Reviews

Divine Will and Human Choice: Freedom, Contingency, and Necessity in Early Modern Reformed Thought. By Richard A. Muller. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017. ISBN: 978-0801030857. 336pp. £30.

How can sovereignty of divine will be compatible with freedom of human choice? Throughout church history, theologians and philosophers have wrestled with this question by adopting various philosophical tools to explain the precise nature of necessity, possibility, and contingency. In this study, Richard Muller provides a comprehensive reassessment of medieval background of the early modern Reformed thought on those philosophical concepts. The book was written in direct response to a thesis put forward by Antonie Vos and his associates who contributed to the book *Reformed Thought on Freedom: The Concept of Free Choice in Early Modern Reformed Theology*, edited by Willem J. van Asselt, J. Martin Bac, and Reolf T. te Velde, (Baker, 2010). According to this thesis, John Duns Scotus is the major formative figure behind a number of early modern Reformed orthodox thinkers. This is in large part due to their adoption of Scotus's concept of synchronic contingency. According to this concept, something is contingent if there is a true alternative for what actually occurs in the same moment of time. This is in contrast with diachronic contingency, according to which something is contingent if an alternative can occur at some other time. With this synchronic view of contingency, Scotus is seen to overcome deterministic tendency of diachronic understanding in Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas. Against this thesis, Muller offers an extensive critique in this book. Muller argues that the idea of synchronic contingency should be taken not so much as replacement of diachronic contingency as refinement or adding nuance to the diachronic counterpart. Then, he argues that the philosophical background of the early modern Reformed should best be described as eclectic rather than solely Scotistic.

In order to achieve this purpose, Muller divides his book into three parts. Part I sets the scene for the rest of the book by describing the state of the research, analyzing the multi-layered nature of the problem, and setting out both logical and historical issues involved with the idea of synchronic contingency. Part II then deals with the question of reception of Aristotle during the medieval period. Here Muller focuses on the issue of principle of plenitude: the idea that all possibilities must be actualized at some future time and what is never actualized are regarded not as possibilities but as impossibilities. This issue becomes his focus as deter-

ministic, 'statistical' interpretation of Aristotle and Thomas was based on their supposed advocacy of the principle. Against this, Muller demonstrates quite convincingly that Aristotle and Aquinas indeed rejected that principle. More controversially, Muller argues that synchronic element is already present in Aquinas's thinking on contingency despite his diachronic orientation, and that Scotus with his synchronic orientation did not alter the basic understanding of contingency but only added an emphasis on the simultaneous nature of multiple potencies. Based on this analysis of the medieval background, Part III finally goes on to examine prominent Reformed thinkers in the early modern period (including Franciscus Junius, Franciscus Gomarus, William Twisse, John Owen, Gisbertus Voetius, and Franciscus Turretin) and shows that the philosophical outlook of the Reformed orthodoxy should be best described as eclectic. This is particularly the case as examination of the model of divine concurrence in many of the Reformed orthodox indicates their Thomistic inclination.

Throughout this study, Richard Muller provides his penetrating analysis of the multi-layered issues involved. In addition to his meticulous scholarship on the early modern period, for which he is well known, here Muller displays that he also has a surprisingly thorough familiarity with a wide variety of both primary and secondary sources from the ancient and medieval periods. Nevertheless, this important scholarly debate will likely continue, particularly as the intricate nature of relationship between diachronic and synchronic contingency demands further clarification. For example, Muller draws his definitions of diachronic and synchronic contingency from Ian Wilks's study because his definition of diachronic contingency 'does not follow the "statistical" definition' (p. 49). The purpose of Ian Wilks's study, however, was to show some cases where diachronic and synchronic contingency do stand opposed to each other (Ian Wilks, 'The Use of Synchronic Contingency in Early Fourteenth Century Debate over the World's Temporal Duration', in *Disputatio: an International Transdisciplinary Journal of the Late Middle Ages*, 2 (1997), pp. 143–58). In other words, even if the deterministic reading of Aristotle and Aquinas based on their advocacy of the principle of plenitude can be disputed, it does not necessarily mean negation of the radical nature of synchronic contingency. Therefore, Muller's basic claim that the synchronic contingency provides refinement to diachronic counterpart rather than replacement might still be questioned.

Although highly philosophical nature of the subject matter does not make this book particularly appealing to many outside the field of Reformed scholasticism, it is yet recommended for those who are seeking to be informed about how the Reformed orthodox theologians wrestled

with the age-old issue of divine will and human freedom and about the nature of their medieval scholastic background.

Takayuki Yagi, University of Edinburgh

In Search of Ancient Roots: The Christian Past and the Evangelical Identity Crisis. By Kenneth J. Stewart. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017. ISBN: 9781783596072 (UK); 978-0-8308-5172-0 (USA). 300pp. £17.99.

In this book the author, who teaches theological studies at Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, Georgia, USA, addresses what he identifies as an identity crisis among contemporary evangelicals. He sees the most obvious symptom of this crisis to be the notion that evangelicalism is a latecomer in Christian history, prompting a number of evangelical leaders to convert to the Roman Catholic and Orthodox confessions which claim unbroken continuity with early Christian tradition. The writings of recent converts such as Tom Howard in America and Michael Harper in the UK reflect the contention of the 19th century Anglican convert to Rome, J. H. Newman, that 'to be deep in history is to cease to be Protestant.'

Stewart sets the crisis in context by noting, Michael Harper notwithstanding, both that it is mainly a North American phenomenon, and that the drift from evangelicalism to Rome becomes a trickle when contrasted with the flood in the other direction, with 30% of US evangelicals being first or second generation former Roman Catholics. However, the claims of Newman and others demand a response.

Stewart offers a strong apologia for the historical pedigree of evangelical doctrine. He argues that throughout the entire history of the Christian church evangelical movements have been perennial and recurring. While recognising that evangelicalism took particular organisational forms in the 19th century in the emergence of some parachurch bodies, Stewart argues that key evangelical doctrines are rooted in Christian antiquity. He cites G. S. Faber's collation of evidence that twenty-eight Fathers from Clement of Rome (ad 96) to Bernard of Clairveaux (1090–1153) viewed justification to be by faith, and not by contributed merit. Furthermore, many of what today are regarded as evangelical convictions are reflected in the early creeds of the church.

Stewart asserts that, overall, evangelical scholars cannot be justifiably accused of neglecting the study of the development of doctrine in the early church. T. M. Lindsay, James Orr, and J. C. Ryle are referenced among others for their work in the nineteenth century, as are J. G. Machen, Geerhardus Vos, F. F. Bruce, and Geoffrey Bromiley in the twentieth, as well as

D. F. Wright, Alister McGrath, and Gerald Bray who continued researching this important sphere into the twenty-first century.

In addition to reviewing such treatments of the apostolic church Fathers, Stewart supplies two chapters appraising evangelical scholarship on the frequency of the Lord's Supper and early church baptism. The former contains a somewhat critical evaluation of the traditional Scottish communion seasons, while the latter offers a somewhat ambivalent understanding of infant baptism. Surprisingly, the significant role of the Scottish communion seasons in 18th and 19th century revivals is passed over. These chapters on the sacraments are followed by a useful review of the interaction between theological exegesis, biblical theology and the history of interpretation.

In Search of Ancient Roots helpfully evaluates the Apocrypha which modern Christian marketing is bringing to the attention of evangelical Christians. Stewart reviews the claims that the apocryphal books are canonical scripture, and finds them wanting. At the same time he recognises that early Protestant Bibles kept them accessible as an appendix at the end of the Old Testament, but disassociated from the canonical writings. He also considers these books to be valuable in providing information about the period when the Jewish state was a colony of the Persians, Greeks and Romans, as well as forming 'part of the thought world of Jesus' (p. 169).

