

Book Reviews

LUTHER. By Franz Lau. Translated by Robert H. Fischer. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1963. 178 pages. Cloth. \$3.75.

The ever growing literature in Luther studies was recently enriched by a slender but generally sound popular biography of the great German Reformer. The author, Franz Lau of the University of Leipzig, well known to Luther students as editor of the *Lutherjahrbuch* since 1957, combines a thorough knowledge of the subject with a gift to delight the reader with apt phrasing. The result is a biography very much in the order of Roland Bainton's classic, *Here I Stand*, without really rivaling the American classic.

Dr. Lau closes his book with a claim that might sound a trifle too boastful, but happens to be true: "The story of Luther's life might be expanded in many a detail. Beyond what has just been said, however, there is nothing to add to the theme, 'Luther' " (p. 166).

It is true that Professor Lau presents a balanced picture of Luther and his world. The contemporary political, cultural, and ecclesiastical world which forms the backdrop against which Luther must be viewed, is indeed well drawn. The author, no doubt, is correct when he claims that "Out of . . . perfected Catholicism the German Reformation of Luther originated, humanly speaking" (p. 29). "Luther's Development," chapter two of Lau's work, captures the heart of the matter: "the Lutheran Reformation lies not in the fight of Luther against the indulgence scandal and against the encroachments of Rome, but in the discovery of the new righteousness" (p. 52). Chapters on "Luther's Breakthrough," the familiar story of Luther's conflict with the Roman Catholic authorities, and "Luther's Reformation," an account of Luther's trials and tribulations with peasants, humanists, Anabaptist radicals, and the Swiss evangelicals, bring the reader to "Luther's Church," Lau's final chapter, which attempts to tie the work into a neat bundle by pulling together the threads of the German evangelical movement which came to be known as the Lutheran Church.

Dr. Lau introduces his work by way of a masterful summary of the evolution of the Luther portrait, a summary that is both sobering and informative. It should be "must" reading for every budding Luther student and perhaps it is not entirely beneath the more seasoned Luther scholar. To be sure, it is not likely to cure the onesided modern Berkegaardian, Barthian, and existentialist Luther images, but it might give their creators the uneasy feeling that their subject is not quite well.

It is definitely a strength of the work that the German scholar is not chronicling a hagiography of an evangelical saint. What remains when the much-needed process of demythologizing has set aside the cherished but false Luther fables is the entirely human but conscientious Biblical theologian whose exegetical work in preparation for the classroom lectures brought him into mortal conflict with the prevailing theology of the day. The man whose conscience was bound by the

Word of God and who obediently listened to the living Word of God remained nevertheless a man with all too common human frailties (cf. pp. 120, 122, 140, 141).

Unfortunately, Lau's work shares the weakness of neglecting the picture of the mature Luther with many a well known Luther biography. Perhaps this is caused by a woeful lack of available monographic literature on Luther's life, work and personality development after the *Augustana* became the theological constitution of the Lutherans. Also unfortunate is the fact that the author has chosen not to document his work. Some of the bold and tantalizing generalizations that add vitality to the work might not have been able to survive under the sober searchlight of scholarly scrutiny and technical apparatus. Roland Bainton of Yale has conclusively demonstrated that a work can be popular in approach and appeal without the sacrifice of careful documentation.

A word of thanks is in order to Professor Robert H. Fischer for making Lau's work accessible to the English reader. The translator is also responsible for a brief annotated bibliography. At times the annotations tend to emphasize the theological and historical predilections of the translator.

All in all, Lau's *Luther* deserves to be read and enjoyed. The reward of the proverbially busy pastor who will find time to read the work will be a deeper understanding of the Lutheran heritage.

Heino O. Kadai

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN CURRENT STUDY. By Reginald H. Fuller.

Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1962. 147 pages. Cloth. \$2.95.

Past disappointing experience with small books which make big claims for their content is deceptive in the case of Fuller's survey of trends of thought among recent and current New Testament scholars. The book contains only 147 pages and yet is described on its jacket as a volume which contains "The main issues of debate over the past two decades and a critical assessment of present trends." Dollars and hours wasted with books of similar size and similar claim force one to be skeptical of the publisher's description of this little volume. But this book is a pleasant surprise; this is a big thing in a little package.

