Reviews

Edwards the Exegete: Biblical Interpretation and Anglo-Protestant Culture on the Edge of the Enlightenment. By Douglas A. Sweeney. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. ISBN: 978-0-19-979322-8. xii + 391 pp. £47.99.

Douglas Sweeney's *Edwards the Exegete* is a rich and illuminating study of Jonathan Edwards's biblical exegesis. Sweeney carefully untangles Edwards's exegesis by drawing on a plethora of printed and manuscript sources. The book is arranged into five parts, each consisting of two chapters. With the exception of Part One, which serves as an introduction, each part pairs a clear overview of an aspect of Edwards's exegetical method, with a detailed case study of the approach being considered. This combination enables the reader to understand how Edwards interpreted the Bible in broad terms, but also allows them to appreciate the implications of Edwards's exegetical method.

Part One sets the context for the book. Sweeney examines Edwards's biblical world, arguing that he spent the majority of his time studying the Bible. For Sweeney, Edwards must be thought of as an exegete and he contends that Edwards's exegesis has been largely overlooked. He notes, for example, that while we know quite a lot about Edwards's interaction with Locke, Berkley and Newton, 'we know little of his work with Matthew Poole, Philip Doddridge, Matthew Henry, Arthur Bedford, John Owen, or Humphrey Prideaux–biblical scholars all. Yet they were steady, staple sources of his study day to day' (p. 7). Sweeney also examines Edwards's view of the Bible itself, noting that while Edwards saw Scripture as self-authenticating, he also believed that it could only be properly understood by regenerate believers, through careful study.

In Part Two, Sweeney examines Edwards's canonical exegesis. He shows that Edwards viewed the Old and New Testaments as being in harmony with one another. This unity was perceived through prophecies and their fulfilments; types and their antitypes; and doctrinal harmonies. Sweeney illustrates this approach through an examination of Edwards's typological expositions of Melchizedek, showing how he 'did things with the Bible that can only be done by scholars with his theological interests... it helped him to exegete the priesthood of Melchizedek more spiritually and practically than those who would succeed him' (pp. 91-2).

Part Three focuses on Edwards's Christological exegesis and demonstrates that Edwards consistently sought to connect the entirety of the Bible to Christ. Sweeney draws attention to the different biblical genres

that Edwards expounded Christologically, noting that he fully embraced a Christocentric reading of the Psalms (in contrast to Calvin). However, Sweeney takes the Song of Songs, rather than the Psalms, as his case study for Edwards's Christological exegesis. He shows that, like the Puritans before him, Edwards interpreted the Song of Songs as 'a real, historical picture of the love of two people meant to symbolize the love between the Lord and His betrothed, the bride he came to rescue at the price of His own blood' (p. 120), rather than as erotic poetry.

Part Four examines Edwards's redemptive-historical readings of the Bible. Sweeney argues that Edwards saw the Bible as a map that marked out God's redemptive plan from the fall until Christ's second coming. For Edwards, history was driven by God's redemptive purposes and was guided by his providential hand. This approach is seen most clearly in Edwards's handling of Revelation. Edwards believed that Revelation outlined redemptive history from the early church to the near future. He allowed that it spoke of some future events (he thought that the Antichrist's fall would happen in 1866), but he believed that most of its prophecies had already been fulfilled. Consequently, Sweeney argues that most of Edwards's preaching on Revelation 'revolved around the gospel, encouraging the sheep to prepare for the Judgment by remaining near the Shepherd' (p. 167).

In Part Five, Sweeney considers how Edwards interpreted Scripture instructively. Edwards interpreted the Bible doctrinally, but sought to press home these doctrines in order to foster godly living. As Sweeney explains (p. 197): 'Edwards preached to change behavior. His favorite thing that happened when he taught Bible doctrine was that some loved the Word and tried to live its lessons joyfully.' Sweeney explores this aspect of Edwards's exegesis with reference to his doctrine of justification, which has sometimes been criticised for being Catholic in tone, due to Edwards's emphasis on the close relationship between faith and good works. Sweeney contends, however, that Edwards's teaching was consistent with Protestant doctrine and that the more Catholic sounding parts of his teaching resulted from his desire to expound all of Scripture faithfully (James, as well as Paul).

From start to finish, this is a masterful study of Jonathan Edwards's exegesis, but it is also far more than that. Throughout the book, Sweeney repeatedly situates Edwards's exegesis in the context of the history of Christian exegesis as a whole. Though these comments are often brief, they provide a useful framework for understanding how Edwards's exegesis related to, and drew on, that of earlier exegetes. Sweeney also does an admirable job of pushing against those who would distinguish between critical and pre-critical interpreters, categorising Edwards as the latter.

He argues that Edwards 'was a "both-and" exegete: traditional and avant-garde, edifying and critical, profoundly theological and thoroughly historical' (p. 219). *Edwards the Exegete* shows that these artificial categories do Edwards a disservice, and in so doing raises the question of their usefulness altogether.

In short, *Edwards the Exegete* is a delight to read. Sweeney's research is rigorous, nuanced and insightful, and his prose is crisp and readable. Sweeney has undertaken the difficult work of unpicking how Edwards interpreted the Bible from various annotations, notebooks, and published works. In so doing, he has delivered a rich account of Edwards's exegetical method, while also highlighting some of the key trends in early modern hermeneutics. *Edwards the Exegete* is an invaluable addition to the existing corpus of literature on Edwards, and for anyone with an interest in either Jonathan Edwards or the history of biblical exegesis, it should be essential reading.

Russell Newton, University of Edinburgh

Settling the Peace of the Church: 1662 Revisited. Edited by N. H. Keeble. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. ISBN 978-0-19-968853-1. xvii + 270 pp. £60.

In 2004 an agreement was formulated between the Dr Williams Library and Queen Mary University (both of London) to collaborate in a new Centre for Dissenting Studies. This venture had, by the year of the publication of *Settling the Peace of the Church*, already produced a promising stream of volumes, with others in view. We have seen studies on such themes as Joseph Priestly (2008) and Dissenting hymnody (2011); we can look forward to additional announced volumes on Dissenting spirituality and the Dissenting Academies.

Yet even considered as a stand-alone volume, *Settling the Peace of the Church: 1662 Revisited* can be seen as setting a new standard for writing about the Restoration-era exclusion of over 2,000 preachers and countless more parishioners from the national church of England. By popular reckoning, this 'Ejection' or 'Ejectment' (the terms are used interchangeably) is the turn of events which ensured the permanent continuance of expressions of dissent (Baptist, Independent, Presbyterian and Quaker) outside what *might* have been a more comprehensive national Protestantism.

From the standpoint of the emergent Dissenting tradition, St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662 (24 August) was the defining moment. Since the conformity in religion required by the Act of Uniformity, passed in May of that year, entailed unquestioning use of the liturgical forms of the *Book of Common Prayer* and readiness to submit to episcopal (re)-ordination,

there were inevitable lines in the sand drawn. In addition to the physical hardships of the expulsion of pastors with families from churches and homes, there came the emergence of cynicism. Months of prior conferencing which drew representatives of the likely-nonconforming into discussion with Establishment advocates—discussion ostensibly aimed at finding a means of comprehending all who were orthodox—came to nothing. Such conferences appeared, in hindsight, to have been mere window-dressing.