The author offers a fascinating study of J. H. Newman and his belated positive influence on the theology underling debates at Vatican II. Also on offer in this book is a study of the current evangelical fascination with 'lite' monasticism, at a time when full-blown Roman monasticism appears to be languishing in the cloisters. Following a chapter questioning whether Christian unity depends on a central bishop of Rome, there is an insightful chapter on justification recounting that in the first half of the sixteenth century there was a justification by faith alone movement within the Catholic Church. This movement was represented at the Catholic-Protestant Colloquy at Regensburg in 1541 where a remarkable concurrence on justification was achieved. Sadly this success was not followed up by Pope Paul III, and a few years later the Council of Trent anathematised justification by faith alone.

In Search of Ancient Roots is beautifully written, well researched, and easily read. It is incisive in its analysis, but irenic in its critique. Its investigation of why some younger evangelicals are turning to Catholicism and Orthodoxy is surely a call to evangelical pastors and leaders of parachurch ministries to pause in their activism. In effect, this book challenges readers to take a prayer-breather which will create space and make time to reflect on whether a laissez-faire ecclesiology, an obsession with

cultural relevance, a proneness to divide, an addiction to faddism, may be asphyxiating some sections of the body of Christ in our generation.

Fergus Macdonald, Edinburgh

Biblical Authority after Babel: Retrieving the Solas *in the Spirit of Mere Protestant Christianity*. By Kevin J Vanhoozer. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2016. ISBN 978-1-58743-393-1. xii + 269pp. £13.99.

This book champions 'mere Protestant Christianity' with 'mere' taken to mean essential rather than minimal. It does so by exploring the interpretive authority of Scripture against a background which lacks both a consensual criterion for evaluating interpretation and visible church unity. Vanhoozer's key strategy is to 'retrieve' the five *solas* of the Reformation in an attempt to move forward faithfully by looking back creatively.

The five *solas* — grace alone, faith alone, Scripture alone, Christ alone, and for the glory of God alone — are construed as 'theological insights into the ontology, epistemology, and ideology of the gospel.' Their special function is 'to preserve the integrity of the triune economies of revelation and redemption,' thus providing 'a pattern for reading Scripture theologically that enables Protestant unanimity on theological essentials, and thus the possibility of genuine fellowship in spite of secondary and tertiary doctrinal differences' (p. 28).

Vanhoozer grounds *Sola gratia* in the Trinity. 'The grace of God concerns the way the Father, Son and Spirit share their love, life and light respectively with those who are not God' (p. 35). The author maintains an interpretive consensus exists among mere Protestant Christians that the Bible is fundamentally about grace which is mediated to us by the Spirit as we read and interpret the words of Scripture. Thus grace provides the framework of biblical interpretation. Locating biblical interpreters and interpretation in the all-encompassing economy of triune communication, prompts the author to claim that *sola gratia* refutes the charge that the Reformation caused secularisation.

The chapter on 'Faith Alone' argues that Christian faith, the gift of the Holy Spirit, is 'properly basic.' This term borrowed from Alvin Plantinga describes a belief that does not need to be justified or inferred from any other belief in order to be considered rational. The validity of this claim for Christian faith is founded on the triune God being the rightful authority in that he has constituted the essential nature of things, determined their proper function, and ordered their final purpose. Because the triune God reveals in Scripture his will for humanity, Scripture is the faithful's default 'fiduciary framework' — i.e. an interpretive thought

structure that one initially takes on faith until it proves itself by yielding a harvest of understanding.

In his treatment of *sola scriptura*, Vanhoozer promotes two key principles of biblical interpretation. First, there is the *canonic* principle of Scripture interpreting Scripture. 'Scripture provides the overarching metanarrative and hermeneutical framework for understanding its parts.' This self-interpreting role is vitally facilitated by the Holy Spirit who accompanies the Word and illumines the interpreter. The second is the *catholic* principle which recognises that church tradition, as the consensual teaching on Scripture's core storyline, is an important marker for interpreters. Scripture is 'the primal and final authority, not the sole authority' (p. 111).

The chapters on 'Christ Alone' and 'For the Glory of God Alone' are both studies in ecclesiology. *Solus Christus* is expounded in terms of *corpus Christi*. Jesus asserts his lordship over the world by commissioning a visible human society to represent him and his rule. Members of each local church are responsible for ordering their church to reflect the truths of all five *solas*. As a royal priesthood they are the recipients of the 'keys' — i.e. they have 'authority to make binding interpretive judgments on matters pertaining to statements of faith and the life of church members insofar as they concern the integrity of the gospel' (p. 174). Although, according to Vanhoozer, this authority is conferred on local churches, they are to confer with other local churches, for each local church is wholly the church, but not the whole church. For this reason denominations are given a place provided they are committed to reform and renewal through a continuing reading of Scripture and allow disagreement on doctrines of lesser importance.

The final chapter is a plea for Protestantism and evangelicalism to find one another. Evangelicalism can be a shot in the arm for a tired Protestantism by opening up the possibility of a confessional unity on first-order doctrines, while permitting liberty on doctrines considered to be of second and third order of importance. On the other hand, because the *solas* resonate with key features of evangelicalism, Protestantism can supply confessional stem cells to a culturally compromised evangelicalism.

This book is a challenging read, but it offers a wide range of riches to persevering readers. There are some marvellous theological one-liners, and a series of fascinating 'sidebars.' Will it promote 'plural interpretive unity'? Yes, among the Protestants in view, for the 'mere' qualifier suggests they are already agreed on first rank doctrines. It will also resource mainline evangelicals as they argue theologically for reform within denominations which are somewhat less than 'merely' Protestant. However, the contention that interpretive authority lies with *local* churches

rather than also with wider representative bodies may make it problematic even for many 'mere' Protestant denominations to heed Vanhoozer's call. And his vision of evangelical energy reviving a weary Protestantism will significantly depend on parachurch organisations developing a more mutual relationship with churches than often currently obtains.

This volume is warmly commended for many reasons, and particularly for: (1) its advocacy of an authority principle founded in the Triune God which is articulated externally in Scripture and internally in the believer by the Holy Spirit; (2) its strong focus on the importance of respecting catholicity both historically in tradition, and contemporaneously in conferring with other interpreters; and (3) its assertion that biblical interpretation is less a procedure that readers perform on the text than a process of spiritual formation that the text performs in readers.

Fergus Macdonald, Edinburgh

The Doctrines of Grace in an Unexpected Place. By Mark R. Stevenson. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-4982-8109-6. 320pp. £31.

This interesting volume considers whether the early British Plymouth Brethren leaders in the middle of the nineteenth century in Britain can be described as Calvinists, or at least as moderate Calvinists. The author provides definitions of degrees of Calvinism in England in the nineteenth century and seems to suggest that the Brethren belonged to the category of moderate, but it is questionable if this is a satisfactory way of distinguishing them or other types of Calvinists.

The author begins by providing two chapters which detail the influence of Calvinism in the centuries from the Reformation onwards. Those details indicate that Calvinism has a reluctance to disappear since there was more than one recovery of Calvinism in the decades before the Brethren Movement commenced in the 1830s. Some early Brethren leaders were aware of and some were in contact with those who promoted Calvinistic teachings in the 1820s and 1830s.

There then follows a set of chapters considering how several Brethren leaders, in different ways, approved of a Calvinistic interpretation of human sinfulness, divine election and the atonement. Several well-known names are included, such as J. N. Darby, A. N. Groves, C. H. Mackintosh and W. Kelly, as well as numerous others. One non-Calvinist appears throughout the book, an evangelist by the name of Alexander Marshall, but he belonged to a later generation of Brethren leaders.

