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Anarchy and Christianity, by Jacques Ellul (trans. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley), Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991. 109p.

Ellul is profoundly worthy of serious disagreement because he will force us to be more balanced in our thinking. He claims the Bible is anarchistic in the sense of portraying all government as necessarily evil. Government as such should always be resisted non-violently, and the evil desire of power by everyone who participates in government should be relentlessly exposed. Even voting is an expression of the will to power and is, in its core, an act of violence. Though we must not think the state will ever disappear, we must resist its administrative omnipresence and set up more humane forms of local community on the fringe of society.

To support his opinion, Ellul focuses attention on numerous biblical texts that show government at its worst. The New Testament opens with Herod the Great murdering the children of Bethlehem. It continues with the devil making the uncontested claim to control all the kingdoms of the world. Then Jesus points out that the rulers of nations lord it over their subjects and enslave them. And in the last book of the Bible, government is portrayed as a devouring beast. The Old Testament picture of the state, as Ellul paints it, is equally bleak.

Surely Ellul's argument should awaken us from dreaming that more government is the solution to all our problems. And we should accept his criticism of the way Christians tend to support whatever type of state they meet. But Ellul seems unable to distinguish between shades of gray, e.g., between a relatively humane democratic regime and a truly oppressive totalitarian system. He makes no mention of the way Christians have exercised a healthy influence not only on particular laws and policies but on entire forms of state. And, above all, Ellul lacks awareness of the common grace of God that restrains chaos in the world, even by pitting force against force by means of government.

Enjoy reading Ellul, but keep in mind that he tells only one side of the Christian view of the state.

Thomas K. Johnson

Changing the Subject: Women's Discourses and Feminist Theology, by Mary McClintock Fulkerson, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994. 412p.

McClintock Fulkerson establishes a thorough platform of Discursive Theology so that the dialogue of theologizing may be open to women (and men) of differing cultural and socio-economic settings. In relatively simple terms, Discursive Theology acknowledges that being able to make any theological statements which reflect a living truth demands first acknowledging the ways that even the words we use are shaped by discursive totalities that precede the individual. In other words, I cannot speak of what freedom means to me without acknowledging that my notion of freedom will be shaped by my cultural, historical, religious, literary, and experiential understanding of freedom. Each word we use in making theological statements is signified with a life of meaning that precedes the individual and is a discursive totality—in dialogue with the past and present, the culture and the individual.

To en flesh the ideas of Discursive Theology, McClintock Fulkerson studies the lives of an older Presbyterian woman of the Midwest, a Pentecostal Appalachian mountain woman, and herself as an academic theologian. She beautifully summarizes the historical and cultural forces that have shaped these women's understanding of the Christian faith. Her thorough insights into what faith, God, and liberation mean to these different women brings not only Discursive Theology to life, but brings these women's experiences of faith to life.

McClintock Fulkerson is deliberately calling for a discourse with other theologians and she is doing so using the language of academic theology. This is both appropriate

and isolating, for the language can be a barrier for others who may be interested in this important conversation.

Don W. Battjes

Christian Philosophy at the Close of the Twentieth Century, edited by Sander Griffioen and Bert Balk, Kampen: Kok, 1995. 224p., Dutch Fl. 39.50.

Over one hundred Christian philosophers from five continents met in rustic Hoeven, in the Roman Catholic province of North Brabant (Netherlands) during the latter part of August, 1994. They came to this remodeled retreat to hear about the status of Christian philosophy at the close of our century.

Two speakers, in particular, an American and a Dutchman, addressed this moot subject. The Notre Dame-based Alvin Plantinga noted two rival philosophies: naturalism and anti-realism (the absence of any absolute norms) which are incompatible with Christianity. Johan van der Hoeven from the Free University zeroed in on contingency and meaninglessness, which he contrasted with the Christian themes of the covenant, encounter, and God's presence in the midst of human brokenness.

The other speakers of the symposium focused on the Christian philosophy of the late Herman Dooyeweerd. Elaine Storkey, from London, England, focused on the male-female issue which Dooyeweerd left somewhat undeveloped.