Settling the Peace of the Church demonstrates a real advance over past analyses, whether aimed at popular or academic audiences. *First*, because the volume is not intended simply to account for the emergence of Nonconformity (although it does this) it has the liberty to explore the Ejection event from a wider perspective. This wider-angle approach was anticipated at the 300th year mark of the Ejection by the publishing of *From Uniformity to Unity* (1962), a volume edited by Geoffrey Nuttal and Owen Chadwick. In it, both Nonconformist and Anglican perspectives were included. But *Settling the Peace of the Church* carries this multi-perspectival approach much further. An intriguing chapter (chap. 9) by Mark Burden relates how the sense of grievance among those ejected in 1662 was matched by that experienced by the many hundreds of Anglican ministers who had earlier been ejected from their livings by the regime of Oliver Cromwell. If the Dissenting community could gather stories of hardship experienced following Bartholomew's Day, there was an Anglican network which would circulate (and publish) stories of the earlier-dispossessed, many of which sought re-instatement to their pastoral charges in late 1662. If there were Nonconformist chroniclers like Edmund Calamy ready to document the stories of Nonconformist suffering, there was an opposite number, James Walker, ready to chronicle the earlier Anglican hardship.

Second, and still more importantly, this volume excels in its geographic expanse. Previously, (in SBET 33.1) this writer reviewed another work, *The Great Ejectment of 1662*. That commendable book at least demonstrated that effects of the Bartholomew's Day crackdown were felt in Wales as well as England. Another fine volume of recent years, Raymond Brown's excellent *Spirituality in Adversity* (2012) gives a more granular approach by explaining how this upheaval affected many devout individuals. Yet *Settling the Peace of the Church* has a longer reach. We are given chapters explaining the implications of the Restoration for religion in Ireland (Robert Armstrong, chap. 4): Irish Protestant bishops—aware of their need of manpower in contending against residual Catholicism—showed greater discretion than their English counterparts in comprehending ministers who might have turned Nonconformist. Consequently,

as in Elizabethan times, Ireland became a refuge for some of the hotter sort of Protestant. Alasdair Raffe (chap. 5) makes plain that the royal re-instatement of episcopacy in Scotland in 1660-62 ensured that there would be plentiful exclusions from the ministry of persons loyal to the existing Scottish national church, who were properly ordained by her existing presbyteries, and who would not stomach episcopal rule and mandatory liturgies. We are shown in chapters 6 and 7 (Cotter and Stanwood) that the Netherlands and colonial Massachusetts were the havens to which many harried ministers and their families resorted when ministry in England was no longer a possibility. So, the book succeeds in demonstrating that the Ejection was, in effect, a three-nation phenomenon as the outworking of an energetic policy of royal supremacy and uniformity in religion. It enables us to see as well the trans-oceanic repercussions of this royal policy.

Of course some loose ends still remain. The chief of these is the perennial question of who provided the driving force behind the abandonment of the idea of a comprehensive national church capable of enfolding a wider range of Protestants. King Charles had given assurances to the Scots in August, 1660 that the Presbyterian form of government was to be preserved. Earlier in the same year, in the Declaration of Breda, Charles had assured English MPs only that he trusted that a future parliament would enact provisions for differences of opinion. So, was it that the King—acting as a 'politique'—concealed his true intentions as to religious policy until an opportune time? Or was it that the new parliament, so heavily Cavalier in orientation, was determined to exact a uniformity beyond what the crown itself would have required? Yet Charles could have withheld his royal signature to the legislation and demanded that it be modified—which he did not do. So the confusion on this point is undiminished.

As well, *Settling the Peace* does not explore the implications of 1662 for the future course of Protestant theology. Did the various expressions of required uniformity have a clearly deleterious effect on theological studies in the three kingdoms? We certainly know that various Puritans were disadvantaged by ejection. Yet helpful light has recently been shed on this question by two volumes: Stephen Hampton's *Anti-Arminians: The Anglican Reformed Tradition from Charles II to George I* (OUP, 2008) and Dewey Wallace's *Shapers of English Calvinism 1660-1714* (OUP, 2011); in a word, there was no cause-and-effect relation between 1662 and the course taken by theology. Dislocation, yes. Disadvantage, yes. But ruin, no.

Here is the best book known to this reviewer on this emotive subject. Of course our empathy belongs with those who were afflicted; but the

situation was more complex than much popular writing surrounding the Ejection would lead us to believe.

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Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History and Strategies of World Missions. Edited by John Mark Terry. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Books, 2015. ISBN: 978-1-4336-8151-6. viii + 662 pp. £42.15.

Not quite the answer to all you ever wanted to ask about missiology, nevertheless this is a far reaching look at the subject with a range of contributors who handle their respective parts of the jigsaw of mission studies very well. This is a second edition of a book first published in 1997 and widely used as a textbook on mission studies since. The justification for a second edition is 'The canon of Scripture does not change, but missions changes every day' (p. vii). Largely North American in its contributors and focus, the book has wider appeal and relevance, though it is limited by the American emphases. Many of the contributors (there are around forty in total) served elsewhere in the world, but all bar two have been based in and for the most part, lecturers in USA.

Most of the book has stayed the same from the first edition. Around thirty percent of the chapters have the same title and author, while around half of the remaining chapters are similarly or identically titled, but have a new author. Some chapters from the first edition have been completely replaced with new chapters. These new chapters reflect some of the changes in missions in the time since the first edition, addressing issues such as women in missions, business and missions and missions in China.

The material is set out in five sections: introduction to mission studies, Biblical basis, theology of, history of, and a far longer final section 'applied missiology' which considers issues such as eastern religions, contemporary cults, the missionary family, urban missions and strategies for starting churches. The concluding chapter seems to be a conclusion for the whole volume, 'Finishing the Task: A Balanced Approach' by Jeffrey Brawner.

As we might expect, themes such as *mission dei*, evangelism and social action, the Kingdom of God, discipleship, debates over the meaning of mission/missions/missional occur throughout the volume. Inevitably there are instances of overlap, but on the whole a consistency of emphasis is maintained, providing a Bible-centred, Spirit-led, whole people of God serving, rounded mission strategies, approach. There is a lot that will be of great interest and helpfulness to students of mission and to practitioners in both global and home contexts.

It is a large volume, more likely to be consulted than read cover to cover. Some careless mistakes don't help (e.g. a wrong reference on p. 43, in Chris Wright's article, to a book by Chris Wright!). Inevitably the quality of articles varies and some of the key chapters in terms of the thrust of the book let it down: for example in setting out 'An Overview of Missiology', Justice Anderson tells us that the term 'includes the Latin *missio* referring to the *missio Dei*, the mission of God, and the Greek word *logos* (referring to the *logos anthropou*, the nature of mankind)' (p. 4). Is that really the only or main reason for the 'ology' part of the word? I doubted that what he then tried to build could be borne by the weight of his claim. Ed Stetzer finishes an otherwise useful chapter on 'The Missional Church' with reflection on beautiful missional feet, starting from Romans 10:15—why that passage and that theme is anyone's guess.

It is not a 'close the discussion, here is all there is to say' volume. Most of the articles are short—circa 12-15 pages—and work well as thought-provoking and discussion-starting essays, giving good information and guidelines for further thought. A forty-page bibliography helps with suggesting where next to go to follow up matters of interested raised in the book.