One might use the index of authors in the rear of the book as a stimulating prelude to reading the entire volume. In the three pages of authors listed appear such names as Barrett, Barth, Bornkamm, Bultmann, Conzelmann, Cullmann, Dodd, Harnack, Heidegger, Hunter, Jeremias, Kasemann, Kierkegaard, Lietzmann, Lightfoot, Lohmeyer, Manson, Robinson, Streeter, Taylor, Wellhausen, Wrede, Zahn, and 118 more. The presence of such an extensive and learned group of writers in Fuller's volume demonstrates two things: (1) Fuller has read and is at home with the bulk of the shapers of the current versions of New Testament theology; and, (2) the volume does take cognizance of the tendencies in New Testament thought which exist today and have existed in the past decades.

But the book is no mere listing of bits of quotation, as the presence of 141 authors on 147 pages might suggest. Actually, Fuller does his

reporting with digests and central thoughts of his many sources and makes use of footnotes to refer the reader to the same material in greater detail. And his skill at grouping thoughts and relating them to each other makes his product altogether fluent and readable.

Fuller attempts to be objective in his reporting, as is evident from his critical comment, both favorable and unfavorable, attached to the points of view he quotes. His own stance is moderate, somewhat independent of those who are far to either the left or right of center. Thus, neither Bultmann nor those engaged in the new quest for the historical Jesus nor orthodox Lutherans receive his unqualified support. This reviewer does not wish to suggest that such a middle-of-the-road position is the proper place to take one's stance, but it is ideal for this kind of reporting of what is currently thought, along with an analysis of strengths and weaknesses. This detachment from both extremes allows for greater objectivity, necessarily tempered, however, by the subjective process of selection of materials for quotation and comment.

Since the book is itself a masterpiece of condensation and brevity, this reviewer finds it impossible to write a digest of its contents in these few lines. But assuming that the bulk of our readers would find themselves to be right wing, rather than left wing, critics of Bultmann, pages 16-19 offer a fine sample by which the reader may judge whether or not he will read the book with profit.

For the person relatively uninformed as to the various trends of New Testament study, Fuller's book offers an excellent introduction. For those who have worked with New Testament theorists in some detail, Fuller's book offers an excellent roadmap. In either case, this is an exceptionally fine volume.

Ray F. Martens

ROMAN HELLENISM AND THE NEW TESTAMENT. By Frederick C. Grant. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1962. x and 216 pages. Cloth. \$3.95.

This stimulating book by a well-known New Testament scholar, now retired, can serve two purposes for the busy pastor. (1) It provides a large amount of background material for understanding the world into which the New Testament church was born. (2) It shows how the attitude of the scholar toward the New Testament governs his analysis of the relationship between New Testament thought and its contemporary intellectual environment.

The reviewer has only praise for the author's synthesis of the available material as he discusses the religious and philosophical developments in the Roman Empire. It is only when the author interprets the impact of these developments on Christianity that this reviewer places large question marks in the margin of his review copy.

On the positive side of the ledger we noted, among other points, the treatment of the following items: the "dismal world of the average Greek"; the piety of the mystery religions; the hope of an after-life; the various aspects of the *praeparatio evangelica* in paganism.

Much of what one questions on first reading can nevertheless serve a very good purpose, provided the reader understands Grant's approach to his material. The author directs our attention (p. 119) to "the crucial importance of the question" raised by Prof. S. G. F. Brandon of Manchester in the July, 1959, number of *The Hibbert Journal* (pp. 404 f.):

Surely, if one is seeking to recommend Christianity as a faith of universal validity, the problem must be faced whether the post-70 A.D. synthesis achieved in the Synoptic Gospels truly represents the original form of the movement which stemmed from the life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth.

Professor Grant's response is most illuminating:

The answer lies, as I shall try to demonstrate, in a further extension of the method, and application of the results, of the past hundred and fifty years of New Testament criticism, not by its abandonment.

