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Book Reviews

***The Hebrew Gospel and the Development of the Synoptic Tradition.* By James R. Edwards. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2009. 402 pages. Softcover. \$36.00.**

Having four evangelical accounts of the life of Jesus and how they relate to one another has provided grist for the church's mill since the earliest records of the post-apostolic church. In this volume James R. Edwards claims to offer a new paradigm specifically for the resolution of the Synoptic problem. He specifically engages the portions of Luke's Gospel that have no corresponding material in Matthew and Mark.

Although he acknowledges the Hebrew thought world lying beneath the Greek surface of each Gospel, Edwards notes that the subtext becomes more visible in Luke's Gospel. Thus, his thesis is that the high concentration of Semitisms in "Special Luke"—those portions of Luke that are not shared in common with Matthew and/or Mark—can be accounted for on the assumption that they derive from the original Hebrew Gospel.

Edwards spends the first three chapters noting the many references to the existence of *The Gospel to the Hebrews* in early Christianity. The list of early church fathers who make reference to and quote from this Gospel are impressive—Papias, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius, John Chrysostom, Jerome, and the Venerable Bede, to name only some—with Jerome providing at least twenty-four examples. The evidence is compelling not only for the existence of this Gospel but also for its high regard in the early church.

Many of these early church fathers held that Matthew was the author of this Gospel written in the Hebrew language. Edwards does not hold to this opinion but does see it as the source of the non-Markan portions of Luke. Thus, the existence of *The Gospel to the Hebrews* and its use by Luke helps to solve, at least in part, the Synoptic problem.

Edwards' research is thorough and intriguing, especially to one who has not even considered the existence of a Hebrew Gospel. In fact, I confess that this aspect alone captured my attention more than the discussion of its use by Luke. Following such compelling evidence, the question is not so much "Was there a Hebrew Gospel?" but rather, "When was it written and by whom?" An earlier date may place Matthew as writer with sections of Luke relying upon it. However, a later date (after the Synoptic Gospels), may point to a Gospel translated from a Greek source, perhaps even a

heretical gospel such as *The Gospel of the Nazarenes* or *The Gospel of the Ebionites*.

One concern with Edwards' work is that he assumes Markan priority over against Matthean. He does not give good reasons for this other than noting it as the opinion of the majority of scholars today. While this may be the case, this assumption becomes very important in Edwards' decision-making process and should be supported more fully. He goes to great length to prove the non-existence of Q ("Adieu to 'Q'," as he titles one of his chapters) and would be well served by providing more justification for following a Markan priority.

The author has provided an excellent, well-written volume that I found to be intriguing and thought-provoking. Anyone interested in New Testament textual tradition and the Synoptic problem should read this book.

Jeffrey H. Pulse

***The Pastoral Epistles: First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus.* By Benjamin Fiore, S.J. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2007. 253 pages. Hardcover. \$39.95**

This volume by Benjamin Fiore is the twelfth in the *Sacra Pagina* series, of which Daniel J. Harrington was the editor. Fiore is a Jesuit Priest, as was Harrington. Harrington, the editor of the series, was Professor of New Testament and Chair of the Biblical Studies Department at Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, recognized as a leading modern scholar of the New Testament. Fiore is Pastor of St. Michael parish in Buffalo, New York. The book at hand was written when Fiore was President and Professor of Religious Studies at Campion College at the University of Regina, Saskatchewan, a Jesuit university college, where he taught for twenty-five years.

The Pastoral Epistles is a relatively short work, treating the three books in 197 pages. For each section of the biblical text Fiore provides his own translation, followed by a section containing careful isagogical and exegetical notes. In the notes, Greek and Hebrew words are transliterated. Fiore pays attention to the frequency and context of important words, providing biblical citations for their use both inside and outside of the Pastoral Epistles, as well as in other ancient Greek writings. After presenting notes on the text, Fiore provides his interpretation of the text and concludes each

section with a helpful bibliography. The indices provided at the end of the book are complete and useful.

A unique aspect of Fiore's treatment of the text is his impressive command of ancient and classical texts, including early Christian and patristic texts that he brings to bear on his analysis, translation, and interpretation. In the author's preface he attributes this treatment to his desire to "expand [his] interest in Latin and Greek literature and culture into the area of biblical studies" (3). The author's academic background "focused on the world of the Greco-Roman moralists and rhetoricians and on how the New Testament writings, particularly the Pauline correspondence, reflected these" (3).

