lessing’s commentary on the Servant Songs clearly and convincingly identifies two servants, the unfaithful servant who is Israel and the Suffering Servant who is Jesus Christ alone.

The textual notes preceding the commentary sections are equally helpful, demonstrating that Lessing’s interpretive remarks flow from a “command of the grammar in the first place.” Each verse is thoroughly analyzed and explained in a way that takes full advantage of the text and its grammar while remaining accessible to those whose Hebrew language skills are either non-existent or quickly heading in that direction. In fact, I was pleasantly surprised

to find in Lessing's notes what amounts to an inductive review of grammar and syntax, neither tiring for an intermediate student of Biblical Hebrew nor overwhelming for a novice.

Throughout, Lessing's refreshing confession of the divine inspiration of the text keeps his reader in the posture of receiving the prophet's gifts in a way that countless other Isaiah commentaries do not. At least for me, this characteristic of Lessing's book makes it all the more salutary as a resource for Bible class and sermon preparation. Such preparation is further informed in the commentary sections written from a distinctively Lutheran perspective, often referring to Isaiah's place within the New Testament and always directing attention to the One in whom Yahweh reveals himself and his redeeming ways of rescue.

Finally, Lessing offers reflections after each commentary section that I can only think to describe as homiletical helps. Taking advantage of the opportunity this Concordia Commentary series provides, Lessing's eloquent and insightful reflections demonstrate the "for you" message of Isaiah, punctuating the devotional comments with the church's historic hymnody and liturgy and steadfastly pointing toward the font, altar, and pulpit where the Servant gives himself.

Any student of Scripture would benefit from Isaiah 40-55. Particularly, though, Lessing's commentary has the potential to make the feet of those given to preach and teach Isaiah more beautiful than they would have been without it. I suppose that means we servants of the word will only have ourselves to blame if what our feet bring stinks.

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***The Reformation: Faith & Flames.* By Andrew Atherstone. Oxford, England: Lion Hudson, 2011. 192 pages. Hardcover. \$24.95.**

This handsome volume would make a fine edition to anyone's coffee table. It is replete with photographs and pictures of many of the locations, people, and documents described and discussed. Yet behind this colorful and well-presented exterior, there is a well written history that makes this book far more than just any coffee-table book. Atherstone delivers a glimpse into the Reformation era from the Renaissance and humanism to the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.

*Faith & Flames* is an apt subtitle for this book as it brings into view a sometimes overlooked part of Reformation history, namely, the violence that ensued from the political shifts and upheavals that occurred due to the shifting

theological alliances of the various territories of Europe. Often macabre at points, Atherstone brings the reality of that era into stark contrast with our often idealized vision. Atherstone portrays for us, through his account of Reformation history, what the price of confessing Christ can truly be.

It would serve as a useful textbook for high school or college-aged students (defining terms and having historical vignettes throughout), but it would be illuminating to anyone who picks it up. While *Reformation: Faith & Flames* eventually focuses more on the Reformation in England, it is still a helpful book for Lutherans. Atherstone helps to put Luther in his proper European context, and, with the book's theme properly in view, Lutherans can see how blessed the Reformation in Germany was by not being as bloody as it could have been. Full of information, Atherstone's *Reformation: Faith & Flames* is a wonderful history. It would surprise anyone who discovers it with not only its pictures but also its content.

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***Reading the Apostolic Fathers: A Student's Introduction.* By Clayton N. Jefford. Second Edition. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2012. 196 pages. Softcover. \$29.99.**

Next to the documents of the New Testament itself, no collection of writings is more important for understanding the earliest church than those that of the "Apostolic Fathers." The term is relatively modern (1672). It is common habit to include under the "Apostolic Fathers" the following: the (first) letter of Clement of Rome, the seven letters of Ignatius of Antioch, the letter of Polycarp of Smyrna to the Philippians, the Martyrdom of Polycarp, the homily referred to as the second letter of Clement of Rome, the letter of Barnabas, the fragments of Papias of Hierapolis, the Shepherd of Hermas, the letter to Diognetus, and The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (the Didache). These are the documents covered by this *Introduction*. One may quibble with the category: Diognetus is an apology and belongs more with Quadratus and Justin Martyr; Second Clement is a homily; the Martyrdom of Polycarp is better classified along with other martyr texts. Nonetheless, more is better in an introduction for students and the general reader.