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One Nation Under God: A Christian Hope for American Politics. By Bruce Ashford and Chris Pappalardo. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2015. ISBN: 978-1-4336-9069-3. 176 pp. £11.57.

One Nation Under God: A Christian Hope for American Politics by Bruce Ashford and Chris Pappalardo provides the modern Christian with an understanding of how their Christian faith relates to the world of politics. Ashford and Pappalardo aim to show how Christians should navigate their way, in a Christ-like way, through the extremes of imbuing politics with a salvific element or withdrawing completely from it.

As the subtitle suggests, the authors expressly state that they want to inspire hope within their readership. All is not lost as it may seem, in fact, as the book urges, the church is still called to have a powerful and unchanging mission to bring the message of hope—the good news in Jesus Christ—to the situations it finds itself in. In the post-Christian culture of the USA, and of the UK, the church needs to find how best to share that news within the world of politics, and that is what this book aims to help the reader with.

The book is split into two sections, with the first half dealing with the Christian view of politics. In summary, all politics is theological in that God has ordained it to regulate society and ensure the welfare of

the people. Politics, they argue, is not something that God's people have recently had to contend with, but something that from creation, God has been using to bring around change in society and to help it function more smoothly. They argue that Christianity is a public faith, and thus we need to ask how the church should relate to the state, and in what ways we can share the truth of our claims with a pluralistic society. The sixth chapter offers a six-part framework for how Christians must allow biblical wisdom to direct their engagement with politics. The opinions and reflections are of great value, and are worth being read again and again. As this section concludes, they share that Christians need both conviction and wisdom as we engage in a post-Christian public square.

The second half of the book considers seven big issues in American politics today, taking one a chapter at a time. Within each of these issues, Ashford and Pappalardo, show how Christians might use the insightful framework in chapter six to engage with each of these issues. The issues they hope might be addressed in a distinctly Christian way are life and death, marriage and sexuality, economics, environment, race, immigration, and war. They treat each of these with a great deal of biblical insight and balance. They then give an example of how a Christian has dealt with this issue in an exemplary way, before offering helpful challenging discussion questions and some resources that the reader may find helpful to look at.

One Nation Under God is a powerful and persuasive book. The argument for the Christian to engage in politics is seldom heard, perhaps as we are all too frequently drawn to the extremes of creating a theocracy or ignoring political life altogether. However, Ashford and Pappalardo warn against both and convincingly show how we not only can, but should, find avenues to be passionate about the gospel and apply it to the world of politics. The arguments throughout are logical and coherent, with the book being highly readable. The framework they present in chapter six is undoubtedly of particular value to clergy and layperson alike.

Frequently I found myself being in complete agreement with the way they handled each contemporary issue, in the way they presented a biblical understanding of them. While none of them were thorough theses on these topics—most being only four or five pages— there was often enough depth for readers to understand the issue enough before seeing a positive Christian real-life response to it. The resources the authors suggest at the end of each presenting issue are helpful in allowing the reader to engage further with the topic at hand, especially because they have rated the resources based on whether they are suitable for beginner, intermediate, or advanced readers.

While it is recognised that the book is a primer, there were a couple of occasions where the transitions between sections moved quickly, potentially causing offence to readers of certain political persuasions as not enough explanation was given. However, the book would still be a benefit to all readers nonetheless due to the numerous gems of thought and argument within it.

A final critique would be that the book explicitly states that it is from an American perspective and, on occasion, it was obvious that the book was intended for that audience. That being said, the overriding arguments and framework that the authors express ensure that there are more than enough parallels for those of other post-Christian societies to find this book to be a helpful, if not essential, read for those wanting to seek a way to engage positively, responsibly and confidently within the sphere of politics.

If we believe that God is in control of all things, and Lord over all aspects of human life, then we as Christians must engage with the political world around us in a way that reflects Christ. *One Nation Under God* provides this starting point for helping us to interact with the systems, and the policies, that drive our country and culture in a way that, does indeed, gives us hope.

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The Covenant of Redemption: Origins, Development, and Reception. By J. V. Fesko. (Reformed Historical Theology) Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016. ISBN: 978-3-525-55098-4. 256 pp. £69.49.

So many books on historical theology are barely more than summaries of older theologians' books. John Fesko's work on the covenant of redemption is a refreshing break with this mold. In this work, we have an excellent and clear account of the formation, transmission, and contexts of various constructions of the Reformed doctrine of the covenant of redemption. Fesko makes clear in the introduction that his historical work intends to aid the project of retrieving and restoring this historical position and his book is certainly a significant step along that path.

The first chapter deals with the historical origins. He discusses the Scottish General Assembly address by David Dickson in 1638. This is the first explicit defence of the doctrine, but interestingly, Dickson takes it as a generally held position. The chapter also gives a brief sketch of the earlier sources cited in the growth of the doctrine in its early stages. The most important point is that all the figures discussed ground their doctrine in rigorous exegesis. This point is important because many critiques of the doctrine claim it is the product of scholastic speculation.

Chapter two deals with the formation of the doctrine in seventeenth-century England and Scotland. This period and place were where the doctrine flourished into its own within the Reformed community. This chapter also highlights important features of exegesis that factor into the doctrine. Fesko helpfully explains how the covenant of redemption intersects within the historical sources with other doctrines and becomes a real part of the settling Reformed system.

Chapter three covers how the covenant of redemption is articulated on the Continent in the seventeenth-century. This is an interesting chapter because it covers specific debates that have started to crop up regarding how to formulate the doctrine. Some take a position that includes only the Father and Son in the covenant, but others include the Spirit as well. There are also debates, particularly revolving around Johannes Cocceius, about how the doctrine of justification relates to the history of salvation before and after Christ's coming, and the covenant of redemption is discussed as these debates affect it.

Chapter four covers the eighteenth-century formulations of the doctrine. John Gill and Jonathan Edwards are the eighteenth-century examples. The main feature here is the discussion of how both figures revise the covenant of redemption, particularly in relation to the traditional Reformed doctrine of justification. Neither Gill nor Edwards apparently hold to the traditional Reformed view of justification. Gill holds to justification from eternity, which produces a conflation of the eternal covenant of redemption and the historical covenant of grace. Edwards, on the other hand, holds to a 'dispositional soteriology', which denies faith as the instrumental causality for justification. This leads to a revision in the way that Christ functions as covenant surety in the covenant of redemption.

Chapter five deals with the nineteenth-century, taking Princeton theologian Charles Hodge as the representative for this period. Hodge, in contrast to the eighteenth-century figures, defends the traditional view, not only of the covenant of redemption, but also of justification and the instrumentality of faith. Fesko highlights many of the summary statements in Hodge's *Systematic Theology*, but also directs us to Hodge's biblical commentaries and other essays or sermons where he provides more extensive exegetical defence of the doctrine. Fesko's chapter here is a helpful guide to Hodge in collecting many of his writings, rather than summarising only his most popular work.

Chapters six and seven both deal with the twentieth-century, one chapter addressing critics of the covenant of redemption and the other highlighting its defenders. Karl Barth, Klaus Schilder, John Murray, and Herman Hoeksema are the figures who criticise the doctrine. Most criticisms connect to negative views of scholasticism and the desire to revise

Reformed covenant theology as a whole. There is also a tendency among them to highlight the theology of John Calvin above the rest of the subsequent Reformed tradition and, of course, Calvin did not hold to the more elaborate covenant theology of later thinkers. Herman Bavinck, Geerhardus Vos, Abraham Kuyper, G. C. Berkouwer, and Louis Berkhof are the twentieth-century proponents of the covenant of redemption. Even with the variations of expression in these writers, they maintain and defend positions on the doctrine in substantial continuity with earlier Reformed theologians.