Regarding the Pastoral Epistles, Fiore finds that "the three letters weave credal summaries and excerpts of other materials into the text. The explicit attention given to these, and the allusions to community officers and ecclesial procedures, suggest a level of organization and a history of Christian tradition that go beyond that evidenced by the other letters of Paul" (5).

As an example of his approach to the texts, the author details the development of a classical rhetorical device called a *chreia*, a "multipart exercise in the development of a theme," and identifies five basic components of the *chreia*. He then detects these hortatory elements in sections of the Pastoral Epistles and ties them to this classical method (1 Tim 1:3-20; 2 Tim 1:3-18; and 2 Tim 3:1-4:8) (16-17).

In keeping with the other *Sacra Pagina* titles, Fiore's treatment of the Pastoral Epistles is accomplished using critical methodology. As the editor explains in his preface, "The goal of *Sacra Pagina* is to provide sound critical analysis without any loss of sensitivity to religious meaning" (xi). Thus, Fiore regularly references "Q." The author accepts that there really was a man named Paul, but he dates the writing of the Pauline Epistles after Paul's death (21), proposing that the epistles were written by a member of the "Pauline community" (21). In a critical treatment of the Pastoral Epistles, the named recipients of the letters do not fare as well as Paul, the author allowing that both Timothy and Titus "might well be fictitious" (21). To "retain the aura of Pauline authorship created by the letter writer," however, Fiore treats the text as if it were actually written by Paul.

Thus, for Fiore, the Pastoral Epistles are writings of the Pauline community to model recipients, created as a vehicle for perpetuating the Pauline teachings and traditions: "This pseudonymous 'official' letter

presents the readers with two models: the addressee Timothy and the sender Paul" (34). This critical methodology allows Fiore to assert of the construction in Paul's opening greeting to Timothy—"from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord"—that "the title/name thus exalts Jesus to a level on a par with YHWH, though he is not entirely identified with YHWH" (33).

Similarly, in considering the "qualities of leadership candidates" as they are applied to the overseer/bishop in 1 Timothy 3:7, Fiore writes, "As is the case with other sayings, in the elaboration the author uses traditional material. No such saying has been found in secular Greek. Its origin with the author of the PE is unlikely . . ." (73). The author supports his position by citing the usage of specific Greek words that he finds to deviate from other New Testament books, including the epistles of Paul. In the same way, addressing the list of qualities necessary in elders in Titus 1:6, Fiore writes, "The list of qualifications closely resembles that for overseers at 1 Tim 3:2-4. The author is apparently using a church order source" (197).

The Lutheran reader who believes in the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture will find many of Fiore's interpretive conclusions unpalatable. Peter clearly identifies Paul's Epistles as Scripture in 2 Peter 3:16. One wonders, then, approaching the Pastoral Epistles as the assertions of the Pauline community and not as a divinely inspired text, how the author would treat the 2 Timothy 3:16 construction τὰ ἱερά γράμματα (the sacred writings), or the clear assertion in the following verse that "every scripture passage is divinely inspired" (Fiore's translation of *πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος*, 171).

For Fiore, *πᾶσα γραφή* refers only to the Old Testament Scriptures, which Timothy would have known from childhood (170), even though the context of 2 Timothy 3 and the theme of Timothy's charge to proclaim true doctrine against false teachers clearly points to New Testament Christian teaching. Recognizing this, the author holds that the Pastoral Epistles "maintain the Christian view that the Hebrew Scriptures, when read from a Christological perspective, provide saving wisdom. They offer the Christian an interpretation of the career and saving work of Jesus" (170).

For Fiore, critical dating would mean that at the time of Paul's writing 1 Timothy, Timothy would probably not have read or heard the Gospels according to Matthew or Luke, but that by the time of 2 Timothy, he would have read or heard Mark, or at least an early layer of "Q." This seems allowable under the "Two-Source Hypothesis" and its modern iterations. As assertions of the Pauline community to perpetuate Paul's traditions and

teachings, the Pastoral Epistles cannot be considered Scripture in the proper sense in Fiore's treatment. Much less possible is that Paul knew he was writing divinely inspired Scripture when he wrote Timothy and Titus since Fiore holds that the author was not Paul and that Timothy and Titus may not have existed.

Looking past the obvious deficiencies of a critical approach to Holy Scripture, there is much to be gleaned from Fiore's commentary. The original translation of the text that he provides is carefully rendered, and his notes on the translation are helpful. His structural analysis of the text and his far-reaching command of classical and ancient literature set his commentary apart.