This is a most handy book and for those beginning their study of the Apostolic Fathers it is a book highly recommended. After a general introduction to the collection as a whole, ten chapters follow which introduce each of the writings. Each chapter is divided into four sections which address nine topics: manuscript tradition, literary form, authorship, date, setting, purpose, primary elements, special images, and relationship to Scripture. Included as well are brief summaries/outlines of the contents of each work and brief lists

of relevant secondary literature. Throughout the book Jefford includes “Figures” which provide other interesting information, such as a listing of the creedal passages in the Ignatian corpus or a listing of the use of a writing by later patristic authors.

The discussion is straightforward and uncomplicated, just right for those who are at the beginning of their study. Obviously, even an introduction—perhaps especially an introduction!—must interpret in the selection of topics, in its summaries of controverted topics, and in the positions it adopts. This is true also of this book. But overall the treatment is balanced and fair and reflects the work of a scholar who loves his subject matter enough to want it taught.

William C. Weinrich

***Offenbarung, Vernunft Und Religion.* By Jan Rohls. Ideengeschichte Des Christentums. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012. 1116 pages. € 59.00.**

Jan Rohls, ordained Reformed pastor, has served as professor of Systematic Theology at the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich since 1988. His publications are in German, but available is a translation of his work on *Reformed Confessions*, published by Westminster John Knox press in 1998. With his *History of the Ideas of Christianity*, he intends to place an enormous project in front of the dedicated reader. The ten volumes that are planned grow out of lectures that have been held at the Ludwig Maximilian University. The reader’s task is enormous on account not only of the number of volumes, but also of the length of each: Volume one, the subject of the second half of this review, is 1116 pages long. Volume two, which arrived in April 2013, weighs in at 1027 pages. The volumes planned are: 1) *Revelation, Reason, and Religion*; 2) *Scripture, Tradition, and Confession*; 3) *God, Trinity, and Spirit*; 4) *World, Creation, and Providence*, 5) *Man, the Image of God (Gottes Ebenbildlichkeit), and Sin*; 6) *Christ, Incarnation, and Reconciliation*; 7) *Rebirth, Grace, and Freedom*; 8) *Word, Sacrament, and Divine Service*; 9) *Office, Church, and State*; 10) *History, the Kingdom of God, and Eternal Life*. These translations are mine; the volumes are in German.

The introduction to the series at the beginning of the first volume is an informative survey of the post-enlightenment discipline *Dogmengeschichte*. Rohls sees himself in this tradition and intentionally links his work to that of Walther Köhler, a student of Ernst Troeltsch. Köhler’s work treated the history of dogma as the history of the Christian consciousness coming to full knowledge of itself. Hegel is more than just in the background. It is this approach that leads to Rohls’ title. The history of dogma is the history of the basic ideas of Christianity finding expression by Christian thinkers. In this way, Rohls distances himself from the history of how the accepted doctrines of the church (according to which confession is insignificant here) came to their expression. He rather contends that these accepted doctrines—dogmas—are

only one piece of the whole *History of the Ideas of Christianity*. Of course, this means that Rohls distances himself from the idea that theology has to do with expressing revealed biblical truths. It is made clear at the end of the volume—and of this review—that he regards this understanding of theology as pre-critical.

Volume one focuses constantly on the relationship between theology and philosophy, revelation and reason. The conclusion to the introduction is telling: early Christian thinkers followed Philo of Alexandria's example in the synthesis of Greek philosophy and biblical revelation, and this synthesis is the key to understanding the development of Christian theology. It seems also to be the case that those approaches in history that internalize this synthesis receive more attention than those that challenge it. The critique of Luther's well-known attack on reason, for example, is tempered and above reproach, but the take-away for this volume is only that Luther valued the positive relationship between reason and revelation in the natural knowledge of God.