The most impressive strength of Fesko's work is how he explains what theological debates are in the background of the changing expressions of the covenant of redemption. He does not treat the doctrine in isolation, but looks at how different topics were under debate in specific periods and how that brings about modification to the eternal covenant. He also gives helpful insight into the changing philosophies that are at work for the various theologians. Views on metaphysics and epistemology change greatly across the periods examined, but Fesko is a faithful guide in explaining what ways of expressing the doctrines remain traditional, even when framed in the terminology of the day, and which views adopt the contemporary philosophy enough to make substantial changes to traditional views.

It is difficult to criticise Fesko's work. At each turn, he provides a balanced approach to the exegetical, theological, and contextual factors behind the doctrine. There possibly could have been more detail in the contextual aspects behind the early formulations, but he makes clear the primary motivation is exegetical and theological refinement. We can be thankful for this work that truly gives much more than book reports, but actually is a significant contribution to contextually sensitive historical theology.

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Revelation: A Handbook on the Greek Text. By David L. Mathewson. (Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament). Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-60258-676-5. xxix + 337 pp. £24.57.

Many valuable resources for students of the Greek New Testament have appeared in the last decade or so. Not only have numerous introductory grammars been published, but also several intermediate grammars, readers and handbooks have been produced for students who wish to develop their Greek skills further (or for those who have studied Greek previously and now wish to revive their knowledge of the language). This spate of

publications has coincided with fresh thinking about Koine Greek in the light of linguistic research. The Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament is designed to provide comprehensive grammatical analysis of the Greek text of the New Testament, informed by recent scholarship in linguistics and Greek. Volumes in the series started to appear in 2003, but since 2009 there has been a steady stream of new titles. With a number of high-quality contributions, this series has become a valued resource for readers of the Greek New Testament, whether advanced theological students, preachers or academics.

David Mathewson, Associate Professor of New Testament at Denver Seminary, has contributed a worthy addition to this series. Mathewson has already written several books and articles on Revelation and/or Greek. This careful analysis of the Greek text of Revelation builds on these earlier works.

Following a short introduction to Revelation and some of the distinctive features of the Greek, Mathewson leads us through the text of Revelation, pericope by pericope. Each section begins with an English translation. Then the Greek text of each verse is analysed, word by word. As usual, in this series, many of the comments are very brief, with a focus of grammatical relationships (e.g., 'nominative absolute' or 'direct object'). Translation of Greek words is not normally provided in the comments, though some words receive a brief explanation. Greek constructions that might be more difficult are explained concisely, and references are often provided to longer discussions in reference works. Some discussions are relatively detailed.

An interesting feature of the Greek text of Revelation is the various 'solecisms' (grammatical irregularities, or grammatical 'blunders'). A notable example is found in Revelation 1:4, where a string of words following a preposition are not in the case expected with this preposition. Mathewson provides a helpful explanation of this phenomenon, pointing to treatments in the works of other grammarians. He also comments on issues such as verbal aspect and discourse analysis.

Mathewson's handbook (like the series in general) would be a very valuable aid to a student or preacher with a good foundation in Greek who wishes to work through the biblical text in Greek. This book is not a replacement for standard exegetical commentaries. The authors in this series pass over wider exegetical issues in order to focus primarily on grammatical and textual issues. This makes the volumes particularly helpful as readers engage with the Greek text for themselves. Less confident readers of Greek may find the minimalist notes a bit daunting, but it should not take long to become accustomed to them.

Readers may find it useful to compare the Baylor Handbooks with another series that has recently seen several new publications: the Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament, published by B&H Academic. Volumes in the latter series cover some similar ground, explaining Greek constructions in a way that helps readers to work with the Greek text. Some of the EGGNT volumes show significant awareness of recent discussion of Greek (for example, verbal aspect, deponency), while in others this is less evident. The volumes in the EGGNT are rather fuller in their comments and have a little more in common with a traditional commentary. There is currently no volume on Revelation available in the EGGNT series.

As an enthusiast and advocate for reading the New Testament in Greek, I am deeply thankful for the availability of resources such as these. I am grateful for reliable, well-informed, guides for readers of the Greek New Testament, and for the vision of Baylor University Press (and various other publishers) to publish these tools. I trust that Mathewson's book and others like it will be widely used to foster direct encounter with the Greek text of Scripture.

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The Gospel of Thomas: Introduction and Commentary. By Simon J. Gathercole. (Texts and Editions for New Testament Study). Leiden: Brill, 2014. ISBN: 978-90-04-19041-2. xi + 723 pp. £158.00.

Simon Gathercole, Senior Lecturer in New Testament Studies at the University of Cambridge, has previously published academic studies of the Gospel of Judas (2007) and the Gospel of Thomas (2012), establishing himself as an important contributor to recent discussion of non-canonical 'gospels'. This massive introduction and commentary on the Gospel of Thomas (GTh) is a further significant contribution that will doubtless be an important resource for future scholarly work on this text.

The first part of the book is a substantial introduction, comprised of twelve chapters. These address the following issues: identification and description of the extant manuscripts; a comparison of the Greek and Coptic texts; specific references to GTh in later ancient documents; references to the content in ancient writings; the original language; the provenance of the work; date and authorship; the structure of GTh; genre; religious outlook; the relationship between GTh, the New Testament and the 'Historical Jesus'; and a brief plan of the commentary.

The issue of dating is one of the most controversial aspects of GTh scholarship, with some scholars arguing for a very early date. Gathercole

favours a date range from AD 135 to before AD 200. He provides a helpful chart identifying the range of recent proposals (pp. 125-7).

One of the reasons that the GTh has received considerable attention in recent years is the suggestion that it might provide some form of access to the 'historical Jesus'. Gathercole looks at various aspects of this question, including whether GTh preserves more original forms of sayings known from the canonical gospels. He concludes, 'Overall, the prospects for the use of *Thomas* in historical Jesus research are slim. As scholarship currently stands, and with the primary sources that are available to us at present, the *Gospel of Thomas* can hardly be regarded as useful in the reconstruction of a historical picture of Jesus' (p. 184).

The commentary itself is substantial (around 430 pages in length). The author follows a standard format for each saying. First, the text in Greek (when available) and in Coptic is provided, along with English translations. Then follows some comment on the text, a discussion of the interpretation of the text, and a concluding section of notes. The book is completed by a fifty-five-page bibliography and various indices.

Gathercole has produced a painstaking work of scholarship that should be consulted by anyone researching GTh. He writes clearly and his comments are well-considered. In his discussions of several issues, such as the question of the provenance of GTh, he evaluates the various arguments but acknowledges that a final conclusion cannot be reached with confidence. This book is not, however, the place to start for someone seeking a general discussion of the significance of GTh. As the author of a scholarly tome, Gathercole engages with the ancient texts and recent scholarship in various ancient and modern languages. Quotations from French- and German-language scholarship are left untranslated.

This is a typically well-produced volume from Brill. While most individual scholars and many libraries will, I imagine, find the hefty price daunting, there is no question about the quality of either the physical book or the scholarship that it contains.