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The Failure of Sex Education in the Church: Mistaken Identity, Compromised Purity. By Linda Bartlett. Iowa Falls, Iowa: Titus 2-4Life, 2014. 252 pages. Softcover. \$15.00.

"For many centuries there was no sex education, yet children were conceived and their parents enjoyed the process" (207).

What method of sex education is best for the church? Bartlett argues that sex education has failed because of its myopic view of sex and sexual difference. The focus on sexual intercourse and sexual desire stimulates attention and curiosity toward sexual relations rather than directing young people to the broader vision of marriage and family. To modify or even to reform contemporary accepted sex education falls short of the church's mission. Instead, sex education in the church ought to be thrown out and replaced with comprehensive education in purity, manhood and womanhood, and the family.

Bartlett's fundamental criticism is that the church has adopted the language and view of the world regarding sex and identity. Language such as "I'm inherently a sexual being" or "children are sexual from birth" reinforces the secular fascination with sexual activity, sexual desire, and sexual attraction. If a person is sexual from birth, sexual expression is a right that need not be limited to marriage, and giving expression to sexual desire is acceptable and to be encouraged (93). In contrast, the church needs to re-invigorate the biblical understanding of sexual activity as subordinate to marital and parental identities. To resist defining a person

by his or her sexuality recognizes that natural inclinations might be expressed in a sinful way and affirms the fallen nature of human beings. Sex has a particular context for expression (in marriage) and a particular purpose (marital unity). Any sex education properly occurs subordinately to instruction in purity, marriage, masculinity, femininity, and parenthood. These identities, not sexual desires and activity, are definitive for the baptized (25-31).

Bartlett points to the encroaching influences of Carl Rogers' non-directive psychotherapy, contemporary humanism's vision of overthrowing familial relationships, and Alfred Kinsey's research on sexual behavior as providing the ideal underpinnings for sex education. As the church embraced sex education, it unwittingly opened the door to these influences as well. Bartlett does not set this forth as a kind of widespread or organized conspiracy. Rather, she demonstrates how the gradual establishment of these influences in secular life also led to their implicit acceptance by the church through the church's acceptance and promotion of sex education.

Rogerian psychology encourages people to access their inclinations as a kind of self-consultation with the specific goal of learning to "trust their impulses" (7-8). This diminished the traditional Christian concern that a person not naturally follow base impulses but discipline himself according to Scripture in order to identify and work against untrained passions rooted in original sin. Likewise, Kinsey's research was a catalyst for changing views about sex in the United States, views that also seeped into the church. Relying heavily on the work of Judith Reisman, Bartlett argues that Kinsey's work introduced and made acceptable the notion that children are sexual from birth (37-38). This does not mean simply that a child is a boy or girl, but that children "have the capacity for sexual pleasure and response" (35). Such a view led to the conventional wisdom that such innate sexual capacity ought to be affirmed and explored.

Some may want to criticize Bartlett for focusing on Kinsey's research, which is nearly seventy years old and has long since been advanced, both by supporters and detractors. Some may also want to dismiss her for relying on Reisman, who alleged that Kinsey himself experimented on boys and infants and/or hired or trained others to do so. However deviant one finds Kinsey's own sexual behavior, the Kinsey Institute has effectively denied Reisman's allegations (<http://www.kinseyinstitute.org/about/cont-akchild.html>). Nevertheless, Reisman's argument connecting Kinsey to fundamental changes in the American perspective on sex remains intact.

However, to focus on these elements is to miss Bartlett's argument, which is not about any of Kinsey's particular findings, some of which have fared poorly, some well, in subsequent secular research. Rather, Bartlett demonstrates that Kinsey's influence fundamentally changed the American perspective on human identity with respect to sex. Prior to Kinsey, sexual desire was one of many elements of human nature, and it was subordinate to one's masculinity and femininity and, most importantly, to standards of human relationships such as marriage. Since Kinsey, sexual desire has been expanded to the broad concept of *sexuality*, which is now regarded as so fundamental to human identity that each person is defined in part by his or her sexual desire (33–44, 91–98, 125–135). Although the term *sexuality* long pre-dates Kinsey, its American popular appropriation as referring to sexual character, capacity for sexual pleasure, or sexual orientation developed only after Kinsey. It gave expression to the post-Kinseyan view of an identity with or orientation toward sexual activity (69–72). This is readily apparent in the contemporary phenomenon of identifying a person as heterosexual, homosexual, or the like.