With this viewpoint, Grant and most modern N. T. scholars interpret the contents of the New Testament as being a synthesis of the teachings of Jesus, elements of rabbinic (normative) and apocalyptic Judaism, Hellenistic religious influences, and reactions within the Christian community against the pagan environment. Small wonder that exegetical conclusions based on such presuppositions conflict with Scriptural teachings. The pastor, therefore, who desires to be true to Scripture can learn much about non-Christian Biblical scholarship from this book.

A careful perusal of the chapters "The Gospel in the Gentile Churches" and "The Emergence of Early Christian Doctrine" will cause the student with sincere Lutheran confessional ties to realize that the area of tension in modern theology and in his own spiritual assurance is what we call New Testament Introduction. Grant arrives at his conclusions of relativism in Christian dogma on the basis of his views (critical-historical) of how the New Testament came into being. Contrariwise, Lutheran confessionalism, in the understanding of this reviewer, bases its doctrines on a hermeneutic and exegesis which presuppose the traditional view of the origin of authentic New Testament writings (cf. the emphasis in orthodox Lutheranism on the distinction between the *homologoumena* and *antilegomena*.) If the Lutheran scholar abandons the historically and Scripturally (cf. II Thess. 2,2; 3,17; Col. 4,16) founded presuppositions which the 2nd and 3rd century church had of the origin of the New Testament scriptures, scriptures with which it refuted heresy, then the Lutheran scholar must either abandon the rigor of his confessionalism (as most have done!) or he must develop a new, un-historical, and extra-Scriptural doctrine of authority, not at all different from that of Rome. And with such an un-Scriptural doctrine a confessional position is doomed.

Elmer J. Moeller

FRONTIERS OF THE CHRISTIAN WORLD MISSION SINCE 1938.
Essays in honor of Kenneth Scott Latourette. Edited by Wilbur C.

Harr. Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York and London, 1962. viii and 310 pages. Cloth. \$5.00.

WELTMISSION IN OKUMENISCHER ZEIT. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Brennecke und 28 Mitarbeitern. Mit 24 Bildern. Stuttgart: Evang. Missionsverlag GMBH, 1961. 336 pages. Cloth. DM 15.80.

Two reviews of the contemporary mission scene around the world are offered here, incorporating the knowledge and judgment of many specialists. The need for these books arises from the widespread social upheavals, the changed circumstances for Christians, the altered picture of some of the historic religions, the ecumenical movement, and the new organization of responsibilities in the World Council of Churches.

Wilber C. Harr was President of the National Association of Professors of Missions 1958-1960. He has had many years of experience in Nigeria and contributes the chapter on Africa South of the Sahara. Other areas treated are China 1937-1949, the Pacific Islands, Madagascar, Methods and Techniques, and Faith Missions since 1938. There is a chapter on Kenneth Scott Latourette and the latter's address at a dinner in his honor. A select bibliography of the writings of K. S. Latourette is appended. As might be expected, the authors are in the Latourette tradition and eminently informative.

The Brennecke volume provides a more complete coverage of the entire world, including a chronology of the principal facts of missionary history, special chapters on the new conditions and problems facing the churches, and a bibliography worldwide in scope. Both volumes will render yeoman service in the study of modern missions, supplementing each other at many points.

Otto F. Stahlke

THE ZONDERVAN PICTORIAL BIBLE DICTIONARY. Merrill C. Tenney, General Editor. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1963. 968 pages. Cloth. \$9.95.

A number of Bible dictionaries have appeared recently and one has the choice between such as are scientific and more modernistic, not to say modern, and such as are Biblical and conservative without bypassing the recent discoveries. This dictionary sets a high standard from the conservative point of view. It can be recommended to Bible students of all levels. Among the 65 scholars that contributed is Dr. L. M. Petersen of our Springfield Seminary. He has written among other articles the one on *money*, one of the more complete references in the book.