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Riots, Revolutions, and the Scottish Covenanters: The Work of Alexander Henderson. By L. Charles Jackson. Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2015. ISBN 978-1-60178-373-8. viii + 304 pp. £23.15.

This is the first, full-length, modern biography of Alexander Henderson (1583-1646). As the author indicates in his introduction, Henderson was probably the most significant figure in the Church of Scotland in the first half of the seventeenth century. More than that, he had a national stature

and engaged widely with the leaders of the nation of Scotland, during one of the most turbulent periods in Scottish history.

After describing Henderson's early history and background, his education and training, Jackson devotes four chapters to distinct (although related) aspects of his ministry. He deals with Henderson the Covenanter, the Preacher, the Presbyterian and the Pamphleteer. There then follows a final main chapter on the Westminster Assembly. Ultimately, Henderson did not achieve his object (and the stated aim of the Westminster Assembly) of the 'covenanted uniformity of religion' in Scotland, England and Ireland. Presbyterianism was adopted in Scotland but not elsewhere and the *Directory for the Public Worship of God*, one of the documents produced by the Westminster Assembly (and substantially written by Henderson) was not widely used or accepted beyond Scotland.

Henderson himself put this failure down to disunity. One striking aspect of this study is the description of Henderson's careful work (much of it in the background) building alliances and co-ordinating opposition to those who would seek to undermine a Presbyterian settlement. The way he fostered unity among those of reformed convictions and mobilised them for action, not least through the National Covenant, is a lesson to us in a day when reformed ministers and elders are divided and scattered, in numerous denominations and with numerous agendas and therefore achieving little.

One of the dangers of writing books about our heroes is the tendency towards hagiography, seeing no wrong in the great individual who is the object of the study. Sadly, Scottish church history has suffered a great deal from work of this calibre. This book, however, is not of that type. The author gives us a full and fair picture of Henderson, indicating strengths and weaknesses and also indicating when he considers that Henderson was right and also when he was wrong. It is refreshing to read such an honest and comprehensive portrait.

A. T. B. McGowan, Highland Theological College UHI

The Quest for the Historical Adam: Genesis, Hermeneutics, and Human Origins. By William VanDoodewaard. Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2015. ISBN: 978-1601783776. iv + 359 pp. £20.72.[1]

In modern Christian theology, many different views have been espoused in relation to creation and the origins of human beings. Much of the discussion leading to these different perspectives depends upon exegeti-

[1] The review copy of this book has an inscription which reads: 'This edition of *The Quest for the Historical Adam* was specially prepared for the Shepherds' Conference and is not for resale. A hardcover edition with an index will be

cal and other considerations, not least in the interpretation of the early chapters of the book of Genesis. Some have argued for six-day creation, as written in Genesis, saying that the teaching of Scripture trumps any scientific evidence to the contrary. Others have argued for an 'old earth', based on geological and other evidence and have sought to accommodate their reading of Genesis accordingly. Still others have argued that Genesis 1-3 has a literary structure which, when properly understood, allows for an old earth yet still permits special creation of human beings and a literal, historical Adam and Eve. Some have argued that Genesis 1-3 is mythological not historical, therefore we must not try to read it literally. Some Christians believe in evolution, others reject evolution as contrary to Scripture. Some opt for a half-way house known as theistic evolution.

The confusion is worsened when we note that every one of the positions noted above has been advocated by those who self-identify as evangelicals! These debates have gone on for more than two centuries but more recently, particularly in North America, the debate has been re-kindled with some ferocity, for two reasons. First, the work of Biologos, an organisation which advocates harmony between science and biblical faith and holds to an evolutionary understanding of God's creation. Second, by the publication of Peter Enns's book *The Evolution of Adam* (Brazos, 2012).

It is into this debate which VanDoodewaard is writing. In this book he argues strongly for a literal, historical Adam, based on a literal hermeneutic of Genesis, in opposition to any of the other views and theories. He rejects the consensus of modern scientific findings as contrary to Scripture and therefore invalid, either because the science is wrong or because the scientists have not taken account of cataclysmic events such as the flood. This book, however, is not a short popular paperback of an apologetic nature. Rather, it is a massive examination of the entire history of the interpretation of Genesis in relation to Adam's historicity. It is on the basis of this examination that he takes his stand firmly on the literal view.

The author, having set the context for the discussion, divides the analysis into a number of chapters, covering the entire period of Christian thought and reflection. There are chapters on the historicity of Adam in the patristic and medieval period, in the Reformation and post-Reformation periods, in the Enlightenment era, in the 19th and early 20th centuries and finally, from the 1950s to the present. This detailed work will be of use to those reflecting on the issues under consideration, whatever view they might take.

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available for sale later in 2015'. There is no ISBN on the review edition and without an index is 345 pp.

In his final chapter, the author highlights the significance of the debate concerning an historical Adam, not least for an interpretation of the Fall and of Paul's comparison between the headship of Adam and the headship of Christ. For this reviewer, these are the most significant points in relation to the importance of an historical Adam. To put it simply, if there was no historical Adam, why am I a sinner?

A. T. B. McGowan, Highland Theological College UHI

Theology and the Mirror of Scripture: A Mere Evangelical Account. By Kevin J. Vanhoozer and Daniel J. Treier. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2015. ISBN: 978-0-8308-4076-2. 280 pp. £17.99.

Theological Interpretation of Scripture (hereafter TIS) is slowly making its way into evangelicalism. The present volume gives splendid access to this burgeoning movement. *Theology and the Mirror of Scripture* continues this movement by heartily recommending the method of TIS to evangelicals. In it, Vanhoozer and Treier advance a *thick* way of doing theology allocated to the interests of both the church and the academy. They do so, in part, with the use of a metaphor.

They do so with the metaphor of a mirror. As evangelicals reflect on their circumstances, they are to practice reflection with the 'forms' and 'content' of Scripture (p. 21). The metaphor of a mirror helps to understand evangelical theology. According to the authors, we are mirrors, reflections, and images of God that practice or participate in God's narrative by re-presenting it in our own contexts. Our action is one of response to what God is doing in and throughout God's redemptive story.

Before we address the highlights of the book, it is important to define TIS. Minimally, TIS is as simple as finding passages that yield or cohere with certain doctrines. This definition is rather thin, however. TIS might be defined as a conscious reading of biblical texts theologically. TIS is a process of constructing serious theology by reading Scripture in its contemporary contexts. It is important to note that this is not simply a matter of exposition or reading the Scriptures for the story of the Bible, but a rich integration of the textual meaning, the canonical context and the church's reception of it in the present context. As such, TIS is central as a way of evangelically thinking and living.

The authors address several definitions of evangelical, but ultimately come to show the ambiguity of it (pp. 45-9). Saying this, the author's realise the importance of some normative definition that is not historically or sociologically contingent (pp. 47-9). They discuss the possibility of doctrinal boundary markers or centred sets but these prove difficult. Further they discuss the possibility of conjoining a centred set and bounded set

where the centre yields a set of boundaries. They discuss various possibilities in more depth in chapter 4 where they consider evangelicalism as fundamentalism, confessionalism, pietism, or post-evangelical, which I lightly address below.