In contrast to this contemporary perspective, human identity is not based or centered on sexuality. First Corinthians 7 teaches that marriage—and therefore sexual relations—is not required, and Matthew 22:30 states that, in the resurrection, people “neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.” These passages indicate that human identity does not depend on sexuality, that is, sexual expression or capacity. That human identity does not depend on sexuality does not deny that each person is either male or female. It means, though, that the capacity for sexual desire and the need for sexual expression are not inherent to human identity. In the resurrection there will be no more need for sexual expression nor will the opportunity for it be available. Those resurrected, however, will still surely be human beings.

In contrast, sex education makes one's identity about sex and implies or teaches that pleasure is the purpose of sex (26). Whether secular or Christian, sex education tends to attenuate shame and to encourage an openness to sex in general by framing all things sexual as positive, rather than to distinguish the context and relationship in which sexual activity is good and when it is to be restrained. The generally open and positive presentation of sexual activity (in contrast to sex within marriage) tends to promote acceptance of all sexual behavior, even that which is immoral or harmful. Even among Christians, so-called safe sex becomes the last resort alternative for those who cannot control themselves. This alternative is presented as one that can be managed simply by a prophylactic without

giving due attention to emotional and relational injury. Although Christian sexual educators do not intentionally promote all of these, their adoption of sexual education methods and topics makes it difficult, in practice, to decouple completely these elements from one another (145–146).

Sex education typically introduces children to explicit language that desensitizes them to the embarrassment or shame that supports a more comprehensive purity. It undermines modesty (54, 59). Even abstinence-only sex education focuses on sex and how enjoyable it is. Although students are told to wait until marriage, education about sex has the effect of encouraging young people to think more about the pleasure of sex and, potentially, to lead them into temptation (139). Sex education with an abstinence emphasis can also imply to young people that any kind of sexual contact is acceptable, except coitus. So long as coitus is reserved for marriage, people may express their sexuality through other kinds of sexual contact (152–153).

The emphasis on technique may inhibit many married couples because they have come to view sex as performance aiming at pleasure, rather than a time of trusting intimacy. The focus is on reaching the greatest sexual stimulation, rather than union and intimacy, of which enjoyment is a fruit (208).

Bartlett emphasizes that none of this means that sex is dishonorable or shameful in itself. Rather, sexual—really, marital—relations, are so honorable that any corruption, degradation, or compromising of it is shameful. Sexual relations remain honorable and pure within marriage, and that is where they are to be practiced and, for the most part, discussed (159). In marriage, a husband and wife have the honorable freedom to explore, discuss, and express their sexuality in accordance with being made one flesh.

While *The Failure of Sex Education in the Church* is essentially a critique of sex education, Bartlett also discusses alternatives to sex education. Such alternatives shift the focus from sex to marriage. This helps young people to move away from an infatuation with sex and physical pleasure to the broader and deeper joys of marriage. It also helps to combat pressures to marry late, after establishing a career. Instead, young people learn that the benefits of marriage are greater than those of an education or career, and the joy and intimacy of a young couple maturing together as husband and wife is healthier than waiting to marry until one is independently established. Proper instruction in manhood and womanhood is concerned with helping young people “stand guard” against the flesh, to practice self-

control, and to understand comprehensively the place of sex in human life (98). Though not presented systematically, themes for alternative education, emphasizing purity, modesty, biblical manhood and womanhood, and marriage are treated in various places throughout the book (e.g., 99–110, 147–148, 179–186, 201–202, and 211–213). Bartlett also includes references for further study in these areas.

The Failure of Sex Education in the Church would be improved by a more organized presentation and the tempering of very occasional sensationalizing. Bartlett presents material by cyclical repetition, with each cycle further documenting and developing her argument. The reader must integrate each cycle with the previous to perceive the full force of Bartlett's argument. However, the reader's perseverance will be rewarded with both a heightened awareness of the matter and a desire to discover and implement alternatives. The occasional sensational tone may be excused because her argument holds true. *The Failure of Sex Education in the Church* is highly recommended for parents, lay leaders, pastors, and others interested in the topic.

Gifford A. Grobien

***Luther's Works, Volume 76: Church Postil II.* Edited by Benjamin T. G. Mayes and James L. Langebartels. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2014. 500 pages. Hardcover. \$54.99.**

The best thing one can do to learn how better to preach is simply to read good sermons and postils, and one will be hard-pressed to find better ones than those of Martin Luther.