Dooyeweerd's most articulate spokesperson was E. Schuurman, who teaches the subject of technology in technical schools in the Netherlands. He critiqued the overemphasis of technology in our contemporary culture and argued that a Christian vision of a meaningful technology before our Creator and Redeemer may provide a way out of technology's many problems.

Words of commendation by A. Plantinga summarizing the mood of this symposium are worth quoting (p. 53):

the Christian philosophical community must . . . offer its own accounts of the main philosophical topics and concerns. Herman Dooyeweerd made a determined and powerful effort to do precisely this: for that we are thankful. We must continue in the spirit of his work, offering our own accounts of these areas. This task is challenging. . . . Most of all, it is the service we Christian philosophers owe to the Lord and our community. I commend it to you.

Ralph W. Vunderink

Divine Representations: Postmodernism and Spirituality, edited by Ann W. Astell, New York: Paulist Press, 1994. viii, 269p., \$17.95 (paper).

This book contains essays presented at a conference entitled "Toward a Lay Spirituality for the Postmodern Era," held at the International Schoenstatt Center in Waukesha, Wisconsin, in October, 1992. It aims to contribute to the formation of a postmodern spirituality true to the insights of Christianity, particularly Marian theology. The book begins with an introduction by the editor, Ann Astell, a Medievalist at Purdue and a member of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary. She regards Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Joseph Kentenich, Chiara Lubich, and Simone Weil as prophets of a postmodern spirituality. All four, she says, speak of the attitude and act of self-abandonment (in opposition to the modern concept of the autonomous self).

A first set of essays examines postmodern views of the self: the Platonic idea of the soul compared to the Genesis idea of a created being in the image of God; Simone Weil's thought on the self; thirteenth-century mystic Angela of Poligno's experience of the self being transformed into God; and the tension of the apophatic-cataphatic approaches to God.

The second set of essays examines contemporary spiritualities: the "New Age"

idea that spirituality is possible without religion; valuing unity and inner experience; a communal spirituality as expressed in a Buddhist and a Christian movement; and Fr. Joseph Kentenich's Marian lay spirituality.

Part three of the book examines social concerns and their power to shape postmodern spirituality: feminism, the capitalist mode of production, ecology, scientism, and health care.

This is a book of uncommon breadth encompassing a wide range of issues examined by people in fields including philosophy, theology, physics, medieval studies, biostatistics, and feminism. The variety of authors, some using the jargon of their discipline, makes it heavy going for the average reader. For those who want to stretch their mind around the questions of a vital spirituality for our time it is worth reading.

J. David Muyskens

Ending Auschwitz: The Future of Jewish and Christian Life, by Marc H. Ellis, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994. 176p., \$16.99 (paper).

Marc Ellis risks harsh criticism as he forges new pathways in Jewish thinking. A Jew himself, Ellis believes that "Jewish Israelis and their supporters in the West often use the memory of the Holocaust to further policies that oppress the Palestinian people." *Ending Auschwitz* contemplates faith and life after the pivotal events of the European colonization of America, beginning in 1492, and Auschwitz.

In the first three chapters, Ellis examines the importance of Auschwitz in modern Jewish identity. He finds that Jews see themselves as permanently innocent victims and therefore freed from normal judgment and accountability. However, Israel "continues Auschwitz" by victimizing the Palestinian people. Ellis wonders whether, in their role as occupier, Jews bring to an end the history of suffering and ethics, which has been their burden and their gift. *Ending Auschwitz*, for Ellis, means that Jews must admit that they are

no longer innocent and that Israel is not their redemption.

But Ellis does not reserve his criticism for Jews alone. In the fourth and fifth chapters the church too is attacked. Taking a broad swing at all of Christianity, Ellis writes that, "the church in its liturgical life recites stories of justice and love and in its life in the world acts to the contrary." Thus, it is seen as the central task of Jews and Christians to join forces to end both Auschwitz and 1492. At best, Ellis doubts this task can be undertaken by normative Judaism and Christianity. At worst, he suspects it may be intimately tied to the task of ending Christianity. The challenge then is to find a new theological proposition which would be credible "in the presence of burning children." The final chapters take up this challenge.