Unsatisfied with the options, Vanhoozer and Treier describe evangelicalism as an anchored set rather than a centred or bounded set. Their complaint is that bounded sets seem to make every commitment of equal value, and that centred sets seem to lack definition (p. 51). Central to an anchored set is the *object* that sustains our movement and limits our movement. Evangelicalism, as an anchored set, is described by its material and formal elements. It is orthodox in that it coheres with creedal teaching. It is catholic in that it universally exists across time continuous with other confessing churches. It is Protestant, or Reformed, in that it adheres to the famous *solas* of the Protestant-Reformation. Formally, it is *radical* in that its grounding is in the gospel that confronts the world. It is also *irenic* because the wealth of the gospel can only be fully appreciated in the context of multiple perspectives. Finally, it is *joyful* in that it promises God's life to humans (p. 52). While still skeletal in form, they expound on this definition throughout the remaining parts of their thick reflection on evangelical TIS.

First, the authors show for the reader how to do evangelical TIS, making it thick. The authors explicitly lay out the method of TIS in chapter 4, which grounds their application for the church and the academy in chapters 5 and 6. They give an extended treatment of history and mystery, based on 1 Corinthians 3, 4, and 10, so as to distinguish the practice from literalist or purely historical ways of reading Scripture. They suggest that Scripture's mysteries are historically located but extend across time. They suggest three essential contexts for Scriptural interpretation. First, TIS is canonical. Individual texts are tied to a larger collection where God has revealed himself, *primarily*, to his church, thus making it canonical. Second, TIS is creedal. As Scripture is a single-authored revelation to a particular people, its natural environment is the church. Third, TIS is cultural. Defenders of TIS often highlight the significance of historical location. Vanhoozer and Treier agree with the idea that Scripture has significance and meaning across time, and, in fact, contextual assumptions are necessary to the preservation of Scriptural meaning. The authors note different ways of tying together the various threads and contexts, but what is clear for them is that 'wisdom' or *phronēsis* is a *uniting* goal for both the church and the academy. Wisdom is not merely an intellectual property of the mind, but it is a way of feeling and acting that *mirrors* God's being and action in revelation.

Second, the treatment is thick because it offers us a proposal for evangelical churches. Vanhoozer and Treier explicitly touch upon this in chapter 5 where they expound on the practice of evangelical theology in the church setting. The primary objective is to identify the term, evangelical, as an identifier of a certain ecclesial movement. They note the various stances (e.g., fundamentalist, confessional, general, and post-evangelical), but most important is their admonition for ecumenical agreement through a 'multi-level framework', which include levels such as piety, social action, and doctrinal development (p. 219).

Third, the authors lay out a fairly thick proposal for academic evangelical theology in chapter 6, by noting several academic developments. While aware of the challenges intrinsic to each one of these developments, the authors highlight their benefits and how they can be integrally united within TIS. Whilst some readers may have affinities to natural theology and would like to see it woven into the frame, those readers will still find much to reflect upon and practice in their own theologizing. In the end, I was uncertain as to why 'rationalistic' approaches were in tension with evangelical TIS where the rational *imago* is ancillary to the whole process.

Concerns aside, the present work is worthy of much reflection. My use of the word, *thick*, throughout is by no means accidental. What you could have in your hands is a delightfully rich treatment of evangelical TIS. *Theology and the Mirror of Scripture* is not a desert after your meal, but a full course meal. And, it is good.

Joshua R. Farris, Houston Baptist University

Unchanging Witness: The Consistent Christian Teaching on Homosexuality in Scripture and Tradition. By S. Donald Fortson III and Rollin G. Grams. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-4336-8792-1. xii + 402 pp. £27.00.

The sexual revolution of the past half century has seen Christians responding to the particular issue of homosexuality on three levels—pastoral, doctrinal, and political, as issues of care, truth and LGBT rights have been debated.

Unchanging Witness is a timely *doctrinal* resource for those who hold the historic Christian position on this contentious subject currently disturbing the western church. This two-part well-researched survey aims to show the consistency in teaching about homosexual practice found in both Christian tradition (Part 1) and Scripture (Part 2), by letting 'voices from the Christian past be heard alongside the biblical witness' (p. xi). It is a joint work by S. Donald Fortson, who teaches Church History at

Reformed Theological Seminary, and Rollin G. Grams, who teaches New Testament at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

The importance of their thesis is highlighted by the scale of the schism occurring over revisionist claims that 'the church has been wrong all along in its belief that homosexual practice is a sin' (p. xi). Such a claim, in the authors' view, is not born out by the dual evidence of Scripture and Tradition. 'Many contemporary discussions of homosexuality are based on broad assertions lacking substantial grounding in the texts of the Christian tradition… We argue that revisionist interpretations are not only bad exegesis but also an abandonment of historic, orthodox Christianity' (pp. xi-xii).

So what do the writers of *Unchanging Witness* hope to achieve? From the back cover blurb we learn that 'This book addresses the arguments from the gay Christian movement and revisionist theologians and exegetes on a single point: Can they withstand the evidence of the primary sources [regarding the church's condemnation of homosexual behaviour]?' These authors think not; they point out that often theological discussion of homosexuality starts with a reading of the Bible, and study of what it says, without listening to nearly two millennia of church history. 'We intend to right this imbalance… beginning with church history' (p. 3).

The first part of the book quotes primary resources throughout to show how the Bible's teaching on homosexual practice has been consistently and universally understood as condemnatory, rather than condoning, by the early Church Fathers (Ch. 2), the Medieval Church (Ch. 3), the Reformers (Ch. 4), the Catholic and Orthodox Churches (Ch. 5) and mainstream Evangelicals (Ch. 6). In the process the authors show that, contrary to the claims of Yale professor John Boswell, sexual *orientation* was *not* unknown to the Church Fathers, and homosexual *practice* was *not* condoned by the Medieval Church, but overwhelmingly disapproved of, even though judgement should be tempered with mercy (Ch. 3). As Cardinal Ratzinger once wrote in a Letter to Catholic bishops on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons: '*Only what is true can ultimately be pastoral. The [revisionist] neglect of the Church's position prevents homosexual men and women from receiving the care they need and deserve*' (p. 95; italics in original). The final chapter of Part 1, on the 'Revisionist Christianity' of many mainline denominations, concludes with Wolfhart Pannenberg's damning verdict on those churches that, by affirming same-sex 'marriage', depart from the biblical norm: 'A church that took this step would cease to be the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.'

Part 2 examines various biblical texts in light of ancient Near Eastern, Jewish, Greek and Roman primary sources and sets out to answer in each

case the interpretations and arguments made by the revisionists. In Chapter 8 situational ethics and the claim that 'no sex ethics can be found in Scripture' is answered by Paul's take on the sinful passion that lies behind forbidden behaviour, and the clear OT sexual ethic that limits sex to a man and a woman in marriage (Ch .9). The case of Sodom is discussed in Chapter 10 as being about hospitality *and* homosexuality. Israel's *distinctiveness* from ancient near eastern cultures, continued in Judaism, is demonstrated in Chapters 11 and 12. Chapter 13 moves on to the New Testament where evidence for support for homosexual practice is found to be nonexistent; instead there is an emphasis on purity and exclusion (Ch. 14). In fact 'soft' men and their supposed orientation are a threat to such purity (Ch. 15).