The theologian will according to his confession find this and that in the doctrinal treatment of certain concepts that he might want to correct and improve. *Christianity Today*, e.g., in the March 15 issue of volume VII remarks that the interpretation of the "emptying" in Philipians 2 goes too far. The *Zondervan Bible Dictionary* states that "He emptied Himself of the divine trappings of omnipotence, omniscience, and glory (Phil. 2:5-8), that He might be truly human, became the Babe of Bethlehem" (p. 84). If we draw the last two parts of the statement together it might make better theological sense. To be truly

human does not require the emptying, for Christ sitting at the right hand of God is truly human and in full use of the powers of God.

In the article on *Christ, Jesus* there seems to be an effort to present objectively the person and work of Christ which at the same time, and perhaps for that reason, lacks certain doctrinal emphases. The death and work of atonement are mentioned but not particularly stressed. One would expect other highlights on His work in view of the fact that other references of a more problematic nature are given. E.g., the statement that "after the millennial kingdom, Christ will enter with His people upon the blessedness of the *eternal state* which will be unmarred by the inroads of sin and death" (p. 156).

As we and our people use this very well edited dictionary of the Bible we will remember that the letters signing the various articles will give us a clue as to how strictly we must take the information especially when the matter touches the doctrinal areas.

Martin Naumann

PHARISAISM AND JESUS. By Samuel Umen. Philosophical Library, New York, 1963. 145 pages. Cloth. \$3.75.

The author, at present time rabbi of Temple Adath Yeshurun, the reform congregation of Manchester, New Hampshire, presents a view-point most interesting to the reviewer—not because of its scholarlyness, but because of its evident reflection of modern Judaism's interpretation of source material in assessing the essence of Pharisaism and the friction point between it and the teachings and person of Jesus.

Rabbi Umen identifies Pharisaism with the spirit of modern Judaism, attributing to the spiritual life of the nation a spiritual genius not too different from that which Roman Catholicism claims for itself when it postulates the dynamic of the Holy Spirit in the Living Body of Christ, i.e., itself. In both groups, therefore, development in doctrine is self-validating. Such advance, says Rabbi Umen, has been taking place in Judaism since earliest antiquity.

Essential in the favorable picture which the author paints of the attitude of the Jews of Jesus' day toward the Messiah whose claims are rejected now as then is the well-known distinction between a political Sanhedrin controlled by the Sadducees and a religious Sanhedrin in which also the Pharisees exercised influence. The former was responsible for hostility to Jesus and for His eventual downfall. Such an approach requires, of course, the assumption that the Gospels and Acts present an inaccurate portrayal of Pharisaism at Jesus' time.

The author uses many constructions which are apparently Hebraisms, utterly unacceptable in every-day English. Punctuation seems to be affected in the process, and leaves much to be desired.

Elmer J. Moeller

KEY TO THE FULL LIFE. By Rudolph F. Norden. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1963. 96 pages. Paperback. \$1.00.

Known especially among campus-affiliated pastors for his art with the pen, Rudolph Norden, one time campus pastor and now assistant to

the executive director for the Commission on College and University Work and editor of the *Campus Pastor*, gathers together the varied experiences of life into a compendious whole.

The twelve chapters show a vibrancy of life for the downhearted, distraught, dejected, disconsolate, depressed. Norden brings Christ to people where they are—unemployed, the unsuccessful, body-mind invalids, unmarried women, senior citizens, the vocation searcher, etc. Personal comments and suggestions plus a wealth of Scripture related incidents cannot but lift the 'spirits' of the reader.

One may not agree 100 percent with all details of the author's presentation, as for example his optimistic view of the sure results of family council meetings, nevertheless a pastor would do well to present such a positively oriented book to many of his counselees for meditative recollection of the purpose and realization of the full life.

Peter Meaholtz

BAPTISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. By G. R. Beasley-Murray. St. Martin's Press, New York, 1962. 424 pages. Cloth. \$12.00.

Knowledgeable readers will probably want to know, first of all, whether their acquaintance with or possession of W. F. Flemington's important monograph, *The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism* (1948), might perhaps absolve them of the responsibility for making the book here under review their own. The answer is a flat no. Useful as Flemington's study will no doubt still continue to be, this present volume is certain to be an equally basic if not even more essential resource, in any serious investigation of the Scriptural foundations for the church's sacrament of initiation.