Luther's postils are usually kinds of commentaries on the material to be preached rather than the sermons themselves, yet his style of commentary is not quite the same as what the modern reader might expect. His *enarrationes*, as they were also called, tend to blend formal commentary and expository, hortatory turns of phrase that one might employ in the sermon itself. With Luther, you always get style and substance together.

Up to now, the most widely used of his postils translated into English was a compendium of eight volumes of church postils edited by John Nicholas Lenker and translated by Lenker and others. Originally published over one hundred years ago, their reprinting by Baker Book House (Grand Rapids, Michigan) in 1986 was in itself a great encouragement to read and consult Luther the master preacher in sermon preparation, especially for the pastor who uses the historic lectionary.

Now, thanks to Benjamin Mayes and James Langebartels, that encouragement is redoubled, for this volume and its companion (*Vol. 75: Church Postil I*, also published in 2013) not only contain better and updated translations of the postils in Lenker but, more importantly, Luther's own 1540 revisions of those sermons originally published between 1522 and 1525. The greatest weakness of the nineteenth-century Lenker edition is that it followed the trend set by Philip Jacob Spener's 1700 edition of ignoring Luther's mature form. This new edition presents the sermons in the order Luther originally intended, that is, with Epistles and Gospels interspersed and categorized in calendar order, another correction of Lenker, who had placed the Gospels in separate volumes from the Epistles. This *Volume 76: Church Postil II* is the Winter Postil (75 is the Summer Postil) and takes the reader from New Year's through Lent.

Luther's approach to preaching is refreshingly free of extra-biblical vignettes and stories that have wearied listeners thought to be in need of trite illustrations for their enlightenment. Instead, what Luther provides is an abundance of *biblical* illustrations. Too often dismissed as something to be avoided, here allegorizing is nothing more than Scripture pressed into service as it was meant to be: Pharaoh bid the Egyptians to do as Joseph said to them (Gen 41:55), and so "must we all come to Christ" (18); though Moses' face (Exod 34:30, 33) needed a veil, "Christ's face, when He was transfigured, was . . . delightful" (48–49); the world rages against faith, just as "Cain wants to rule alone and to have his brother dead, so that he is no more [Gen 4:1–16]" (285); the Canaanite woman (Matt 15:21–22) came to Christ because she "perceived her need, and for that reason she ran after the sweet fragrance (Song of Solomon 1[:3; 4:11])" (378).

For Luther, there is a proper use of allegory, which is "to interpret the Scriptures spiritually (as people say) through allegories, as St. Paul does" when finding Christ and the church in the types. "St. Paul calls this a mystery, that is, a hidden, secret meaning underneath the external meaning of the histories" (340). Yet allegorizing must always be done in service of the gospel, or else it becomes "babbling . . . good for killing time, if you have nothing else to preach." Better, says he, to "abandon such fables and remain with the simple teaching and meaning of Christ" (315).

The challenge for the preacher who would seek to replace the use of hackneyed vignettes with the kinds of biblical references that fill Luther's sermons is to become thoroughly acquainted not only with the particular readings appointed for the day but with all of the Scriptures, as these sermons show Luther clearly to have been.

The only criticism that could be offered of these volumes is a very minor one that could even be leveled to a degree against the Weimar edition itself—namely, the overuse of brackets. If the intention is to recover Luther's thought as he intended, even quotation marks around verbatim biblical references would need to be eliminated, for he did not use them. By supplying them, the Weimar editors removed Luther from his monastically learned employment of *enarratio*, which involved making even verbatim biblical phrases one's own. In fact, this is another notable and helpful stylistic element to be found in Luther's preaching. The Weimar quotation marks, which look literally rather like hen-scratching, could be slightly annoying to the Luther purist; these volumes have taken the hen-scratching to another level. Wherever words are supplied in English that are lacking in the original, they are bracketed; and the brackets seem to mar the page unnecessarily. Better to let Luther be Luther, at least in this reviewer's estimation.

On the whole, this volume and its companion are exceedingly helpful. In terms of scholarship available in English, the update is invaluable, and the continuing encyclopedia that is *Luther's Works*, a project begun in 1955 and renewed by Concordia Publishing House this past decade, is made the more venerable by this notable contribution. The world of Luther scholarship is indebted to Mayes and Langebartels for the accomplishment of this painstaking update.