Ending Auschwitz is a bold and provocative work. Its sobering analysis of the failings of modern Judaism and Christianity provides a critical challenge to these two religions. Ellis would prefer to throw the baby out with the bath water (at least in the case of Christianity), a solution which he has not adequately justified. Nonetheless this remains an important work for those concerned with the Israeli-Palestine conflict and the future of Christianity.

Alice M. Hartmans

Ever a Frontier: The Bicentennial History of the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, edited by James Walther, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994. 282p., \$24.99.

This book should have an audience among the readers of this journal. Dr. Robert Coughenour, longtime professor at Hope College and Western Seminary, is a graduate of Pittsburgh Seminary. Dr. Wallace N. Jamison, author of two essays, served formerly as president of New Brunswick Seminary and is now Professor Emeritus of Illinois College. Dr. C. Samuel Calian, president of Pittsburgh Seminary was one of three persons on the accrediting team which visited Western

Seminary about two years ago. Anyone at all interested in the history of theological education, Reformed/Presbyterian seminaries, and American religious history will discover this book valuable. Moreover, the Eerdmans Publishing Company produced this book in a very attractive format.

Usually a good history calls for one author and not several as in the case of this volume, but the general editor, Dr. Walther, has done not only an amazing job in selecting qualified historians to write the essays but he has also been very adept in guiding the authors and editing the material so that it seems that all the material was produced by one person.

An understanding of the history of Pittsburgh Seminary begins with a review of the "genealogy" shown in the diagram on page xiv. Pittsburgh is the result of numerous mergers of a considerable number of schools over a two hundred year time span. There have been six denominational families involved: Presbyterian USA, Associate Presbyterian, Associate Reformed Presbyterian, United Presbyterian of North America, United Presbyterian in the USA, and the Presbyterian Church (USA), which is now the familiar body made up of the United Presbyterian Church (which was the result of the merger of the old United Presbyterian Church with which the RCA considered union) and the PCUS, the former Southern Presbyterian Church. The most recent merger in the seminary's history was in 1958 when the Western and Pittsburgh-Xenia seminaries united.

Would it be possible for the Western Seminary of the RCA to consider producing a history of its institution along these lines? Could a general editor be found who will assemble a group of interested scholars in the RCA who would produce essays which, when edited carefully, will eventuate in a solid history? Since Western Seminary has already passed its 125th anniversary, the producing of a solid institutional history would be a very worthwhile project.

Elton J. Bruins

Ezekiel 1: Chapters 1-12, by John Calvin (Calvin's Old Testament Commentaries, The Rutherford House Translation, Volume 18, translated by D. Foxgrover and D. Martin), Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.

Calvin delivered his comments extemporaneously in lectures on the Hebrew text of Ezekiel between January, 1563, and February, 1564. By that latter date he had reached chapter 20 of the prophecy and was no longer able to continue because of ill health. He died shortly thereafter.

The current volume, the first of two on Ezekiel, is part of a much larger project of Rutherford House in translating all of the reformer's Old Testament commentaries into modern English. It reads well. Technicalities are presented in such a way that non-specialist readers are helped rather than hindered in their understanding.

The overall goal of the project is "to let Calvin speak in his own words, as far as translation into another language allows." The translators of *Ezekiel 1* have admirably succeeded in doing that. The impression one gets is that of listening in the lecture hall with the sixteenth-century audience.

Now, the busy pastor or other serious reader seldom proceeds through a commentary from cover to cover. They dip into it. Can one, then, dip into Calvin's *Ezekiel* and benefit from it? The general answer is yes.

Of course, the exposition is over four hundred years old. There are dated features including the author's knowledge of the ancient Near Eastern background, his occasional slam at the sixteenth-century papacy, and his attempt in some sections to find a spiritual lesson in each of the details of a passage.

Such things aside, the reader who dips into the commentary may well find aids to understand the prophet's message and helpful pointers to the working of God in the present.

Glenn Wyper

The Fabricated Luther: The Rise and Fall of the Shirer Myth, by Uwe Siemon-Netto, St. Louis: Concordia, 1995. 186p., \$12.99.