The eight chapters show how quickly Rohls moves through 'earlier' church history in order to direct the bulk of his efforts at describing the modern era—a perhaps unavoidable approach. The chapters are 1) *Ancient Times / Early Church*, 2) *the Middle Ages*, 3) *Renaissance, Reformation, and the Age of Confessionalism*, 4) *the Enlightenment*, 5) *the Age of Idealism*, 6) *Pre-March and Post-March* (referring to the March revolution in German states in 1848; Rohls covers approximately the 1st two-thirds of the nineteenth century in this chapter), 7) *the Late 19th Century*, and 8) *the 20th Century*. On the heels of the final chapter is a concluding summary that reduces the content of the book down again to thirty intense pages. Rohls concludes not with a theologian, but with a Vittorio Hösle, a philosopher of religion. The conclusion is a sober reminder of the current state of the synthesis Rohls sees at the foundation of Christianity: "Such a permeation (of religious content with rational justification, JC), though, is so necessary in [Hösle's] eyes, because the substantiation of the truth of the Christian religion through references to the authority of scripture, tradition, and confession, has not been credible since the rise of historical criticism."

The sheer depth of Rohls' treatment of the history of theology impresses and assures the significance of the contribution, but it remains that Rohls' "ideas" encompass not only confessional dogmatics as biblical revelation, but with equal interest all manner of error. As a historical work, the volumes will be valuable while demanding a critical evaluation of this principle for sorting the historical material. In a dogmatic perspective, it will be interesting to see how Rohls navigates the connections between the "ideas" and their respective volumes.

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***The Messianic Hope: Is the Hebrew Bible Really Messianic?* By Michael Rydelnik. New American Commentary Studies in Bible & Theology. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2010. 224 pages. Softcover. \$19.99.**

In this book Michael Rydelnik advocates strongly for the position that the Hebrew Bible (i.e., the Christian Old Testament) is indeed messianic—that is, it contains predictions that were, or will be, fulfilled by Jesus Christ. This, of course, is not a new idea and has been denied for many years by those practicing the Historical Critical Method. What might be surprising to the readers of this journal, however, is that more and more evangelical scholars—known as usually having a more conservative stance toward Scripture—are moving away from seeing direct prophecies in the Hebrew Bible concerning the future Savior. Instead, they view these writings as presenting a story that finds its climax in Jesus, but recorded by authors who did not have an intentional messianic meaning. Rydelnik shows that this is the new reality by quoting leading, well-known representatives of evangelical scholarship who hold this viewpoint.

The author proceeds to summarize contemporary explanations as to how the Hebrew Bible is, or is not, messianic. He then examines text-critical evidence, arguing that in a number of places the messianic hope is clearer in the variant readings and that often these variants are the better readings. In other portions of the book, Rydelnik endeavors to show that the Hebrew Bible reads itself in a messianic fashion (later Old Testament writers understood passages written earlier to be messianic), and that Jesus and the apostles believed the Old Testament writers knew they were writing about the coming Deliverer. Rydelnik also discusses what he considers to be the (negative) influence of the great Jewish interpreter Rashi on Christian interpretation of the Hebrew Bible.

Rydelnik, in addition, reviews the variety of ways the New Testament uses the Old. He explains that while the New Testament largely understands the messianic hope in a direct (rectilinear) fashion, it does not exclusively do so. In this regard, there are four ways, he suggests, that the New Testament uses the Old: the direct, typical, applicational (deriving a principle from an Old Testament text and applying it to a New Testament situation; e.g., Mt 2:16-18), and summary (using an Old Testament verse as a summary of what is taught in a number of Old Testament passages; e.g., Mt 2:23) methods.

In the last portion of his book Rydelnik carries out a thorough study of one passage from each of the three divisions of the Hebrew Bible: Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 7:14, and Psalm 110. Examining evidence within the passage, in its immediate context, in the whole book in which the passage appears, and in the entire Old Testament, he interprets the three texts in a direct (rectilinear) manner.



I found Rydelnik's book to be helpful, one which gave me some new ideas, and one to which I will refer in the future. This is not to say that I have total agreement with all aspects of his writing. In a few places he stretches a bit too far his assumptions and conclusions, omits other possible explanations, or makes questionable assertions. In general, however, I appreciated the purpose and spirit of this book (written with appropriate fervor by a Jewish convert who was brought to faith in Christ as a teenager), and I commend Rydelnik for making a convincing case for the messianic nature of the Hebrew Bible.