One chapter considers an area of belief about which the Brethren were often under attack from other Christian leaders and that concerned how

the Brethren thought of the relationship between faith and assurance. They were criticised for ignoring the need for repentance and for assuming that assurance belonged to the essence of saving faith, with some writers accusing them of the heresy of Sandemanianism (faith basically is only mental assent to gospel invitations). There was some basis for the accusations in the preaching of several Brethren evangelists, but those statements were not endorsed by the leaders assessed by the author, and their views on the nature of saving faith were similar to other orthodox Christians.

With regard to assurance, one reason for the Brethren's attempts to get their listeners and readers to focus on Christ for assurance rather than on changes within themselves was that many Christians at that time did try to gain assurance from their way of life and failed to have it. So it is not surprising that the Brethren and others stressed a different way of finding assurance by focusing on Christ rather than on inward experiences and life changes.

The final chapter provides a summary of the perspective of the early Brethren leaders. They opposed human creeds on principle, were radically biblicist (they accepted only what could be proved from the Bible), and were passionate about evangelism (they did not believe it was appropriate to introduce deep truths into evangelistic preaching). Since this was the case, it is not surprising that eventually subsequent generations of Brethren forgot the Calvinist convictions of their founders. Of course, the same outlook is found in other churches as well.

The author proves his case that some of the early Brethren leaders can be classified as Calvinists, although to be so identified would probably not be their choice given that they objected to all human classifications of believers. Nevertheless, one can ask why those leaders had those beliefs, and an obvious reason is that several of them had undergone theological training in other denominations before they became Brethren and retained those doctrinal beliefs after adopting some or all of the doctrines or practices usually regarded as Brethrenism.

The book is a reminder that origins of spiritual movements within the church are varied, and that various groups can walk together for a time before some of them head away in their own directions. Early Brethrenism shared with others a desire for a return to New Testament Christianity, for involvement in worldwide mission, for the priesthood of all believers, and for lay participation in church activities. Such a desire was very commendable, although the history of Brethrenism is a clear example of the difficulty of attaining such a goal even when core principles have been identified.

Sadly, many of the leaders referred to became responsible for dividing the Brethren Assemblies and, some would say, diverting them away from the original vision. Whatever else may be said about their Calvinistic leanings in doctrine, they did not prevent sad developments among those who once walked together. Nevertheless, this book is an important study of an aspect of the theological beliefs of a spiritual movement that affected its contemporaries in widespread ways, and which for a while in the nineteenth century contributed to the adoption of Calvinism in churches in Britain and Ireland.

Malcolm Maclean, Greyfriars Free Church, Inverness

Anthony Tuckney (1599–1670): Theologian of the Westminster Assembly. By Youngchun Cho. Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2017. ISBN: 978-1601785701. xii + 164pp. £28.67.

Anthony Tuckney was an important member of the Westminster Assembly who played a crucial role in the development of the Westminster Larger Catechism. An examination of his theology has certainly been needed and Youngchun Cho's volume helps fill that gap. Cho explored many aspects of Tuckney's theology, and uses an excellent variety of sources. Although more and more monographs appeal only to easily available, English sources, Cho made outstanding use of manuscript and Latin works. This is a significant strength of the work, and provides readers with access to material that may not be accessible to everyone. Additionally, his translations are well done, and accurately construe the Latin text from Tuckney's disputations. In this way, Cho is a superb guide to all of Tuckney's works and leads us into the full range of his corpus.

Another strength of Cho's volume is that it explores that major aspects of Tuckney's theology in an orderly way. This means we have helpful pointers to where Tuckney engaged with various topics of theology. Cho demonstrates that Tuckney was a formidable advocate of standard Reformed theology. He leads us through the menagerie of sources to provide a fully rounded description of Tuckney's theology and explain the exegetical and theological arguments that undergird those views.

This book, however, has several shortcomings. First, there is no clearly stated overall thesis to the book. The argument appears to be, 'Under these influences [William Perkins and Laurence Chaderton] and from early in his career, Tuckney presented the accomplishment and application of the gospel primarily in terms of union with Christ, and set forth each redemptive benefit in terms of communion with Christ; yet while arguing the primacy of union with Christ, he did not neglect the necessity of articulating distinct aspects of union with Christ in an orderly

manner.' (p. 6) Yet, union with Christ does not appear as a main feature of the chapter on 'reason and revelation,' the chapter on 'in pursuit of Reformed catholicity,' or a large part of the chapter on Tuckney's 'Trinitarian understanding of salvation.' In other words, much of the volume seems to be about topics that are not related to the main argument. Additionally, the thesis itself needed to be more carefully posed. What about Tuckney's view of union with Christ makes it worth a monograph? The fact that he discussed union with Christ tells us little. Not only did most of the Reformed theologians speaks about union with Christ, but competing theologies like Roman Catholicism also talked about union with Christ, albeit in different ways. This means the thesis as it is stated tells us little of significance. We need to know what makes Tuckney's doctrine of union distinctive or what it tells us about the nature of theology in the period.

The second problem is that Cho neglected to analyze the broader relevance of Tuckney's theology. The minutes of the Westminster Assembly show that he was important for the Larger Catechism and that would have been an aspect of Tuckney's work worth exploring. As the work stands, however, there is no investigation of how others appropriated or received Tuckney's ideas. There is also no examination of where Tuckney received his ideas. Although Cho mentioned Perkins, Chaderton, and a few other cited by Tuckney, there is no analysis of how Tuckney received, modified, and argued the positions of his forebears. There is also little discussion about the contextual considerations and philosophical apparatuses that helped shape the theological positions Tuckney took. There is some mention of antinomianism and Cho did outline some Trinitarian debates, but the contextual analysis of antinomianism was minimal and the discussions about early-modern Trinitarian heresies were never shown to be connected to Tuckney's own work. It could be that Tuckney weighed into those debates, but Cho does not demonstrate that. This lack of broader discussion has the overall effect of making the work primarily descriptive and summative rather than analytical.

Lastly, despite the use of good primary sources that was mentioned above, Cho often seemed not to keep his sources in the proper relation to one another. For example, at one point he cited Tuckney's disputations from Cambridge as documents that give insight into 'the context in which the Westminster Confession of Faith locates the timing of justification' (p. 123). Yet, these disputations must have been written after 1649, which was after Tuckney left his work at the Assembly. Cho himself indicates Tuckney's citation of Richard Baxter's *Aphorisms of Justification*, which was first published in 1649. This makes it unlikely that, as important as this book is as a source of Tuckney's theology, it does not

seem to be informative about the context of discussions at the Assembly. Another example of Cho's disorganized use of sources is when he cited an early debate from the minutes of the Assembly to make an argument about the text of the Confession itself (p. 121). During the debate he cited, however, the Assembly was not yet writing the Confession and was still involved in revising the Thirty-Nine Articles. In this regard, Cho actually seemed to misunderstand the primary sources. He cited the minutes of the Assembly to argue that George Walker (1581–1661) appealed to union with Christ to refute antinomian overemphasis on forensic justification (p. 122). In the discussion Cho cited, however, Walker actually seemed to be defending forensic notions of justification by using union with Christ to further an argument against Roman Catholic notions of justification. Cho certainly explained that Tuckney upheld the forensic understanding of justification, but he appears to have misread his emphases.

Cho's work is an introductory outline of Tuckney's theology and an informed guide to the primary sources. This book should spark more discussion about Tuckney and his contributions to the Westminster Assembly and the education of ministers in Cambridge. It is a valuable volume in drawing needed attention to a neglected figure who played important roles in the history of Reformed theology.