One of the easiest things for the human mind to do is to think in terms of generalizations. We like to stereotype people—to "peg" them as this way or that. Often we base these characterizations on isolated incidents or on certain things that people have written or spoken. However, what is said or done one time may not be the "total picture" or accurate description of a person or ethnic group. Often generalizations can be misleading or downright wrong. These cliches, often repeated, can, however, become the common opinion. Uwe Siemon-Netto's book, *The Fabricated Luther*, deals with just such a stereotype. This stereotype, which Siemon-Netto believes is utterly false, says that Martin Luther was the progenitor of Germany's National Socialism and Adolf Hitler himself. Pivotal to the popularization of this thinking was William Shirer's book, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*. In that book, Shirer "fabricates" what Siemon-Netto labels a "myth."

Siemon-Netto shows in great detail throughout the book that what Shirer and others have done to Luther is to make generalizations after reading just bits and pieces of his writings. They are, in Kierkegaard's terminology, "paragraph vultures" who have "pounced on isolated ideas of an author out of context" thereby distorting the author's fundamental line of thought (p. 13).

Shirer and others, reading only certain writings of Luther, came to the conclusion that the reason Hitler was so easily able to rule in Germany was due to Martin Luther's teachings on obeying the government. However, Siemon-Netto shows very clearly that although the young Luther taught submission to the government, the older Luther thought differently. As Siemon-Netto points out, Luther, "far from being a quietist, implored Christians to speak up against governmental injustice . . ." (p. 94).

What is particularly distressing to Siemon-Netto is that in the years just prior to and

during World War II, most of the world "bought" the Shirer myth. Even Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt were influenced by thinking that depicted all the German people as "militaristic" and "bloodthirsty." The result of this was that no Allied support was given to the German resistance movement which included men like Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

This is a fascinating book which is well worth reading for just about anyone who cares about history. It sounds out a loud warning to all to beware of cliches and stereotypical thinking. A careful, balanced reading of all the facts should always be carried out before making generalizations. This has certainly not always been done with regard to Martin Luther. Most alarming to this reviewer is that the "Shirer myth" continues to be propagated in Washington, D.C., at the Holocaust Memorial Museum. There, according to Siemon-Netto, visitors are shown a film that makes Luther out as forerunner of Hitler and his mass destruction of Jews. Somehow, this myth must be corrected. Luther was not infallible in what he wrote, but he certainly deserves a balanced and fair evaluation. To that end, Siemon-Netto has done us a great service.

John C. Koedyker

Finding God: A Handbook of Christian Meditation, by Ken Kaisch, New York: Paulist Press, 1994. 380p., \$19.95.

This is a basic manual for meditation. Kaisch assumes nothing in this presentation. He starts from the beginning and leads the interested reader through learning steps and into an appreciation and a possible experience of the prayer form we call meditation. This will be a process or journey on the way to contemplation which is a mode of activity quite different from our normal ways of thinking or acting. He focuses his work in this manual on three purposes: an introduction to the wonderful tools for spiritual transformation within the Christian tradition, an illustration of the developmental sequence inherent in the

spiritual journey, and a desire to win souls for Christ (p. 1).

Kaisch first describes the *human condition* and offers a form of prayer that rests on the process(es) of recollection, meditation, contemplation. The remainder of the manual walks the reader through the various methods that open the faithful person to this form of prayer and the problems that militate against them. Gaining control of our attention is the big job. This is necessary in order to free oneself from the false self and to attend to the absolute presence of God as the source of all the energies we discover. The dynamic of meditation is a systematic method for transforming the false self and a method to enter into God's truth. "We must let go of the false self and move into the true center which lies hidden in each heart. We must enter into the realm where our efforts to control and manipulate are useless. We must explore our true depths in the Divine" (p. 335). He arrives ultimately at the *fundamental promise* of Christianity: ". . . we are already saved! . . . we are already whole at our deepest level" (pp. 336-337).

Kaisch writes like one who loves to meditate. His thoughts are expressed in a manner we could call circular and repetitive. The thirty-eight exercises are prime examples of this. He has evidently found success in the methods made famous by the monks and hermits. Through the repetitive effort to focus the attention on clearing away the false self in order to come into contact with the beauty of God, one is enriched with the contemplative peace this world cannot give. Choices will be made as the person of prayer becomes more and more free to be the person God intended him/her to be—the loving object of his love.