Jeffrey H. Pulse

***Christian Social Teachings: A Reader in Christian Social Ethics from the Bible to the Present, Second Edition.* Edited by George Wolfgang Forell. Revised and updated by James M. Childs. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013. Paper. 533 pages. \$39.00.**

George Wolfgang Forell (1919–2011) was born in Breslau and immigrated to the United States in 1939. His long career included service as a Lutheran pastor, a distinguished professorship at the University of Iowa, and numerous publications in the areas of Reformation studies, doctrinal theology, and theological ethics. This present work is a revised and updated version of a book Forell edited in 1966. The revised version was executed by James M. Childs of Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus.

Beginning with "The Biblical Heritage" and concluding with "Trinitarian Theology and Social Ethics," the volume spans Christian history, including short readings from representative authors in each period with brief introductions that set the writer and texts within their historical context. The book is divided into eleven parts, each concluding with a basic bibliography for further reading.

Selections from the Early Church are fairly predictable: sections of the Epistle to Barnabas, Tertullian, Irenaeus, Origen, Chrysostom, and Augustine are included. One would have thought something of the *Didache's* "two ways" might have been used. Part 3, the Medieval Church, offers examples of monastic and mystical writers as well as a substantial sampling of Thomas' *Summa Theologica*. Under the heading of Reformation (Part 4), there are fourteen pages from three of Luther's writings as well as some material from Calvin's *Institutes*, a few bits of Anabaptists material, and two pieces from the Counter-Reformation Jesuit, Francisco De Suárez. Parts 5 and 6 include voices from Europe and North America in a broadly defined Post-Reformation era (Rationalism, Pietism, Puritanism, Wesleyan movement, Quakerism etc.).

The bulk of the volume (pages 196–522) covers the nineteenth century through the first decade of the current century. The majority of contemporary ethicists included in the anthology are from a mainline, liberal Protestant

perspective. Noticeably absent are any texts from Gilbert Meilaender, Oliver O'Donovan, Robert Benne, Richard John Neuhaus, Carl Henry, or Alasdair MacIntyre, even though a broad range of topics are included: ecological ethics, liberation, biomedical ethics, war/peace, feminist/womanist, and sexual ethics.

Like its predecessor, the second edition of *Christian Social Teaching* will no doubt find its use as a text in undergraduate or seminary classes in Christian ethics. A more balanced selection of sources in sections of the book which cover the twentieth and twenty-first centuries would have enhanced the book's usefulness in the classroom.

John T. Pless

***Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics.* Edited by Joel B. Green. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011. 889 pages. Hardcover. \$59.99.**

*Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics* is a massive and wide-ranging volume consisting of topical entries as well as three introductory essays by Allen Vehrey ("Ethics in Scripture"), Charles H. Cosgrove ("Scripture in Ethics: A History") and Bruce Birch ("Scripture in Ethics: Methodological Issues"). Vehrey's essay argues that, while biblical ethics assumes a unity on account of the fact that there is only one God, there is no singular biblical ethic, even as there is "no simple unitive understanding of that one God or that one God's will" (5). Variety within the canon leads to variegated and contextual approaches to ethics. Cosgrove provides an overview of how the Scriptures were used for ethics in each period of church history from the early church to twenty-first-century postmodernism. Birch's methodological treatment is largely condensed from the book he co-authored with Larry Rasmussen, *The Bible and Ethics in the Christian Life* (Augsburg, 1989). Birch sees the Scriptures not as normative canon for doctrine and life, but the entry point into a world where Christians can communally engage in moral deliberation. Thus, the reading of the Scriptures requires the use of critical skills and a community of interpretation. He concludes, "Clearly, the reading of Scriptures to Christian ethics is a rich and complex conversation that is both historical and global. We are invited into the conversation not for the discovery of fixed moral truths, but rather to experience the moral power of life lived in the presence of God and as part of God's people" (33). This hermeneutic appears to govern the majority of entries within the dictionary.