Harrison Perkins, Queen's University Belfast

Echoes of Exodus: Tracing a Biblical Motif. By Bryan D. Estelle. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2018. ISBN: 9780830851683. 392pp. £33.99.

Many in the last century have tried to follow Geerhadus Vos's method of biblical theological investigation, but Bryan Estelle has proved to be Vos's true heir. This work looks at how the 'Exodus motif' resounds throughout the canon of Scripture. That motif, however, is not simply the crossing of the Red Sea. It includes the whole narrative pattern of slavery, release, crossing, wilderness-testing, and Promised Land inheritance. Estelle persuasively argued that this pattern of events appears throughout the Bible and structures many of the ways biblical authors conceived of redemption. He, thankfully, avoided any notions of having found the centre of biblical theology, but instead focused on hermeneutical factors involved in understanding the multifaceted use of the Exodus motif across the Bible. The Exodus became the paradigm of God's redemptive work in the later phases of the Old Testament and the New Testament authors adopted that theme as well and developed it in light of the coming of Christ. Estelle summed up the developing Exodus pattern as: 'the salvation complex involves liberation, presence with God, sanctification in the wilderness wanderings, and entry into the Promised Land.' (p. 222)

This book is not a simple work of exegesis though. It is also a case study in hermeneutics of inner-biblical citation. The biblical writers constantly quoted or alluded to previous passages of Scripture and especially the New Testament authors who built their doctrine upon the Old Testament. Estelle is a helpful guide to developing clearer thinking about inner-biblical citation. The first chapter is devoted to exploring these hermeneutical issues and the appendix further develops those ideas. A careful reading of this work will help readers shape their own ability to analyze inner-biblical citations as they come across them for academic exegesis or sermon preparation.

The bulk of the book develops the case that the Exodus motif was prevalently used throughout the Scripture. It is not, however, simply that authors refer to the event. It is also that the event itself is repeated. Even in the creation story, there is the fashioning of the world through the waters, Adam is placed in probation, and there was the offer of the eschatological Promised Land if he had resisted the serpent. God delivered Israel from slavery in Egypt through a similar cycle and it appeared again in the time of the exile. Each time the narrative pattern is recognized and heightened by the biblical authors themselves. In the coming of Christ, the new exodus occurs. Christ himself came through the baptismal waters, was designated as 'son' as Adam and Israel had been, was tested in wilderness, but Christ succeeded in faithfulness where the others failed. The Synoptic Gospels, the Pauline writings, 1 Peter, and Revelation all draw on this theme.

This book makes a massive contribution not only to exegetical understanding of the Exodus motif, but also makes substantial theological contributions. The Exodus narrative pattern itself is not just historical, but also personal. The pattern of slavery-freedom-wilderness-Promised Land is the pattern of the Christian life. We were bound in sin, Christ first freed us from the eternal consequences of sin, and we are in the difficult pilgrim wanderings as we wait the Promised Land. The import of this is the full compatibility of biblical and systematic theology. Those who would abandon the 'order of salvation' for the 'history of redemption' need to take account of Estelle's masterful exegesis. As it happens the history of redemption teaches the order of salvation. Narrative soteriology reveals personal soteriology. Estelle's work shows those two should never been opposed. The first Passover sacrifice enabled the first Exodus event and the ultimate Paschal lamb purchased the ultimate Exodus for his people.

This volume does leave a few lingering questions (note that questions are not the same as concerns). Estelle surveyed essentially the entire canon. Notably absent though is the Gospel of John and the Catholic Epistles save 1 Peter. Space prevented analysis of John and Hebrews from

being included, but we can hope Estelle will release this material in some capacity soon. Further, the prevalent notion of the Exodus's influence on biblical writers raises the question of active and passive appropriation of material. If, as Estelle argued, Paul at times made unconscious use of the Exodus motif, how do we explain that? With regards to this interface between a scriptural author and God's inspiration of the text, Estelle could have helped this reviewer with an exploration of the unconscious psychological processes that might take place in the mind of any author who alludes to and echoes previous scriptural motifs. What significance do we make of the difference between conscious, active appropriation of prior biblical material versus unconsciously, passively echoed themes? None of these questions undermine the value of this work. On the contrary, they provide fuel for future studies to forward the work Estelle has begun here. Everyone should read deeply of this rich work and digest it fully.

Harrison Perkins, Queen's University Belfast

The Letter to Philemon. By Scot McKnight. (The New International Commentary on the New Testament). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7382-8. xxxii + 127pp. £20.99.

Scot McKnight's commentary on Philemon replaces the original volume in the NICNT series by F. F. Bruce, published in 1984. McKnight's fresh look at this little letter brings its entanglement with Roman slavery sharply into focus. Close to half of the main text in the book is dedicated to providing the reader with a helpful overview of the phenomenology of slavery in the First Century CE as well as its more recent forms. This introduction is well researched and helpful in accurately setting the letter in its historical context.

At the centre of the discussion surrounding this epistle is the lack of 'any overt appeal from Paul to Philemon to manumit Onesimus,' (p. 1). This has given rise to the accusation that the letter is pro-slavery, morally inferior and in need of updating. The alternative approach is to diminish the significance of slavery in the Roman Empire by arguing that it was unlike the racial slavery of the New World and thereby attempt to escape the moral problem that the letter raises, (p. 4). McKnight is honest in facing the stark reality of the original setting as well as the moral challenge of a Christian master owning a Christian slave. He acknowledges that Paul's vision for a new, kind humanity, established in writings like Colossians 3:11 and Galatians 3:28, a humanity where there is neither slave nor free, was effectively the dropping of a world altering stone into the Mediterranean. However this new vision did not immediately demand the manumission of slaves by their Christian masters. We

should not expect Philemon to read like the 1807 British Slave Trade Act, (my words not his), instead we should see it more as 'Nelson Mandela's *Long Walk to Freedom*.' McKnight believes Paul was focused on equality within the *Ekklēssia* not the Empire. The intent of the letter was not to persuade Philemon to manumit Onesimus, but to welcome him home as a forgiven brother even though he was a runaway slave who had probably stolen from him during the course of his escape. Philemon is being asked not 'to pursue justice but to create a cycle of grace, forgiveness, restitution, and reconciliation' (p. 5). In this letter Paul envisioned 'a fellowship of equals in which the slave owner and slave were brothers (and sisters) in Christ' (p. 5). On this basis, McKnight believes that the letter to Philemon demands that the Church today should be a place of reconciliation and liberation where people, deemed by others as unequal, feel welcomed and valued. Christians should embody a way of life that establishes social equality and that this way of life should serve as the ground rules for new communities in Christ.

The commentary on the text itself provides the kind of analysis, insight and detail that one would expect from any volume in *The New International Commentary of the New Testament* series. The discussion on the various aspects of the story as it unfolds is informative, fair and helpful. The volume ends with some interesting reflections on what might have happened to Philemon and Onesimus. For instance, is the letter's survival a sign that Paul's request to have Onesimus work with him was granted? Was Onesimus, as Ignatius of Antioch suggested, the eventual bishop of Ephesus? McKnight concludes 'I hope that is true,' (p. 114).

Not everyone will agree with all of McKnight's conclusions. Some may feel that Paul's appeal to welcome Onesimus back as a brother has stronger implications than acknowledged or that the differences between slavery then and now are not given as much credence as they would like. However no one will be able to deny that it this a very well researched and written commentary. It is honest in facing the horrible realities of first century slavery and balanced in its consideration of the complex issues that surround the idea of a Christian slave owner. There is an extensive bibliography for those who wish to consider the matter further.

This is a commentary that will be of benefit to scholars and pastors alike and I highly recommend it. It is a significant thing to write a commentary that will replace one written by F. F. Bruce but McKnight's volume is a worthy successor.