The notes and bibliography at the end of this manual are good sources of information for those studying the theory behind this kind of prayer. The topical presentation of the bibliography is particularly helpful.

Michael Danner

A Firm Foundation: An Aid to Interpreting the Heidelberg Catechism, by Caspar Olevianus (translated and edited by Lyle D. Bierma), Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995. \$17.95 (paper).

Caspar Olevianus was the pastor of the Church of the Holy Spirit in Heidelberg, Germany, in 1563, the year in which the Heidelberg Catechism (H.C.) was written and first published. The traditional opinion is that he and Zacharias Ursinus, theological Professor in the University of Heidelberg, co-authored the H.C. Ursinus' Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism has long been a well-regarded classic, but Olevianus has faded away into the shadows of history. Now Professor Lyle Bierma has given Olevianus a well-deserved "resurrection" by translating *Vester Grundt* (A Firm Foundation), his commentary on the Apostles' Creed, into modern English.

A sub-title indicates that this book is an aid to interpreting the Heidelberg Catechism, but I think that this is more in the mind of the translator than in the mind of the author. Yet Bierma has given "A Firm Foundation" a closer relationship to the H.C. by giving it the same Lord's Day divisions that the H.C. has in its treatment of the Apostles' Creed, and he has printed every clause or phrase that is also found in the H.C. in heavy print.

I expected a work on the Apostles' Creed to be a boring repetition of things often repeated, but was agreeably surprised. Olevianus is a "Barnabas," a "son of encouragement," and keeps throwing in the most beautiful and encouraging gems: for example, "First of all, for every Article of faith, think about God's promise that if you believe it in your heart, and confess it with your mouth, God promises to give you what is stated in that article" (p. 12). On Christ's complete sacrifice, Olevianus says, "If Christ had not paid for all our sins, he would have had to remain in the tomb" (p. 8). He steers away from every trace of Nestorianism—. . . if God and humanity had not formed one person in Christ, it would not have been the blood of the Son of God that was shed, and the sacrifice would not have been of sufficient value for the sins of the whole world" (p. 57).

He lays stress on the necessity of a true faith without displaying the Puritan tendency to prescribe a set path to a true faith.

To my surprise, Olevianus teaches that the sins of believers have been pardoned from eternity (p. 9), and comes close to ideas that, in later generations, led to a position that believers are justified from eternity.

On the still more negative side, Olevianus declares that to participate in the Roman mass is to worship the devil. It gives us an insight into how antagonistic the Reformers were toward Roman Catholicism. In opposition to the Lutheran view on the physical presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, he cites how Jesus was only in one place at a time in his earthly ministry, which is not germane to the issue at all.

Editing was faulty at A60, on page 110, leaving in redundant words which resulted in an incoherent sentence, but otherwise the editing is excellent.

All in all, the translator and publisher have done well in providing us with a book that should be of interest not only to those of Reformed persuasion, but to all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ and his gospel.

Arie Blok

A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals, by Don S. Browning, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991. xii, 324p., \$30.00.

Browning argues that both practical theology and the description of concrete situations proceed as dialogues or conversations. He illustrates his theory with studies of three congregations: Wiltshire Church located in a changing Northeast community; the Church of the Covenant, a conservative Presbyterian congregation in the Midwest; and the Apostolic Church of God, an African-American pentecostal congregation in Chicago.

The author presents three movements of a fundamental practical theology: descriptive theology, historical theology, and systematic

theology. In the chapter on practical moral thinking, Browning outlines the five dimensions of moral thought. They are visional, obligational, tendency-need, environmental-social, and rule-role. Ethics, Christian education, and pastoral care all are related to these five dimensions. For example, the author says, "The five dimensions can be looked at from the perspective of aretaic judgments—judgments about character and virtue. Those dimensions have implications not only for the principles we should follow, they also have implications for the kinds of character and virtue that constitute readiness for moral action. This is enormously important for Christian education for discipleship and religious education for citizenship. To educate is to form the *character* and *virtue* of persons so that they *act* in certain ways."