Most of what is written in this second half adds little to what has already been compiled and argued in Robert Gagnon's magisterial work, *The Bible and Homosexuality: Texts and Hermeneutics* (Abingdon, 2001). An exception is Chapter 14 with its section on Paul's insistence in 1 Corinthians 5-7 on purity and holiness for the church, contradicting 'the erroneous notion that Paul's statements about the Mosaic Law involved a complete rejection of the Old Testament law for Christians' (p. 264). Thus, it is argued, 'As in Leviticus, Paul says a church should put the sinful person out of God's people' in the hope that 'the experience will drive that person to repentance' (p. 271). Not surprisingly, the authors record their dissent from Stanley Grenz's suggestion that homosexuals should be welcomed without affirming them, on the grounds that he thus fails to take seriously the OT horror of impurity. They also observe that Paul's concern about orientation related to *the heart's direction* (a rebellious passion), not *the psyche's condition*. They conclude (Ch. 18) that when the world challenges God's purposes for creation it subverts the gospel and for this reason alone Christianity and homosexuality are irreconcilable.

For those engaged in current church debate regarding gay ministers, *Unchanging Witness* provides solid evidence of the consistently negative view of homosexual practices by both Scripture and the tradition of the church. Those involved with ministering to homosexuals in their church will have to ponder the writers' ecclesiology of holiness which they see as 'inextricably related to the personal purity of the church's members. Moreover,' as they conclude, 'how the church includes and excludes persons is a matter of soul care, which is also a matter of eternal significance for individuals. Indeed, how a church handles wilful sin in its midst involves the outworking of the gospel in the midst of a community' (p.275).

Paul C. J. Burgess, Lugton, Kilmarnock

Confucius for Christians: What an Ancient Chinese Worldview Can Teach Us about Life in Christ. By Gregg A. Ten Elshof. Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2015. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7248-7. 102 pp. £9.99.

Confucius for Christians is a helpful but often unsettling book for those shaped by historic western theologies and worldviews. By contrast, most of East Asia has been shaped by centuries of Confucianism, a far different context from, and into, which to engage in biblical reflection. Gregg Ten Elshof grapples with the dual questions: 'How much is our reading of Scripture formed by western presuppositions and worldview, which may not be biblical at all?' and, 'Are there things we can learn from the Confucian wisdom tradition?'

Ten Elshof is not at all putting biblical revelation and Confucian writing on an equal footing, but rather is concerned to study some of the teachings of Jesus as the lens through which to test both our western assumptions and practice of Christian living, and Confucian values. This is not a book about contextualization so much as exploring in what ways we can learn about wise, good living from sources beyond the Scriptures, specifically Confucian thought. As James M. Houston comments on the book, 'Looking again at Christianity from an Eastern perspective helps us in the West be aware of how our enculturation has distorted the Christian faith.'

Ten Elshof illustrates his subject by consideration of family, learning, ethics and ritual, along with case studies. So for instance, in the chapter concerning family, he shows how Confucius emphasized that a well-ordered life and human goodness cannot be separated from well-ordered relationships; and that healthy familial relationships between parent and child, between siblings, and between spouses, are the foundation and training ground for good relationships between 'ruler and subject' [*i.e. relating to authority structures in society*], and between friends. All these relationships are thus interdependent. This contrasts with the strongly individualistic and atomized approach to relationships in much contemporary western society, including often in our churches. The question is, which better reflects the Lord's teaching?

In relation to learning, Confucian wisdom teaches that there is a difference between a love of learning and a love of knowledge, and that the former better encourages humility and a willingness to examine fresh material that may require modification of previous understanding. Are there areas where as Christians we have closed our minds to unfamiliar ideas and practices without honest examination? Do we sometimes behave as if our understanding of Scripture rather than the Scripture itself is infallible?

'Ritual' is a tricky word for evangelicals—British ones, at least. But Ten Elshof uses the term primarily to mean the kind of repetition (e.g. of Creed or practice) which may begin as an outward observance only, but in time trains our inward hearts so that spontaneity and godly habit converge. Although he does not use the term, he is describing the need for the *spiritual disciplines*—a timely word in our twenty-first century Western over-emphasis on personal autonomy and dislike of discipline.

The author teaches at Biola University, but his style in this short book is very informal. Approximately a third of the book consists in quite lengthy case studies, parts of which I would gladly have skimmed. But perhaps that neatly illustrates one of the concerns of Ten Elshof. Many outside the Western world learn theology and discipleship most effectively through narrative and story-telling. For many Asians, the case studies would be the real meat of the book, while many Westerners are more accustomed to propositions and systematic teaching. Being accustomed is not however the same as what may be more effective and life-changing.

And so, as East meets West, and the Church becomes increasingly global and we learn to live together for the glory of God, *Confucius for Christians* offers some helpful signposts as to how we can understand one another—and how an ancient Eastern philosophy may help us understand how to live the Christian life more fully.

Rose Dowsett, Glasgow

Urban Legends of the New Testament: 40 Common Misconceptions. By David A. Croteau. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2015. ISBN: 978-1-4336-8012-0. xv + 255 pp. £11.60.

David Croteau is Professor of New Testament and Greek in the Seminary and School of Ministry at Columbia International University, where for a decade he has been teaching hermeneutics. In this book he demonstrates why it is so vital that we strive for the most accurate understanding of a text, even if that means letting go of some cherished hitherto held assumptions.

It isn't clear why Croteau affixes the term 'urban' to his examination of false interpretations, but he defines 'An urban legend [as] a commonly circulated myth, repeated throughout the culture as common knowledge, but which isn't true' (p. xiii).

The book comprises forty brief chapters, each structured in a similar way: a summary of the 'legend', a look at some of the problems raised by this reading, attention to historical and cultural context, examination of particular Greek words if need be, and then a suggested reinterpretation and its significance. Part I introduces sixteen passages/verses from the

Gospels, and Part II covers twenty-four from Acts, the Epistles, and Revelation.

The Gospel section is as diverse as 'Jesus was a carpenter', 'Do not judge others', or 'The Gospel of John never refers to repentance', and much more. Part II includes 'Just say you believe in Jesus and you will be saved', 'Hell is the absence of God', 'Money is evil', and 'Good works are optional for Christians'—and again, much more. Almost all chapters are based around a specific verse. In addition, ten 'urban legends' have QR codes through which the reader can watch brief videos on the internet of the author addressing each of these.

In each chapter, Croteau argues his case coherently and straightforwardly, in everyday language that shows how some of this material began in teaching in a local church context. The author wears his scholarship lightly, but it is clear that he has a thorough grasp of language, culture, context and the wider vista of the text and theology of the whole Scripture. His clear passion is to uphold the absolute integrity and authority of the Scriptures, which deserves our utmost attention to accuracy in rightly understanding it.

Whether or not the reader agrees with every case that Croteau makes, this volume takes us away from the examination of the theory of hermeneutics (which can be hugely important, but equally can be sterile and nit-picking) and into the realm of concrete application: what does this specific text truly mean, and how do we reach accurate understanding?

That is surely a quest we need all to pursue; and for those readers of *SBET* who are ministers or teachers, helping others grasp the true truth of Scripture accurately must be a central concern.

Rose Dowsett, Glasgow

The Professor's Puzzle: Teaching in Christian Academics. By Michael S. Lawson. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2015. ISBN: 978-1-4336-8410-4. xix + 296 pp. £30.