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***Paul's Letter to the Romans.* By Colin Kruse. Pillar New Testament Commentary Series. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012. 669 pages. Hardcover. \$52.00.**

The Pillar New Testament Commentary Series aims to "make clear the text of Scripture as we have it" (xiv). It is designed with pastors and teachers of the Bible in mind. As such, the volumes in this series are written with a certain reverence for the word of God. Pastors who do not wish to wade through a sea of critical material to get to a theological gem will find these commentaries helpful. The PNTC commentary on Paul's letter to the Romans by Colin Kruse is no exception.

As far as commentaries go, Kruse, senior lecturer in New Testament at Melbourne School of Theology in Australia, has produced an above-average commentary on Paul's "most important piece of writing" (xvi). It

is based primarily on the NIV translation of the Bible. Before getting into the meat of the text of Romans, Kruse spends an appropriate amount of space on introductory matters. In addition to providing a summary of the letter's content (4-6), he also identifies for the reader some of the main theological themes in the letter (22-33). It is helpful, when reading any book of the Bible, to have a bird's-eye view of the material before delving into it.

For the sake of readability, and to keep with the flow of Paul's argument, the commentary uses additional notes to highlight topics that are of special importance. This allows the reader to read Kruse's exposition of Romans without getting distracted by tangential material. It also allows the author to delve more deeply into specific areas of interest. These additional notes are a helpful feature of this commentary. If one chooses, he can read further on topics such as "Natural Theology" (93-109), "The Nature of the Homosexual Practice Condemned by Paul" (109-115), "Baptism in the Pauline Corpus" (270-272), and many others. These notes provide, in effect, a "commentary within a commentary."

From a theological standpoint, it is hard to disagree with Kruse that "as far as Romans is concerned, the center, heart, and organizing principle of Pauline theology is the action of God through the person and work of Jesus Christ to deal with the effects of human sin, individually, communally, and cosmically" (33). Kruse defines justification as "God's gracious acquittal of guilty sinners" (27) and affirms the forensic character of justification.

Kruse views Baptism in less than sacramental terms. He comes close to a proper understanding of Paul's baptismal theology when he says, "It seems to be implied that our death and burial with Christ in baptism must be as real as the newness of life that it makes possible" (261). However, according to Kruse, Baptism for Paul is "part of the full conversion-initiation experience that involves repentance and faith in Christ expressed in submission to baptism on the part of the convert. . . ." (260). While seeking to remain faithful to the text, Kruse does not completely avoid a Reformed bias.

In one of his additional notes, Kruse discusses the "Identity of the 'I' in 7:7-25." He provides a survey of differing interpretations of Paul's use of the first person singular. Was Paul speaking about his own experience as a Jewish boy or describing his pre-Christian experience? Was he describing his experience as a Christian? Or, did Paul's use of the "I" in Romans 7 speak of Israel as a nation? Kruse is not favorable to the idea that is

traditionally held among Lutherans, namely, that Paul is describing his own struggles as a Christian. He seems to have difficulty reconciling Paul's words in 6:14 ("For sin shall no longer be your master") with Paul's description of the power of sin. He adopts the view that the "I" "denotes Israel's historical encounter with the law and her ongoing experience of life under the law" (321).

No commentary on Romans would be complete without an evaluation and critique of what James Dunn has called the "New Perspective" on Paul and the law by E.P. Sanders. Kruse provides an adequate appraisal of Sanders' examination of Palestinian Judaism as well as a summary of scholarly criticism of the "New Perspective." Kruse seems to lean in the direction of Sanders' critics, offering his own summary of the strengths and weaknesses of Sanders' arguments.

One of the strengths of Kruse's work is his ability to interact with Old Testament and Second Temple literature. In several places, he shows where Paul is alluding to earlier texts. Such interaction affirms that Romans was not written in a literary vacuum. Paul's teaching about Jesus, like that of other New Testament writers, is rooted in the Scriptures of Judaism. This is especially evident in Paul's identification of Jesus as "Son of God," "Christ," and "Lord." For Kruse, Paul's use of the title "Lord" underscores his deity, since the title 'Lord' refers to Yahweh in the Old Testament (47). For believers in Rome, where Caesar claimed to be the *κύριος*, Kruse believes that the confession of Jesus as "Lord" would have additional connotations. Jesus was thus "not only the Lord of individual believers, but also the one who would subdue all political as well as spiritual powers beneath his feet. . . ." (47).

Kruse can be commended for offering an exposition of Paul's letter to the Romans that is easily accessible to pastors and teachers of the Bible. It is scholarly without being overly critical of the text and takes into account recent developments in Pauline research. While some of Kruse's conclusions on doctrinal issues such as Baptism will not satisfy Lutheran pastors, there is much that would make it a useful addition to a pastor's library.