Browning maintains that in order for transformation to take place the following must happen: a crisis, a witness to the consistent love of God, doing descriptive theology, confronting the demands of positive ideals, leadership that guides the process, and using dialogical skills. Throughout this book the reader is introduced to many who have made significant contributions to the conversation: James Fowler, Thomas Groome, Jurgen Habermas, Stanley Hauerwas, Heinz Kohut, Reinhold Niebuhr, Thomas Oden, and Paul Ricoeur, among others. There is an excellent bibliography.

Throughout, reference to the three congregations keeps the volume from being solely theoretical. I did not find it easy reading. Church consultants, those engaged in theological education, and reflective people who think about the nature of theology and the church may appreciate this volume.

Robert J. Hoeksema

Gathered at Albany: A History of a Classis, by Allan J. Janssen, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995. xi, 163p., \$11.99.

This outstanding contribution to The Historical Series of the Reformed Church in

America should be required reading for every classical stated clerk and president. Every person who has ever wondered about the role of a classis or presbytery can profit from this book. Dr. Donald J. Bruggink is once again to be thanked for his labor of love as editor of the series.

The Rev. Allan Janssen, stated clerk of the Classis of Albany, traces the history of the classis, beginning in 1771, within the circumstance of the growth of the Reformed Church as a denomination and of developments in the history of the United States. The relation of the classis to mission outreach into Canada, to revivalism and the American "Protestant empire," to theological issues, and twentieth-century social issues are all treated fairly and with surefooted competence. The valuable final chapter on a case study on the ordination of a woman to the office of minister is a clear treatment of church order questions regarding the relationship of the General Synod to the classes.

There are several questions which this reviewer would like to raise. Is the classis "the" central assembly in Reformed Church order" (p. 7)? A horizontal (rather than hierarchical) Reformed church order is built on the theological affirmation that the final word belongs to the sole head of the church, Jesus Christ. No assembly is "central" in a horizontal Reformed order. Each of the various assemblies has its assigned responsibility (e.g., elders in admission to baptism and membership, classis in ordination of ministers, General Synod in church order and doctrine) for the sake of good order, edification, and mission. Janssen's discussion of the history of the relation to the General Synod and to consistories and congregations provides numerous illustrations of how conversation among the assemblies takes place in practice and how the responsibilities can shift from decade to decade.

A second question is whether "efficiency and bureaucratization" are "the very building blocks of a denomination" (91). It is possible to argue on the contrary that confessional and ethnic identity within an uneasy ecumenical context is the heart of being a denomination.

The drive for efficiency and bureaucratization may be a signal of the need for repair of a Protestant denomination rather than its building block.

Finally, Janssen poses several questions at the end of his study. "Just what is a classis? Is it to provide programs for its congregations? Is it to deliver the product produced by the denomination, or even the local synod? Or is it, rather, to act as 'bishop'?" (135). We can hope that out of his rich experience and depth of knowledge he in concert with others will be enabled to help provide answers to these questions.

Eugene Heideman

A Generation Alone: Xers Making a Place in the World, by William Mahedy and Janet Bernardi, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994. 183p., \$10.99 (paper).

As a military chaplain and campus pastor, William Mahedy is well acquainted with the generation born after 1964 known as Generation X. Mahedy and a GenX friend, Janet Bernardi, discuss effective ministry to this group of people and speculate that GenX will eventually become a powerful force in ministry to their own generation and generations to come.

Mahedy and Bernardi say that Generation X is a generation alone. Their Baby-Boomer parents, seeking the American Dream, fulfillment through materialism and serial adult relationships, left them in the care of surrogate parents known as day care centers, and sometimes literally left them alone as latchkey kids. They sometimes join whoever will accept them, cults and gangs included. (Note: The TV show *Friends* is a Generation X primer.) The institutions of their lives have failed them. The government has enriched their predecessors' lives by building a huge debt that they must pay. Their concept of the ideology of the larger church has been shaped by the Bakkers, Swaggerts, Falwells, and Schullers. Business has used them as low pay and temporary "entry-level" employees, discarding

them whenever the quarterly report needs punching up. Our sense of national integrity has been bludgeoned by Viet Nam, Watergate, Iran-Contra, and Whitewater.