There are three types of entries: articles on the relationship of ethics and Scripture, articles on ethics within Scripture, and articles on particular classical and contemporary issues. Some entries serve as "orientation" articles, giving the reader a broad introduction or orientation to a particular issue, such as "Just-War Theory" by Gary Simpson (445-449). There are articles on each book of the Bible (or, in a few cases, multiple books, such as 1-2 Kings, 1-3 John)

that focus on ethical themes within the particular writing. Most often, the movement is from the biblical text to some sort of relevance for or application to specific moral issues. In other cases, the article begins with an issue such as abortion or pornography and seeks to retrieve biblical material that informs the ethic. There are entries that examine the use of the Bible for ethics in major Christian traditions such as Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Anabaptist, Eastern Orthodoxy, and others. Contemporary topics such as feminist ethics and health care ethics are also included. There is even an entry on artificial intelligence, but it lacks an effort to connect it with the Bible, save for a passing reference to the *imago Dei*.

There is an entry on "Liturgy and Ethics," but there is nothing on ethics and Baptism or the Lord's Supper. This seems strange in light of the fact that there are surely ethical dimensions to Baptism (Romans 6) and the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11) in the New Testament. Doctrinal topics such as atonement, salvation, creation, and eschatology are included. There is an article on sanctification, but nothing on justification. Antinomianism rates an article, but the author fails to mention the Reformation controversy that gave rise to the label. Lutherans will search in vain for a separate entry on "Two Kingdoms" or "Law and Gospel" in Christian ethics.

The authors are from a variety of denominational backgrounds, but mostly mainstream Protestants or Neo-Evangelicals. Most of the articles represent a "balanced" approach in that the authors attempt to point out competing approaches and describe them without undo prejudice. As is to be expected with a work involving so many different scholars, the quality of individual entries varies greatly.

Given the easy accessibility of ethical articles on the internet, especially on new and developing topics, one is led to wonder whether dictionaries such as this one have a future. Even though this work was just published in 2011, some of the articles are already dated.

John T. Pless

***Who Is Jesus? Disputed Questions and Answers.* By Carl E. Braaten. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmanns Company, 2011. 154 pages. Softcover. \$20.00.**

This relatively short book accomplishes a lot in 150 pages. Carl E. Braaten, one of the most influential American Lutheran theologians of the latter twentieth century, gives an insight-filled and useful overview of current issues in the doctrine of Christology and its related field of Gospel studies.

The first two chapters consider epistemological issues that have confronted Christian theology ever since the writings of Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694-1768) were published by Gotthold Lessing as the *Wolfenbüttel Fragments* (1774-1778). In these two chapters, Braaten revisits his doctoral

research on Martin Kähler, written under the supervision of Paul Tillich at Harvard University.

In the first chapter, Braaten also describes and evaluates three “Quests for the Historical Jesus.” Quest One was started by Reimarus and concluded by Albert Schweitzer. Quest Two was started by Rudolf Bultmann and continued by his disciples: Ernst Käsemann, Günther Bornkamm, Ernst Fuchs, Gerhard Ebeling, Hans Conzelmann, and others (15, n.27). Quest Three has as its most prominent practitioners the “Jesus Seminar,” John Dominic Crossan, Marcus Borg, and Robert Funk—on the “negative critics” side; and N. T. Wright, E. Sanders, James D. G. Dunn, Luke Timothy Johnson, Richard Bauckham, Pope Benedict XVI, and others—on the “positive critics” side (23, n.43).

In the chapters that follow, Braaten examines several Christological issues: the resurrection of Jesus, the incarnation of God in Jesus, the exclusive claims of the Gospel, the atonement and its various “theories,” the relation between Jesus and the early church, and Jesus’ view of politics. The book also includes “Questions for Discussion” at the end of each chapter, which will be helpful if the book is used in a group study.

In his conclusion, Braaten states that: “the answers in this book have been constructed unabashedly in sync with the classical creeds and dogmas of the church” (142). This is more carefully explained in the chapter on salvation, where Braaten states: “Orthodox Christianity has never promulgated a particular dogma on salvation, as it has on the Triune God and the person of Christ” (85). I disagree. The ecumenical creeds do proclaim a particular doctrine of salvation—called the “vicarious atonement.” Nevertheless, I am glad to see Braaten’s affirmation of the orthodox dogmas of the Trinity and Christology.