Although the contents are arranged in similar order in both books—beginning with a chapter on the antecedents of Christian baptism and concluding with one on the validity and value of infant baptism, while exegetical studies of all the relevant New Testament passages occupy the intervening and major portions—Beasley-Murray's has the distinct advantage of more than twice the space for his discussion of the subject. As a result his exegesis is consistently more thoroughgoing and detailed, and perhaps for that very reason often more persuasive.

A measure of the "high" view of baptism that marks the author's interpretation throughout is his comment regarding John 3:3-5: "The emphasis on the miracle of God wrought by the Spirit in baptism is underscored by the teaching of a new life bestowed by the Spirit in that context, the equivalent of a divine begetting" (p. 231). The nineteen pages devoted to Rom. 6:1 ff. are a model of lucid exposition that evinces both a comprehensive grasp of all the important literature and a gift for sound, independent judgment. On the question of the relation of Jesus' baptism to that of the Christian, he voices sharp disagreement with Cullmann's thesis that the Jordan event anticipated the Savior's general "blood-baptism" for the sins of the world. At most he concedes it to have been but one instance of the way in which Jesus must fulfill all righteousness and thus no more than the beginning of his messianic task. Nevertheless, he also finds a deeper significance in this first

instance of the Messiah's fulfillment of all righteousness, namely, that hereby in a signal way Jesus as Representative Man, as Messiah representing the people in need of deliverance, demonstrates and effects his solidarity with them in their need.

But this is not a book for armchair theologians only. Preachers will find their homiletical resources greatly enriched as they follow the author's exhaustive but never wearying, exciting but never fanciful, exegetical treatment of the score or more epistle texts that bear upon baptism.

In his vigorous and forceful argument for "believers' baptism" Baptist Beasley-Murray may cause many a Lutheran to wince as he demonstrates the weaknesses of some allegedly Lutheran defenses of infant baptism. On the other hand, repeatedly it is his own notion of faith as limited to a man's conscious, cognitive, volitional response to God's initiative that makes him incapable of grasping the Lutheran principle whereby adults are baptized as if they were infants and infants as if they were adults (cf. p. 360). Lutherans who are inclined, perhaps unwittingly, to share such an understanding of faith should find the author's acute observations a useful purgative for doctrinal sluggishness.

It is to be hoped that the inordinately high price set on the American edition will not seriously restrict the wide distribution this book not only deserves but demands.

Richard Jungkuntz

YOUNG MARRIED COUPLES IN THE CHURCH. By Wayne Saffen. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1963. 87 pages. Paperback. \$1.25.

Eighty-seven pages of concentrated 'juice' for the organization and for the vibrant ongoing program of a young married couples group. A young married person who has "latent talent, drive, genius, ambition, devotion, initiative, creativity, eagerness to learn and apply, and readiness to action" (p. 14) will have his appetite whetted for pursuit and his mind filled with potent ideas to be adapted to the needs of a young married couples group.

Two emphases should be noted. (1) The initiative to form a young married couples group is with a member and not the pastor. Preliminary leg work and research is to be carried on by an enthusiastic 'worker' who will then present his findings and desires for such a group to the pastor. "When your church does not do something, it is often because you did not do it" (p. 20). (2) The group is to be centered about the Word. Repeated encouragement is reiterated for the young adult Bible Class. Suggestions as to Bible Class format are helpful.

The author has over the years gathered the idea specks of mercury into one concentrated capsule. Pages 59 and 60 map a year's program almost beyond physical ability. A dilution of applicable ideas will adequately serve most groups.

The appendices: A—Interest Finder, B—Sample Letters, C—Sample Programs, D—Model Constitution, E—Christian Service Ideas, plus a categorized bibliography are worth the price of the book.

Peter Mealwitz

STUDIES IN THE GOSPELS AND EPISTLES. By T. W. Manson. Edited by Matthew Black. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1962. 293 pages. Cloth. \$6.50.