Robert Murdock, The Faith Mission Bible College

Saved By Faith and Hospitality. By Joshua W. Jipp. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7505-1. xiii + 206pp. £16.99.

Joshua Jipp's book sports a provocative title inspired by the early Christian book of 1 Clement (p. xii). However, to contrast this statement directly with *Sola Fide* would present a false dichotomy. Rather he emphasises that hospitality to strangers is at the core of the Christian faith (p. 2). Following his introduction, Jipp first examines divine hospitality in Luke-Acts, Paul, and John before moving on to talk about human hospitality. He is primarily an exegete (p. 9) and that comes through clearly in his approach which is saturated with references to biblical texts and explanations of these. At the end of each chapter he concludes with a series of 'study questions' for the reader to think through. The book is a valuable reminder of the hospitality of God and the need for the church to model this hospitality.

His first chapter examines divine hospitality in Luke-Acts. He demonstrates that many elements of hospitality (food, meals, houses, and travelling) pervade these books. Through Jesus' words and actions during the Last Supper in Luke, hospitality is even seen to encompass Jesus' death (pp. 25–26). In his examination of Acts he shows how divine hospitality continues through the church after the resurrection. Towards the end of the chapter he examines what this means for the church today. He argues that the identity of the church as recipients of divine hospitality means sharing hospitality with others indiscriminately. This necessitates embracing the stigma of those whom society treats as outcasts.

He then moves on to divine hospitality in Paul. He argues that the church's experience of divine hospitality is the foundation for its identity and this is the identity that transcends all social distinctions leading to unity in diversity. He claims Paul argues 'that those who have experienced God's hospitality extended to them in the saving death of Christ are called upon to lay down their rights, privileges, and preferences as a means of loving and welcoming their fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.' (p. 54). He argues that those with higher status need to lower themselves so as to make all people feel welcome.

In his chapter on John he demonstrates again the offer of divine hospitality in the life of Jesus. In John the elements of 'wine, water, bread, foot washing, and home are used to express humanity's deep desire and need for God and the overcoming of that which separates humanity from God and life.' (p. 82). Those who receive hospitality from God are then to be those who share this with others. He demonstrates this with Jesus' foot washing in John 13.

In his remaining three chapters he discusses three threats to hospitality that are challenged by this biblical model. He names these areas as 'tribalism', 'xenophobia', and 'greed'. In his chapter on tribalism he discusses the need for Christians to not just be hosts, but also submit to be guests to others. This means entering into their homes, practices, and cultures. He is careful to point out that this is not indiscriminate, that there are limits to what we enter into (p. 101), but he does not flesh this out thoroughly.

Sodom and Gomorrah receives its inevitable mention in the chapter on xenophobia, along with Gibeah (Judges 19). As positive models he presents Ruth and the legislations of the Torah. This sets up an effective argument for the present church to welcome the stranger in its midst including those outside the faith — this offer is not simply a covert evangelism. This model receives a thorough grounding in Jesus' indiscriminate hospitality to those who both accepted and rejected him.

In addressing greed he discusses the prevailing culture of economic scarcity. That is, in our consumerist culture we tend to operate under the assumption that resources are scarce and we need to protect ourselves. He presents divine hospitality as the antithesis in presenting a model of economic abundance — we are to share resources because God knows what we need and when we need it and can provide. One of the examples he employs here is the offering collected for the Jerusalem church (2 Cor. 8–9). The model of economic abundance rejects the idea that the receiver is obligated to provide some sort of return for the gift. Instead, God will provide the return.

Occasionally Jipp relied on unusual readings of the text. However, his main points stand apart from these readings. At times his work would benefit from further development of thinking in how principles might be applied in the church. However, he does give a number of examples which may stimulate the reader to think of how they may practice divine hospitality. Overall, I commend this book for its valuable biblical exegesis and critique of hospitality practices.

Philip D. Foster, University of Edinburgh

The Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation. By Rod Dreher. New York: Sentinel. ISBN: 978-0-73521-329-6. x + 262pp. £13.95.

To live in a Western country today means living in an increasingly post-Christian nation. Many of us have struggled from time to time with what it means to live as a Christian in such a nation. This problem is often exemplified in questions raised by the continuing sexual revolution.

Dreher wrote *The Benedict Option* in response to the question of how to live in a post-Christian nation. The book is inspired by the rule for living developed by the monk Benedict of Nursia who lived at the turn of the 6th Century. Dreher's stated purpose is 'to wake up the church and to encourage it to act to strengthen itself, while there is still time' (p. 3). Although his target audience is decidedly American and he comes from a Roman Catholic-Orthodox perspective, the ideas in the book will be of value to Evangelical Christians living in the post-Christian West.

The Benedict Option is divided into two major sections. Following on from Dreher's introductory chapter, the first section forms the first three chapters. In order, these chapters cover the 'challenge of post-Christian America' as he sees it, the philosophical and theological developments that led to this point, and how the Rule of Saint Benedict can be appropriated for believers today. The second section fills the larger part of the book and covers chapters 4 to 10. Through these chapters Dreher seeks to elaborate on how the Rule can be applied to modern, theologically traditional Christians of all churches and confessions. He writes 'The Rule offers insights in how to approach politics, faith, family, community, education, and work' (p. 5). He also gives examples of groups who have already implemented or begun to implement the ideas he is advocating. Dreher ends the second section by devoting two chapters to contemporary issues of sex and technology.

The first section begins with an outline of recent political developments in the United States of America linked to religious freedoms which have shocked the church. It also covers statistics on theological understandings of American Christians. For example, Dreher references a 2011 study by Christian Smith which 'found that only 40 percent of young Christians sampled said that their personal moral beliefs were grounded in the Bible or some other religious sensibility' (p. 11). Dreher adds that 'It's unlikely that the beliefs of even these faithful are biblically coherent.' Dreher then compares this current crisis to the crisis the church faced after Rome was sacked in the 5th Century which led to the founding of the Benedictine order in 529.

Dreher then moves on to discuss the roots of the crisis. According to Dreher the roots of the crisis can be traced to the fourteenth century. He identifies 'five landmark events' beginning in that century:

- In the fourteenth century, the loss of belief in the integral connection between God and Creation — or in philosophic terms, transcendent reality and material reality

- The collapse of religious unity and religious authority in the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century

- The eighteenth-century Enlightenment, which displaced the Christian religion with the cult of Reason, privatized religious life, and inaugurated the age of democracy

- The Industrial Revolution (ca. 1760–1840) and the growth of capitalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries

- The Sexual Revolution (1960–present) (p. 23)

After outlining these different areas and the effects they have had on the Christian faith, Dreher leads the reader into a discussion of the Rule and how it could benefit the church. Essentially the idea of the Rule is 'to order one's life to be as receptive as possible to God's grace, both individually and in community' (p. 47).

In his third chapter, Dreher discusses the Rule, explaining through conversation with modern Benedictine monks, its different emphases. The areas he discusses are: order, prayer, work, asceticism, stability, community, hospitality, and balance. In the evangelical church many of us would turn our noses at ideas of asceticism and the like. However, Dreher provides a thought provoking defence of such practices. We train to become good at certain things. Dreher presents asceticism as follows: 'Relearning asceticism–that is, how to suffer for the faith–is critical training for Christians living in the world today and the world of the near future' (p. 65).