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***Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community and Worship.* Edited by Holly Catterton Allen and Christine Lawton Ross. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2012. 330 pages. Softcover. \$22.00.**

The purpose of Allen and Ross' book is not to highlight the numerous and unique generation types within today's congregations and parishes (children, youth, young adults, middle adults, and older adults). Rather the authors' intention is to amplify how all ages and generations of individuals may mutually learn, live, and grow in faith together as the body of Christ. They indicate that far too often the church, especially since the late twentieth century, has over-emphasized the segregation of generations, with the result that mostly peers work, learn, and grow together. They mention that there is a modern tendency within some congregations to separate the worship or learning experiences of the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials. They provide results of a very interesting study that compared the praying vocabulary of children who attended children's church to that of children who attended worship with their families.

The modern learning framework is flawed, according to Allen and Ross, depriving many people of the best opportunities to learn and grow in faith and wisdom from others of varying ages and experience. The authors spend an entire chapter discussing how education, factors of life-stage learning, and American individualism have affected the way the church views Christian formation today. They offer biblical and theological foundations that are compelling and support more intergenerational activity. Their sociological research and recent studies also indicate that people develop and mature best when all ages are present together, especially in worship. They reemphasize the value of learning wisdom from others and the importance of storytelling.

This is a refreshing book for pastors and church workers, especially those who serve smaller and midsize congregations in which ages, families, and generations vary dramatically. Even though some of their practical suggestions do not harmonize with normal Lutheran practice, there is much more to gain than lose in this text. Generation separation for Christian formation and worship is not the only or best way. In a broken world of single-parent and dysfunctional families, the need for belonging and support is heightened, especially for children. If a young person lacks a father or a mother, other role models of faith may encourage him or her. At the other end of the generational scale, in a society of greater mobility,

older adults have fewer opportunities for support, love, and bringing younger generations “to term” than they once did.

Consistently bringing various age groups together enables people to glean the best from one another, but the authors stress that the preparation to do such formation takes more time and hard planning. Since each generation has its unique tendencies, the authors stress and encourage the more difficult task, namely, educating many all at once and often using all five senses. The authors also provide useful resources on how to begin and sustain intergenerational formation. When all generations mutually love and support one another, the body of Christ is functioning well.

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The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis. Edited by Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes. Second Edition. Leiden: Brill, 2014. xii + 884 pages. Softcover. \$76.00.

This volume on the current state of textual criticism deserves to be read by all serious readers of the Greek New Testament. It is very helpful because it is more in-depth than a basic handbook on textual criticism and wider ranging than a text-critical study of a particular manuscript. It challenges the reader to think critically about the state of his or her critical edition of the Greek New Testament. Optimistically, this book has the ability to inspire a reader of the Greek New Testament to pay more attention to variant readings and appreciate them as more than mere “minor changes.”

This collection of twenty-eight essays presents the *status quaestionis* for New Testament textual criticism. Various experts in the field present the current state of research in different avenues of textual criticism, presenting both the state of the scholarship and the types of studies that are being done. Each essay provides enough details on a particular aspect of textual criticism to explain the current state of research as well as to provide guidance for more in-depth analysis.

This volume, a second edition of an original festschrift for Bruce Metzger that was published in 1995, is, in reality, a new book. It includes thirteen of the original essays, though they have been significantly updated to the point of being rewritten. Further, eight of the essays have been replaced, one essay was removed from the original edition, and seven

new essays have been added. The changes take what was a 401-page book and more than double it to 884 pages. The revisions update the book to the current state of research and show how much progress has been made in the last two decades of textual criticism.

The essays have an interest in discussing both the available sources for textual criticism and current strategies for using those sources productively to analyze the texts with both the general criteria and eventual goal of the study. The essays range in topic from different sources for textual criticism (e.g., manuscripts, lectionaries, Syriac, Latin, Coptic, Ethiopic, Armenian, Georgian, Gothic, and patristic citations), criteria for evaluating variants and similarities, relationships between manuscripts, the social world of early Christian scribes, current discussion about the goal of textual criticism, and historical discussion of what work has been done in the field in the past.

The value of the book is its breadth and depth. It is not a handbook and does not discuss the most basic elements of textual criticism; instead, it is directed toward the critical reader of the New Testament. Readers, then, will still need to master the prior work of Bruce Metzger¹ and the Alands² before approaching this volume. This is both the book's greatest strength and its weakness; it is very valuable for the careful reader of the New Testament but too in-depth, and not systematic enough, for the novice.