This generation does not trust institutions, leadership, or previous generations. If they are to find fulfillment and meaning, it will be in a new way. Previous generations have proved all known means of fulfillment to be futile. Mahedy finds many parallels between the veteran suffering from post-traumatic distress and the GenXer who is trying to start out in a business world that doesn't care about him or her as a person. The result is that many GenXers live at their parents' home. They are battle-scarred, and their parents see them as "Baby-Boomerangs," who don't have what it takes to cut it in "the real world." Their real world is very different from anything their parents ever experienced, and their parents can't see it.

This generation is not looking for a Rock, but an Oasis. Generation X's disillusionment with humans and institutions is an opening for churches that offer a healing community based on relationships of integrity and low-level, soft-pedaled, truthful Christianity. Xers are ready to abandon self and seek the good of humanity.

This generation can identify with Christ and there are many who will emerge from the fog in which they currently find themselves to find Truth and Meaning and hold it up for all to see. Christ himself was alone, forsaken by his heavenly father, his earthly friends, and his religious forbearers. Total abandonment of self to that Christ is the way to meaning and hope, and this generation is uniquely posed to recognize all that Christ meant to teach. Like Christ, this generation will change the world through quiet resolve, truthful ideals, and pragmatic deeds. The key to fulfillment is filling the "God-shaped space" that is in us. Only Christ can fill it and end the desperate search for meaning which consumes Generation X.

Larry Klaaren

A History of Christianity in Africa, by Elizabeth Isichei, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995. xi, 420p., \$19.99.

Elizabeth Isichei is a professor of religious studies at Otago University in New Zealand and a former professor in Africa for sixteen years. Her book is detailed, full of unfamiliar facts, wide in scope, and honest in perspective. As a frequent visitor and short-term missionary to East Africa, I had read bits and pieces of the Christian history in Africa, but Isichei has helped me put it together in chronological order. Painstakingly, she tells of the origin of the faith in each country—even those countries that no longer exist—and how the political and social struggles of the day have affected each.

Church history enthusiasts and students will find it invaluable, appreciating the author's scholarly effort, but missionary candidates will find it most beneficial. Gone will be preconceived images of white leaders overseeing national followers and mission policies originating from Europe and America. In their place is the reality of a new day—educated nationals in prime positions, more church response to causes of oppression, and a serious search and expression of national identity in the faith. On the other hand, there has been a shift "especially among the élite . . . to a post-Christian position, adopting "scientific socialism," or, more commonly, absorbing the general secularity so common in the Western world" (p. 338).

This is a book worth wading through. It has the capacity to astound and inform everyone.

Joyce E. Carroll

An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning, by Walter C. Kaiser and Moisés Silva, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994. 298p.

The purpose of this book is to assist evangelical readers of the Bible in discovering the meaning of the text. While Christians might believe that discovering the intended

meaning of Scripture is straightforward, the historical nature of human language and culture lead to many complications. The authors are confident that genuine understanding is possible because of the inherent unity of Scripture, the created ability of the human person in God's image to receive personal communication, and the work of the Holy Spirit in guiding the reader through the words of the text. The authors encourage Christians to read the Bible so they can hear and apply God's message from the Scripture into their lives and world.

The authors comprehensively and accurately discuss basic issues of biblical hermeneutics. The book is divided into four parts. In Part One, the authors discuss the process by which meaning is discovered when reading any written text. In Part Two, the authors summarize how the reader can make sense of the various forms of literature found in Scripture. In Part Three, the authors write about how the interpreter can read the biblical text for personal meditation, for obedience within a contemporary setting, and for theological coherence. In Part Four, the authors summarize the history of biblical interpretation, numerous approaches to biblical interpretation in the past 100 years, Calvinistic hermeneutics, and principles for discovering multiple applications out of a single meaning.

The authors reflect two distinct perspectives within evangelical biblical interpretation. Silva is more willing to allow the reader to rely upon the Holy Spirit's direction in meditative reading of Scripture without formal knowledge of the historical and literary setting of the passage. Kaiser is more concerned to discover the original historical-grammatical meaning of the text. However, there are no significant differences between the two authors. Their individual writings and perspectives blend well together.

This reviewer found the work to be a helpful review of the basic issues in biblical hermeneutics for pastoral work. The most useful settings for the reading of this book might be as a seminary introduction to biblical studies, as the subject of a pastoral discussion group, or as part of a pastor's continuing education.