After discussing the Rule, Dreher moves on to the second section of his book. In this section he applies the Rule to the following areas of modern society: politics, faith, family, community, education, work, sex, and technology. I felt it more important to highlight the premise of the book at greater length so these areas will not be discussed here. Suffice to say that he applies the rule in a thought provoking and valuable way, not advocating a full-scale withdrawal from society, but arguing for greater separation than we have currently. This greater separation is in order to maintain our faith in the world. 'If we are going to be for the world as Christ meant for us to be, we are going to have to spend more time away from the world, in deep prayer and substantial spiritual training – just as Jesus retreated to the desert to pray before ministering to the people' (p. 19).

The reader will need to wrestle with whether or not they consider Dreher to be a bit too alarmist. For example, he writes 'Christ promised

that the gates of Hell would not prevail against His church, but He did not promise that Hell would not prevail against His church *in the West*. That depends on us, and the choices we make right here, right now' (p. 5). Although he may be too alarmist, he does present reason for alarm, and at minimum deserves to have his presentation thoughtfully considered. Has the Evangelical church lost something in the attempts to reject unhelpful theologies that have been tied to liturgy and ascetic behaviours? How long will we in the West continue to live out materialist and consumerist lives with few qualms? Although the reader will need to push past a few grammatical errors, I would recommend Dreher's book. Overall I found it to be an inspiring read.

Philip D. Foster, University of Edinburgh

The Persistence of God's Endangered Promises. By Allan J. McNicol. London: Bloomsbury. ISBN: 978-0-5676-7758-7. xiii + 228pp. £75.

Allan J. McNicol's book is his response to what he sees as a crisis in Biblical Theology introduced by the Enlightenment. The problem he seeks to address is the relationship between the Old and New Testaments. In his opinion the best way to tie these together is through the theme of the persistence of God's endangered promises. However, his position on historical issues will be jarring to many evangelical Christians. He adopts positions which, if they do not compromise the orthodox understanding of God, surely come close to doing so. This work may, however, have value for the evangelical biblical theologian.

McNicol begins by highlighting his problem of apparent disunity and his proposal for solving the issue. He proposes that the Bible be read as a 'realistic narrative'. In such a reading the truth of the work is not contingent 'on the presumed factuality of any particular history-like event or incident' (p. 28). In some sense, everything in the Bible, historical or not, draws the reader into 'absolute reality'.

He takes the reader on a whirlwind tour of how he sees the narrative of the OT focusing on the theme of God's endangered promises before focusing more fully on the NT. It is relatively easy to follow the thrust of his argument here. As the story of the OT unfolds there are numerous threats to the promises of God. However, despite these threats the promises persist.

Before discussing the narrative of the NT, McNicol discusses Jesus and his mission within the Second Temple context. He then moves on to discuss how the portions of the NT writings relate to the theme of God's endangered promises. He spends a chapter on each of the following sections: Matthew; Paul; Luke-Acts; Mark; key non-Pauline letters; and

Johannine works. Across it all he demonstrates that the church is considered to be a part of the story of Israel. The church is a partial fulfilment of God's promises, with the final fulfilment awaiting the second coming. In some sense then the promises are still endangered:

> as God's people await ultimate fulfilment they learn the promises will remain endangered until the full glory of the kingdom emerges. Luke and John wrestle with what this means for traditional Israel while writings like Mark and 1 Peter focus on implications for the Gentiles. In all these writings the earlier narrative of the persistence of God's endangered promises in Hebrew scripture is recapitulated and reaffirmed in new and wider dimensions. This reading of the two Testaments not only brings coherence to the biblical narrative but demands they be united together. (p. 212)

This book has honourable intentions. However, the historical-critical position from which McNicol works is completely integrated into the work. For the reader who disagrees with the underlying assumptions, it is often difficult to see how the work is of benefit. One major issue I found with the work was a failure to ask how much of the Biblical story must be historically based for the Christian to be able to trust it as truth.

Here I intend to demonstrate more clearly the position he works from, and further highlight this issue. In discussing the covenant with Israel McNicol writes 'Ultimately, whatever constituted the origin of Israel entering into covenant with Yahweh to live by Torah it is clear that its observance spawned a narrative that frames the Pentateuch' (p. 35). In discussing the conquest of the land, McNicol resorts to describing the genocide texts as being metaphorical 'Their function is not to relate actual descriptions of warfare' (p. 65) instead it was to emphasise the need to be separate from the practices of the other cultures. It seems part of the motivation for this reading comes from the texts being troubling for today's readers: 'Especially for Westerners it is troubling in this post-colonial era to read about Yahweh fighting on behalf of Israel against native populations' (p. 64).

The issue of what actually happened becomes the elephant in the room when he discusses Jesus in chapter 5. Jesus seems to lose all divine attributes. McNicol's Jesus is a product of his upbringing in esoteric circles 'Guided by his eschatological outlook Jesus was convinced that Israel was in a time of crisis' (p. 88). His text is full of hints that Jesus did not comprehend his divine mission. For example he writes that Jesus 'began to conclude that "this generation" will have to answer for its tepid response or even hostility to his mission' (p. 88). He demonstrates a belief that Jesus' plans changed in response to this hostility (pp. 88–89).

His presentation assumes some historical aspects, but in suggesting the narrative need not be historical one needs to answer the question of how historical it needs to be in order to truthfully convey 'absolute reality'. With regard to Jesus, the Bible presents him as aware of his ancestry from a young age (Luke 2:49) and of his mission from the beginning of his ministry (hence his baptism). Therefore, one may wonder whether Scripture is regarded as authoritative when even the incarnate divine character is presented as initially mistaken as to his mission.

Philip D. Foster, University of Edinburgh

The 'Fellowship of Trial': Religious Rhetoric in World War One: The Sermons and Poetry of Revd Walter Mursell, Minister of Thomas Coats Memorial Baptist Church, Paisley. By Brian R. Talbot. (John Howard Shakespeare Memorial Paper 2017). United Board History Project, 2017. 42pp. £3.50.

Many readers may recall when Karl Barth famously proclaimed, 'Pastors […] must aim their guns [i.e. their messages] beyond the hills of relevance' (*Homiletics*, Westminster John Knox Press, 1991, p. 119). So too thought many of the congregants who listened to the sermons of Scottish Baptist minister, Walter Mursell. Mursell, it seems, thought differently from Barth. Five short weeks after Britain declared a state of war on 4 August 1914, Mursell began a series of war related sermons. The series included titles such as: 'Intercession during Wartime' on 6 September, 'The Duty of Courage' on 13 September, 'The Red Cross' on 20 September, and the 'The Fellowship of Trial' on 27 September. The final sermon listed here ('The Fellowship of Trial') is where Talbot's lecture derives its name. In this sermon Mursell challenged his congregation as Paul did to Timothy, 'As a good soldier of Jesus Christ, accept your share of suffering' (II Tim. 2:3). Talbot maintains this sermon best characterizes Mursell's attitude to the war (p. 41).

What constitutes this printed lecture? Talbot's lecture features some biographical elements, some denominational history, and some literary-theological analysis of Mursell's sermons and poetry as they relate to the First World War. The paper is divided as follows: Introduction; Walter Mursell: his background and ministry; His sermons and poems at the beginning of the war; His sermons and poems towards the end of the war; and Walter Mursell and the personal impact of the war. For source material, Talbot draws from Mursell's books of sermons and poetry, including: *The Waggon and the Star* (1903), *Afterthoughts* (1914), *The Bruising of Belgium and Other Sermons During War Time* (1915), *Ports in the Storm* (1919), and *Echoes of Strife* (1919). He supplements Mursell's own writ-

ings with excerpts from denominational records, journals, magazines, and newspaper articles, as primary sources. He discursively includes a number of secondary sources, as well.