In this stimulating volume, Michael S. Lawson seeks to orient the novice educator to consider best practice in teaching from a Christian perspective. The work is motivated by two important considerations. First, content mastery demonstrated by the acquiring of a terminal degree is neither sufficient nor exhaustive of good preparation for teaching. Second, 'a truly Christian education' is 'not just teaching from a Christian perspective' (p. xii). '[T]he goal of all *Christian* education', Lawson writes, is 'to love God more' (p. xiv). Lawson therefore devotes the first chapter to 'A Philosophy for Christian Education', before looking at a holistic and integrative framework for the place of learning in chapter 2.

Following this initial material, the rest of the book looks at various aspects of the 'puzzle' of an educator's work. Lawson considers learning theories and practices that will enable good course planning. He looks at the admittedly important, though complex, question of content mastery, as well as the skills necessary to manage the classroom experience and to successfully evaluate different components of education. The chapter on 'Instructing Skills' looks at a variety of approaches and techniques for good classroom teaching, including, but not limited to, lecturing. Lawson further develops the idea of a Christian educator through the topic of 'Relating Skills', hoping that lecturers will not only enable students to acquire 'more information' but that their approach to teaching will inculcate a real love of learning.

In his final chapter on 'Institutional Realities', Lawson grapples at length with the practicalities and tensions that educators are likely to face. He provides a realistic and frank account of the common frustrations and sorrows involved in contemporary teaching in higher education settings including the issues of funding, accreditation, and tenure.

The valuable offerings made by Lawson's reflections on teaching are sometimes let down by the theological rational for his educational framework. Discussing planning skills, for example, Lawson writes that 'The God of the Bible plans everything, so if we are to be like him, we must also plan' (p. 94). Such theological univocity is concerning, though the weaknesses of such an argument should not, of course, obscure the genuine necessity and responsibility of careful planning, which might be commended theologically on other terms. Again, Lawson employs Christ's 'skills' at winemaking, cooking, and his awareness of regional news to argue for the importance of integrated knowledge for the Christian educator (p. 45). Certainly the unity of knowledge as well as the utility and virtue of integrated learning are defensible on theological grounds, but this does not seem the best way to make such a defence.

The Professor's Puzzle defies simple genre distinctions. Lawson writes with an engaging and enjoyable autobiographical style; reading his book feels like being invited into a warm conversation with an experienced educator. His deep care for students and appreciation for the opportunities presented by the educational experience are clear. Lawson, very naturally, writes from a particular denominational, cultural, and educational context. Much, however, can easily be translated into different ecclesial or institutional settings.

Often there is very little to guide early career scholars through the terrain of learning good pedagogical practice. Rarer still is deliberate attention to the telos of or motivation for learning. Yet this book provides much that will be of good, pragmatic interest to the new Christian educa-

tor. Its theological weaknesses ought not to distract the charitable reader from the genuine insight and expertise that Professor Lawson offers to the next generation of academics.

Alden McCray, University of St Andrews

Recapturing the Voice of God: Shaping Sermons Like Scripture. By Steven W. Smith. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2015. ISBN: 978-4336-8250-6. x + 230 pp. £19.25.

In *Recapturing the Voice of God*, Steven W. Smith's main focus is the structure, or shape, of sermons. He contends that, 'much of what we call expository preaching simply isn't' (p. 1). In our current context, expository preaching has become less about explaining and applying a biblical text, and more about a 'tired, formulaic preaching template' (p. 1).

In response to this problem, Smith invites the reader to consider that, 'Expository, text-driven preaching, is not a style but a theologically driven philosophy of preaching whose purpose is to get as close to the text as possible' (p. 1). Smith develops this idea in the opening chapters, first by arguing that true expository preaching is an attempt to capture the voice of God, as it is present in the Word of God, and re-present that through the sermon. If this is the task of preaching then the structure or shape of this re-presentation should be modelled on the Scripture which is being preached.

Having made his case, Smith demonstrates how sermon structure can mirror the structure of Scripture. He begins by arguing that there are three macro structures within the Bible, into which the nine discernible genres fit, as follows:

1. Story: Old Testament Narrative, Law, Gospel/Acts, Parables.

2. Poem: Psalms, Prophecy, Wisdom Literature (which includes Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon)

3. Letter: Epistles, Revelation.

Smith's reasoning is that, by understanding the genres of Scripture, and seeing how they fit within the three larger structural forms, we have a better chance of ensuring our sermons are structured in a way which reflects the passage from which we are preaching.

Smith uses these genres as the basis for the rest of his book: each chapter is devoted to exploring how the genre 'works' within Scripture, and how the preacher can re-present this in a sermon. In an effort to show how each genre can be 're-presented' in a sermon, he concludes each chapter

with an exemplar: taking a biblical text and talking the reader through the process of crafting this into a sermon which, in Smith's opinion, appropriately presents the Word of God in its genre-specific way.

In writing this book, Smith has presented his arguments in a clear and persuasive way. His initial consideration of the need for sermon structure which is shaped by the biblical genre of the text is thorough and well thought through. I was especially taken by his use of the idea that preachers 're-present' the Word of God: we are not inventing something new, but taking what God has already spoken through the Bible and I appreciated the time he spent explaining his view that preaching is 're-presenting' the Word of God.

Smith's explanation as to how to structure a sermon based on a genre is clearly presented. It becomes clear as you read each chapter how Smith has arrived at his conclusions, as he closely examines each genre in detail, highlighting particular aspects and nuances.

Including exemplar sermons at the conclusion of each chapter is also helpful. While it is engaging to read Smith's theory as to how to structure a sermon based on the genre of the text, it is beneficial to actually read how he puts his own theories to work. This, I think, helps the reader to really grasp how specific genres dictate and change the way a preacher may approach the structure of the sermon.

I only have one major issue with this book, and it is Smith's claim that expository preaching has fallen into a rut: in other words, that it has become a predictable '3-point' sermon structure. I should say that I have no doubt that his observation is true in some instances, and that some preachers have indeed fallen back on this as being the only approach to sermon preparation. My issue, however, is that there is no indication as to how Smith arrived at this observation or how much of a problem this has become. There are a number of books and courses used to train preachers, and to my knowledge, these will often cover the importance of context and genre in sermon preparation. With this being the case, I would have appreciated if Smith explained why he felt expository preaching in particular had gained the reputation he claims.

In addition, I feel that Smith's work would have benefitted from a slightly deeper exploration of the historical development of expository preaching. He does, in the opening chapters, present a brief history and theology of preaching. I think it would have been helpful at this point if he had taken time to show how others have tackled the issue of sermon structure based on Scripture, and shown how his own work either challenged these previously held views, or built on and developed them. I appreciate that he presents his ideas in his own, unique way, but I feel this kind of exploration would have further strengthened his arguments.

My concluding thought for this review is a suggestion as to how best to use this book in the context of ministry. While this book is engaging, reading it from cover to cover can be challenging, as there is a lot on which to reflect. I would suggest that a better way is to wait until preaching on a particular genre of Scripture, and then read the relevant chapter of Smith's book. This will keep the specific details on a specific genre fresh throughout your sermon preparations.

Stuart Love, Glasgow

CORRECTION

The footnote on p. 81 of the previous edition (34.1) ought to have read:

> 'After reading Mr Baird's review, I suggested he ask Professor Gaffin for comment on this paragraph. He responded to the author that he agrees with his critique. Mr Baird raises an important issue that would have to be addressed in any future study of Vos's doctrine of union with Christ.'

Apologies to all concerned. *Review Ed.*