These studies are a set of posthumously collected essays which were first presented in lecture form during the years 1939-1953. Despite the intensive research and debate focused on just this area of Biblical scholarship in the decade that has elapsed since then, the essays have lost none of their timeliness nor power to stimulate fresh thinking on familiar topics.

As now arranged in book form they fall into two groups: (I) *Materials For A Life of Jesus*; and (II) *The Epistles of St. Paul* [so titled despite the inclusion of an essay on Hebrews]. Part One is—in contrast to the extremely skeptical approaches of the recent generation of Continental scholars—a soberly optimistic view of the possibility as well as the usefulness of a genuine historical recounting of the life of Jesus within the acknowledged limits of the extant data. Without arrogance, though with a touch of asperity, Manson dismisses all the moil and toll of form-critical inquiry as "interesting but not epoch-making." His arguments in support of this appraisal deserve a more attentive hearing than they seem to have received thus far.

Part One concludes with an essay on the Son of Man sayings of Jesus that is far more valuable than its omission from the bibliography in the newly published *Interpreter's Bible Dictionary's* article on the same subject might appear to suggest. At any rate, Manson here persuasively develops and, with minor amendments, strengthens the position initially set forth in his *Teachings of Jesus* (1931), namely, that Jesus took the term from Daniel 7 rather than from Enoch or elsewhere, and that in his interpretation of the expression he redefined it in terms of the Isaianic Servant of the Lord, maintaining both the corporate significance and the personal embodiment of this corporate entity in himself, in such a way that the Pauline image of Christ as the Head of his Body, the Church, becomes a true reflection of the concept even though Paul himself does not use the term Son of Man.

The studies in Part Two are concerned in part with interpreting the major epistles in the light of the postulated existence of a strong and aggressive "Cephas faction" and the resultant conflict with Paul's own missionary work and the ensuing tension in the church at large. This, however, seems too tenuous a thread with which to tie all the variegated data of these epistles into a psychological and theological unity. The evidence for such a dichotomy in the primitive church is still as inconclusive as it was in the days of F. C. Baur.

Apart from the preceding stricture Manson's treatment of his materials in this part of the book furnishes an exemplary instance of the kind of "close reading" that every exegete should strive for. It is this kind of reading that leads him to find reasons in the text of Philipians for questioning the traditional assignment of this epistle to a "captivity." It is better understood, he suggests, as coming from Ephesus in the same period as the Corinthian correspondence and as dealing with the same basic problems.

Regarding the Thessalonian letters Manson makes a strong case for their chronological inversion as first suggested by Hugo Grotius and more fully argued by Johannes Weiss. One wonders why this simple solution to many of the vexing questions arising from the traditional sequence has not received attention in recent commentaries and Bible dictionaries.

In the lecture with which the book opens—the only one not previously published in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*—Dr. Manson graciously acknowledged his debt, among others, to two former teachers (John Skinner and Charles Anderson Scott) for the “proof that exact and thorough scholarship can be linked with a deeply-rooted faith in such a way that scholarship is delivered from mere antiquarianism, and faith from obscurantism.” This debt is one that is now passed on to all readers of this book, as well as to those who were ever privileged to hear its author in classroom or lecture hall.

Richard Jungkuntz

FAITH VICTORIOUS: AN INTRODUCTION TO LUTHER'S THEOLOGY.

By Lennart Pinomaa. Translated by Walter J. Kukkonen. Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1963. 216 pages. Cloth. \$4.75.

Here in seventeen clearly organized, crisply written chapters is a distillate of recent German and Scandinavian research into Luther's theology as passed through the alembic of one man's judgment and orientation.

The author, professor of theology at the University of Helsinki, would doubtless be the first to warn the reader not to expect more from this volume than its sub-title claims for it; but at the very least it fulfills this promise in most creditable fashion. Lutheran pastors will be pleasurably profited by reading it and many will be stimulated to pursue a deeper investigation of this or that topic ranging from revelation to ethics. A modest bonus for readers of this American edition is a basic bibliography of relevant books and articles in English which the translator has appended.

As might be expected, a mild Lundensian influence is apparent, particularly in the discussion of atonement and justification.

Richard Jungkuntz