Who might be interested in this lecture? Those interested in the study of the First World War are offered a view 'from the inside' of a significant churchman, who arguably influenced the opinions of his contemporaries. Pastors may find Mursell's sermons either exemplary or find themselves agreeing with Barth's perspective. Still, preachers will need to develop ways of thinking about war, as Jesus reminds his Church, 'There will be wars and rumours of wars' (Matt. 24:6). Additionally, I imagine it will interest those in Scottish studies, those concerned with Baptist theology in history, and those concerned with the ways in which religious rhetoric is used in times of war and peace. For an example of his rhetoric, Mursell wrote in one sermon, 'I do not hesitate to say […] that Belgium is Christ to us today – Christ clothed in modern garb, Christ represented in the unspeakable need of his hunted brethren […] Christ a refugee, holding out imploring hands for help in desperate extremity' (p. 21).

Overall, I found Talbot's lecture convincing. His project's aim to 'determine if the [themes and emphases Mursell raised] were representative of the views of the wider Baptist constituency in Scotland' (p. 5) provides valuable insight into aspects of shared Scottish interpretation of the war. At first seeing the war as 'unexpected and unwelcome' (p. 12), Mursell seems to be representative of other Scots in his belief that supporting war efforts is a moral imperative. Finally, on the other side of the massive loss, the war is seen to have left an indelible mark on the Baptist church and the world. Talbot balances his own narrative comments with key quotations, which invite readers into the changing attitudes of the early twentieth century. More critically, this publication appears unpolished, as small infelicities of style can distract. Further with a stronger developing line of argument this work would better serve readers.

Kyle Lincoln, University of Edinburgh

The Mind of the Spirit: Paul's Approach to Transformed Thinking. By Craig S. Keener. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016. ISBN: 978-0-8010-9776-8. xliii + 402pp. £24.57

In this study, Craig Keener provides a thorough engagement with Paul's view of the mind. Drawing upon a wealth of scholarly learning and a vast range of sources, Keener sets Paul's theology of the mind in its first-century context and draws out numerous exegetical and theological insights. Although disciplined historical work forms the core of this study, the

reader is also invited and exhorted to consider the relevance and pastoral implications of Paul's vision for the church of today.

Across eight chapters, each addressing a key Pauline text, we are invited to trace Paul's distinctive approach to the mind. We are shown how Paul perceives the condition of the mind apart from Christ and then the mind as transformed and renewed through an identification, by faith, with Christ, and the presence and working of the Holy Spirit. Thus, we find engagement with texts such as Romans 1:18–32 and 7:22–25 which present Paul's understanding of the negative and futile characteristics of the mind apart from Christ, amongst pagans and Jews respectively. These chapters serve as a foil for an exploration of Paul's positive construal of the mind as transformed by faith in Christ (Rom. 6:11). Keener unpacks how Paul demonstrates that this transformed mind, in contrast to the mind of the flesh, is of Christ and of the Spirit (Rom. 8:5–7). A series of texts are expounded to demonstrate Paul's conviction that the exercise of the Christian mind leads to both wisdom and renewal in the life of the believer (Rom. 12:1–3; 1 Cor. 2:15–16). Furthermore, we see how, for Paul, the mind is integral to the life and unity of the church and how believers are called to frame all thought and contemplation in the light of the heavenward hope found in Christ (Phil. 2:1–5; 3:19–21; 4:6–8; Col. 3:1–2).

The chapter in which Keener considers Romans 7:22–25, exemplifies the merits of the study as a whole. It is the longest chapter of the book; an appropriate measure given the interpretive quandaries arising from this text. Keener contends that Paul is offering an account of the mind of the flesh under the law. Whilst readers may demur from this or that interpretive decision (e.g. who is the 'I' in Rom. 7:7–25?), Keener is far from strident; at each point in the argument alternative positions are presented and his conclusions are responsibly cautious. The judicious inclusion of an excursus on 'flesh', setting Paul's usage of the term alongside Stoic and Jewish sources, is employed to good effect, inviting the reader to delve deeper into finer points of interpretation without distracting from the central thrust of the argument. Moreover, Keener's prodigious use of footnotes is indicative of a near-exhaustive engagement with ancient texts from both the Jewish and Graeco-Roman milieu. This attentiveness to Paul's first-century context allows a fresh and clear delineation of the apostle's unique approach to questions, shared by Jews and pagans, concerning the relationship between the mind, passions, and the Law.

In a postscript, Keener suggests some pastoral implications. Specifically, the reader is urged to critique contemporary epistemologies, worldviews, and indeed, much Christian teaching, on the shared charge that they fail to respond to the full scope and coherence of Paul's teaching concerning the transformed mind. Moreover, Keener encourages inter-

disciplinary work to bridge the gap between theology and psychology. This postscript indicates why an ongoing neglect of this aspect of Paul's thought and theology would be to the detriment of the church. Therefore, this work has relevance not merely for students of Paul's writings, theology, and context, but also for preachers, pastors, and other church leaders.

Tim Sinclair, Partick Trinity Church of Scotland, Glasgow

The Disruption of Evangelicalism: The Age of Torrey, Mott, McPherson and Hammond. By Geoffrey R. Treloar. Downers Grove, USA: InterVarsity Press, 2017. ISBN: 9780830825844. 334pp. £19.99.

If one is to write the history of the evangelical movement as it existed in the English-speaking world in the first half of the twentieth century, there are two immediate challenges to be faced. The first is to locate a suitable standpoint from which to appraise this transoceanic movement entailing Britain, 'Greater Britain' (the then-Empire extending to the South Pacific Antipodes, Canada and South Africa) and the USA. A historian situated in Britain or America might struggle mightily to overcome a tendency to dwell most on developments close at hand and upon abundant archival material most easily accessed. A second challenge is to navigate one's way through an abundance of earlier accounts (most focused upon single regions) the writing of which was occasioned by the felt need to explain (after the fact) how the disintegration of the broadly evangelical Protestantism which was such a force in the Victorian age necessitated new structures.

Geoffrey Treloar, the Australian historian best known for his impressive work on the labours of nineteenth century New Testament scholar, J.B. Lightfoot, *Lightfoot the Historian* (1998), has succeeded magnificently in meeting both of these named challenges. From an Australian standpoint in what was earlier reckoned part of 'Greater Britain' and assiduous library work in Canada, the USA and the UK, he has composed a compelling account taking in the vicissitudes and the larger-than-life personalities which exerted powerful influence upon the transoceanic evangelical family across a half-century. Attempting to fill the role of an irenic interlocutor, he has sifted through massive amounts of literature which both defended the fragmentation of evangelicalism in the post WWI world as something necessary and pointed the finger of blame at the combative leaders who (it is argued) accelerated the process.

This is not absolutely new territory. The American Presbyterian historian, Bradley Longfield explored it as regards his own American constituency in his fine work of 1991, *The Presbyterian Controversy*. The British writer, Keith Ives, has drawn attention to the theological polarities open-

ing up in British Nonconformity as displayed in the now-defunct *British Weekly* (*The Voice of Nonconformity* 2011). What is new (and especially commendable) about this IVP volume (itself a constituent part of a five-volume series) is its geographic 'reach'. The dominant broadly evangelical Protestantism which exerted so much influence and which so much reflected the sensibilities of the Victorians did not simply expire: it fragmented in the face of the new challenges posed by natural science, biblical criticism and war. The basic issues were the same whether one lived in Sydney or Toronto, in Manchester or Chicago. One detects that in Treloar's estimation, this fragmentation was by no means inevitable and that even where it produced polarities of thought and proclamation, these did not necessarily lead to the dividing of denominations. It must be noted that Treloar has excelled in mining books and religious periodicals from this period to an uncommon degree.