This book is a welcome reference volume for all serious students of the Greek New Testament. It will show them the state of scholarship on the topics while challenging them to think critically about the various sources from which the modern critical editions are currently built. Further, this volume will not only push readers to consider a number of early manuscripts of the New Testament but will also aid the reader to picture the social world of the early Christian scribe and challenge the reader to think very critically about the goal and process of textual criticism.

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¹ Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

² Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987).

God's Saving Grace: A Pauline Theology. By Frank J. Matera. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2012. 283 pages. Softcover. \$28.00.

Frank J. Matera's latest work seeks to provide a summary of the main theological themes in the Pauline letters. His goal is to provide a coherent presentation, that is, one that explains how statements in the different Pauline letters are related and cohere with one another. The book works with all thirteen letters that bear Paul's name. Matera operates on the assumption that there is evidence that Paul was the author of 2 Thessalonians and Colossians. He is less certain about Ephesians and the Pastoral Epistles, though he says that if he were to learn that Paul was the author, he would not be surprised. The result is a presentation of Pauline theology as it is found in the canon of the New Testament.

Matera has organized the book around two principles. The first is the theme of God's saving grace that Paul experienced in his call and conversion. The second is a set of three implicit narratives that Matera believes lie at the foundation of Pauline theology: 1) God's saving grace in Paul's life; 2) God's saving grace in Christ; 3) God's saving grace in the lives of those in Christ. These narratives structure the book as Matera first discusses Paul's experience of the Damascus Christophany and identifies it as the generative center of his theology. In the succeeding chapters the grace of God serves as the unifying theme as the book treats Pauline Christology, anthropology and soteriology, ecclesiology, ethics, and eschatology.

This book is the mature work of a scholar whose command of the material and clear writing produce both clarity for those seeking introduction to the themes of Pauline theology and also new insights for those who have worked with Pauline literature. Matera emphasizes that the occasional nature of the Pauline letters determines the varied ways in which Paul expresses his theology. He finds coherence rather than contradiction. Matera states his position on contested issues but does so in a way that alerts the reader to the fact that other opinions exist. The result is an excellent discussion of Pauline theology that will benefit pastors in their preaching and teaching.

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The Spirit of Pietism. By Robert J. Koester. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 2013. 430 pages. Softcover. \$39.99.

Pietism is a subject that is discussed much but understood little. Because the topic is both enormous and difficult to define, there is great value in any work that strives to explain at least a part of it, especially one in English. Robert Koester's book is no exception.

Koester writes in a very popular style with a practical application in mind. While he is interested in the historical account of Pietism, his goal is clear when he asks: "Which factors [contributing to Pietism] are historically connected to German Lutheran Pietism and which are transcultural and would contribute to an outbreak of Pietism in any culture?" (11). In other words, while the history is important, Koester is more interested in diagnosing Pietism and thereby showing what things contributed to its emergence.

Thus, Koester's study is useful for anyone interested in learning more about Pietism but with an added interpretation of the information. For those who want a one-volume work on Pietism, this book satisfies that desire. Koester also provides a fairly extensive bibliography of secondary literature to facilitate further study.

The book itself is divided into three sections. In the first section, Koester discusses the historical background of Pietism, focusing on the factors that contributed to its appearance. In the second section, he discusses the two important early Pietists, Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705) and August Hermann Francke (1663-1727). The third section treats Valentin Ernst Löscher (1673-1749). That this third section is the longest is not surprising, since Koester translated part of Löscher's critique of Pietism, *The Complete Timotheus Verinus* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1998).

Two things, however, detract from this work. The first is Koester's continual reliance on secondary literature. While this is a popular work and primary material is not only seemingly endless but also frequently inaccessible to American readers, it can be discouraging for readers who are interested in reading further to see indirect citations throughout the work. Knowing where to look for primary material without having to consult another book first is always helpful.

The second is a problem true to any study of Pietism. Koester seems to function without a clear definition of what he means by "Pietism." Other scholars, whom Koester frequently quotes, are divided on an exact definition. Is Pietism just a German Lutheran phenomenon? Are all Pietists

alike? Can they all be classified under one term? Koester never defines exactly what he means by Pietism, so one may be left with the impression that all Pietists were alike or that Pietists essentially agreed with each other in everything.

Nevertheless, these two points should not distract from what is otherwise an excellent treatment of three important historical figures connected to Pietism. It can only help those interested to learn more about the movement and, hopefully, encourage them to read further.

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