Orthodox Lutherans will find the chapter on the exclusive claims of the Gospel to be the most troublesome. Braaten affirms that there is no salvation outside of Christ and that Jesus is the only reconciling mediator between God and man (85). But then he states that “Christians have a good reason to hope that God will . . . find a way to accomplish his desire that all should be saved” (86), appealing to “Paul’s kind of universalism in Colossians and Ephesians” (86; see also 56).

My strongest criticism of the book is Braaten’s glib dismissal of the third quest “positive critics,” such as N.T. Wright. On the one hand, Braaten brilliantly explains that “we have the eyewitness testimonies in the canonical manuscripts, and if we do not meet the real Jesus there, we will not meet him at all” (25). But then he writes, “we must still ask about the relevance of even the most positive reconstructions of the ‘historical Jesus.’ The results of historical research are never certain, always a matter of higher or lower degrees of probability” (23). And so, like Calvin and Barth, Braaten retreats to the mystical safety net of the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum* (32–33).

Braaten's criticism of the Three Quests is the most useful part of this book for orthodox Lutherans. For neo-orthodox Lutherans, this book could become part of an advanced catechism for their doctrinal position.

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***Jesus in Trinitarian Perspective.* By Fred Sanders & Klaus Issler. Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2007. 244 pages. Softcover. \$24.99.**

We live in a contemporary context characterized by the growth of pagan spiritualities, the capitulation of mainline churches to postmodern social morality, and the retreat of traditional Christianity from the center of society. Such circumstances encourage a certain despair, and despair tempts one toward a moral and theological paralysis. Thus, the church seems consigned to a defensive posture as she suffers constant attacks against her theological and moral heart.

In the midst of a fierce battle, the good soldier seeks stable ground upon which to mount a proper defense. A good fortress begins with a solid foundation. The construction of persuasive arguments demands a return to the building blocks of vocabulary and grammar. In this regard, a new book, *Jesus in Trinitarian Perspective*, calls the church back to the fundamental pillars of her life. Indeed, it calls us to return once more to him who is the cornerstone, Jesus Christ, in whom the whole structure of the church and the whole of her theological and moral life are constituted.

We might expect such a call to christology to spring from Lutheran, Roman Catholic, or Orthodox circles. However, *Jesus in Trinitarian Perspective* is a collection of articles compiled from Protestant Evangelical authors who teach at Biola University, Erskine Theological Seminary, Dallas Theological Seminary, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. These authors have found it necessary and salutary to return to the trinitarian and Christological creeds of the ancient church. By returning to patristic foundations, these authors have discovered the stable ground from which to mount a solid defense. Their essays consistently call the Evangelical community to return to the theological grammar without which the church's confession simply cannot stand.

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of this book is the emphasis that is given to the second council of Constantinople (AD 553). The genius of this council is the intimate connection made between the church's Trinitarian grammar established through the battles of the fourth century and her Christological confession forged in the fifth century. The second council of Constantinople summarized the church's theological grammar in a simple

orthodox formula: "One of the Holy Trinity suffered for us." In this sentence, the church summed up her trinitarian, Christological, and soteriological vision. It is this fundamental formula that the authors of this volume recall for the church and promote as a solid foundation for renewed theological conversation.

While the return to the patristic tradition is worthy of praise, there are a couple of weaknesses. First, the father's theological grammar is considered in terms of modern psychological theory. The ancient understanding of "person (*hypostasis, persona*)" especially suffers from this association, being defined as "center of consciousness." Here theological personhood is equated with the fragmented individualism of our fallen existence. Second, the essays do not consider the ecclesial implications inherent in the ancient church's confession. It remains a challenge for Protestant theologians to confront the eucharistic reality that informs the whole patristic perspective.

In spite of these weaknesses, this book is a very positive sign on our modern theological landscape. Indeed, this return to the foundations of the catholic tradition is the stable ground upon which a solid fortress can again be constructed; it is a healthy and vibrant seed from which, it is hoped, a bountiful and joyful harvest may be produced.

James G. Bushur