It is appropriate to draw attention to several admirable features of the book. Never before has the reviewer read in one place chapters (6, 7 and 8) that distilled so much from so many sources about evangelical Christianity's engagement with the Great War (1914–1918). Evangelical concerns about the already-current breakup of doctrinal consensus did not prevent keen support for a war effort waged in defence of what was still reckoned to be a 'Christian civilization'. Similarly, these same concerns (considerably accentuated by the 1920s) did not hinder evangelical Christianity's determined post-war efforts to be engaged in reconstruction of the world order through the League of Nations and negotiations for disarmament.

Similarly, Treloar offers the reader much food for thought in surveying how Christian mission needed to reconnoitre in the post-Great War period (chap. 11). 'Christian' Europe had besmirched the Christian message by its war of attrition which drew in colonial troops from Africa and the Indian subcontinent. The Paris Peace Talks of 1919 did not extend to colonial domains as it did to Eastern Europe the self-determination pled for by Woodrow Wilson. And after 1917, the Soviet Union began exporting Communism with a missionary zeal of its own.

Perhaps most refreshing of all was a late chapter (12) maintaining that, in spite of the 'mea culpas' which began to be issued by evangelicals in the late 1940s about the neglect of social ministry, the overwhelming evidence suggests that most expressions of evangelical Christianity never repudiated this expression of the Gospel and took it seriously.

In sum, here is a book that holds out great explanatory power. If we are predisposed to think that the theological polarities which so dominate church life in the Western world today have been perpetual fixtures, Treloar helps us to see that the first half of the twentieth century was an era which — for all its tensions — still had Christian people of clearly differ-

ing tendencies in conversation with one another. Christians of evangelical sympathies but who had made accommodations over questions of science and biblical criticism (liberal evangelicals, Treloar terms them) continued to be an important and influential constituency well past mid-century.

Every book has some loose threads and this one does also. Pentecostal Christians will with some justification wonder why their global movement (officially traceable to 1906) is introduced late (as a mere portion of chap. 10) and primarily in connection with the career of the flamboyant Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944). Those interested in the theological controversies of the late Victorian period will justifiably take the view that the continuity between those struggles and those which so polarized in the era of the Great War has gone under-recognized. And, for all its attempts to portray an English-speaking evangelical movement not overly-equated with Britain or America, we still have a book whose subtitle heralds three Americans and an Irishman transplanted to Australia.

Kenneth J. Stewart, Covenant College, USA

Crossing Cultural Frontiers: Studies in the History of World Christianity. By Andrew F. Walls. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-62698-258-1. xii + 284pp. £26.99.

The name of Andrew F. Walls is revered within the field of Mission Studies and the development of the discipline of 'World Christianity'. Despite his significance as a towering figure in the academic area, Walls is not known primarily for major academic publications. In fact, it might well be said that Walls, like Paul the apostle, has produced 'living publications' in the form of the many students he has supervised and encouraged over the years. Yet Walls has published many papers in various journals and other publications, many of which would not be easily accessible to most readers. In recent decades, two collections of Walls's essays were published: *The Missionary Movement in Christian History* (1996) and *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History* (2002). Now, after a long wait, a third collection has been produced, edited by Mark Gornik, Director of the City Seminary, New York. Without doubt, this collection will be warmly welcomed both for the inherent value of the essays and as a further testament and tribute to the pioneering work that Walls has done.

The essays are grouped into three main parts: 'The Transmission of Christian Faith', 'Africa in Christian Thought and History', and 'The Missionary Movement and the West'. The topics discussed by Walls reflect the range of his interests. Essay titles include, 'World Christianity and the Early Church', 'Towards a Theology of Migration', 'The Discovery of "African Traditional Religion" and Its Impact on Religious Studies',

'Kwame Bediako and Christian Scholarship in Africa, and 'The Future of Missiology—Missiology as Vocation'. Some of the essays reflect personal friendships and collaboration (with Kwame Bediako and Harold Turner) and Walls's interest in and association with Sierra Leone is marked with the essay, 'A Christian Experiment: The Early Sierra Leone Colony'. The essay 'Missions and the English Novel' is an interesting discussion of mission and missionaries as portrayed in some classic English fiction. Several essays focus on notable figures in the history of mission: one discusses John and Charles Wesley (evidence of Walls's Methodist affiliation and his passion for hymnody), another looks at Jonathan Edwards and David Brainerd. I was pleased, having a strong connection to the Eastern Cape of South Africa, to see the inclusion of an essay that discusses Tiyo Soga.

Walls writes in an engaging style. In his introduction to the book, he writes, 'This book […] is a ragbag, reminiscent of those bags of my grandmother's day that held strips of cloth from miscellaneous sources to be used for making clootie mats (rugs, warm if dust retaining)' (p. ix). He also comments in the introduction on his thoughts about the term 'World Christianity', noting that he is 'a late convert to the use of the term' (p. ix). Sometimes Walls includes personal reflections, in which he is gently self-deprecating. For example, in the first essay, Walls recounts his decision, in choosing the topic of his doctoral dissertation, to focus on a fragmentary Latin text of a Greek original, rather than one of the other versions in Coptic, Arabic or Ethiopic. He comments, 'And so, following conventional wisdom, I missed an important point about the early church that the history of this text illustrated: its vast geographical spread and linguistic diversity' (p. 3).

Some themes run through more than one essay, even to the point of similar phrasing. One of these themes is Walls's conviction that Western theology has been dominated by an Enlightenment worldview, and that theology must take more account of spiritual realities that are 'bracketed out in an Enlightenment worldview' (p. 47). He comments, 'It is not that Western theology is wrong; it is simply too small for the operating systems of Africa (and indeed, of most of the world) (p. 47). Walls continues, 'Perhaps we need to consider more deeply what Paul calls the principalities and powers in charge of the course of the world, yet defeated by the Resurrection of Christ and dragged behind the triumphal chariot of the cross' (p. 48, with reference to Colossians 1:13–15). This is a helpful emphasis, when taken as part of the whole scriptural account of the work of Christ, and several recent scholars have given more attention to Christ's victory over the Powers in their writings. While I welcome Walls's call to learn from the 'big universe' of Africa, I am not convinced that it is helpful

to regard the category of 'ancestor' as a valuable concept in developing Christian theology. In the same essay, Walls adds,

> Perhaps a richer theology of the family, one that has a place for the ancestors, will come as richer family reality of Africa and Asia than the atomised one of modernity. African Christianity may help us to reflect more on the Lord's words about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: 'He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. (p. 48)

I would like to hear the response of African and Asian theologians as to whether the concept of ancestor can be used without importing with it aspects of indigenous beliefs and practices that would stand in tension with Christian confession. Nonetheless, Walls's citation from Luke 20:37–38 highlights his readiness to face his readers with challenging ideas from the text of Scripture as well as from African culture.

I would encourage readers who wish to understand the contours of the church today, of World Christianity, to read this book. It is not intended to be a systematic introduction to the topic. Other books accomplish that task more effectively. What this book does is to bring the reader into contact with a brilliant and fresh thinker who wishes to draw together Scripture, voices from the early church, the lessons of mission history, and the perspectives of contemporary Christians throughout the whole world, so that the church of Jesus Christ will grow and thrive. There is much to learn here.

At the time of writing, Walls recently marked his ninetieth birthday. He comments in his opening remarks to this book, 'My deepest gratitude must be for the privilege of being allowed for so long to move around the amazing workshop in which the renewal and construction of World Christianity has been taking place. *Gratias Domino refero*' (p. xii). In his concluding essay, he asks the question, 'Is there any more exciting vocation at the present time than missiology?' If the implied answer ('no'!) is correct, then that is in no small measure thanks to the work of Andrew Walls. Many will echo his expression of thankfulness to God for his life and work.

Alistair I. Wilson, Edinburgh Theological Seminary