The only significant weakness is that an exposition of Calvinistic hermeneutics, and even one of evangelical biblical hermeneutics, ought to give a fuller explanation of the place of Christ as the center of Scripture within the larger history of salvation.

Michael Van Hamersveld

Jesus: Miriam's Child, Sophia's Prophet, by Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, New York: Continuum, 1994. 262p., \$22.95.

This book is the sequel to *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Reconstruction of Christian Origins*, the author's best-selling work of a decade ago. In her new book, Fiorenza links the struggle of feminists within Christian theology to the world-wide concern for global democracy, economic justice, and universal well-being. In what she refers to as "historical amnesia," the author traces the rise and fall of the liberating movement around Jesus as prophet and messenger of divine Sophia. To do so, she first seeks to investigate the links between feminist christological articulations and the theoretical, historical, cultural, and political frameworks that shape biblical as well as feminist christological discourse.

The author clearly states some of the complications of portraying Jesus as liberator encountered by any christological work, feminist or otherwise. For example, she discusses the possibility that the stories of Jesus will continue to function to inculcate feminine romantic attitudes concerning male "rescue." Another difficulty she identifies is that to see Jesus as liberator is to see what preceded him to be somehow enslaving, an association that can and sometimes is perceived as anti-semitic.

Of course, one of the biggest stumbling blocks to feminist christological debate arises around the theology of the cross. The kind of self-giving love embodied in Jesus' act collides with our culture which calls women to self-sacrificial love for families. Fiorenza argues that such links render the exploitation of women in the name of love and self-sacrifice

psychologically acceptable and religiously warranted.

Fiorenza calls for new images for Jesus the liberator that see him as a political martyr, a revolutionary, a worker, a mother, a menstruating woman. She argues that Jesus' death does not need atonement or sacrifice to have meaning, but derives meaning from the political act of martyrdom for a cause that seeks to liberate us all.

This is a time in which "new" interpretations of Jesus proliferate. These can be challenging, thought-provoking, and give rise to illuminating discussions of who Jesus is. My hope is that those who would delve into some of these current "Jesus books" would include this interpretation as well in their readings and discussions.

Barbara Pekich

Judaism: Between Yesterday and Tomorrow, by Hans Küng (translated by John Bowdon), New York: Continuum, 1992. xxii, 753p., \$24.95 (paper).

Christianity, History and Future, by Hans Küng (translated by John Bowdon), New York: Continuum, 1995. xxv, 936p., \$44.50.

Hans Küng, Roman Catholic director of the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Tübingen, Germany, plans to complete the project begun in these two massive volumes with a similar treatment of Islam. Küng takes his cue from Kuhn's theory of paradigm shifts; he discerns six historical paradigms for both Judaism and Christianity. The depth of understanding and clarity of presentation of such a wide range of material is breathtaking and always insightful.

The motto facing *Christianity's* title page is that there can be "No peace among the nations without peace among the religions. No peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions. No dialogue between the religions without investigation of the foundation of the religions." This motto sums up Küng's passion throughout his work.

Dialogue among the religions involves for Küng the need for each of the religions to explore their own sources and essence and to be clear and frank in setting forth their own understanding of the truth. He believes that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam must begin with their common roots in Abraham and monotheism in order to recognize their commonalities and profound differences. Embedded in the text of these books one discovers boxes with questions which persons in each of the religions should be addressing to each other as well as themselves, and a number of charts designed to provide visual understanding of the various historical paradigms in each religion.

Especially impressive is Küng's emphasis on the Jewishness of Jesus and his sharp criticism of the Christian paradigms which have consistently and deliberately ignored and/or rejected his Jewishness. While European churches since World War II have been more ready to recognize Jesus as a Jew, my sense is that American churches continue to be seriously subject to Küng's critique. With his emphasis on the Jewishness of Jesus, he presents a challenging critique of the Nicene tradition, which replaced the Jewish tradition with the Hellenistic-Greek paradigm. One may not always agree with Küng, but one will always be challenged to greater depth and deeper faith by his clear presentation of the issues.

The comparison of the Medieval Roman Catholic paradigm with the Reformation Protestant paradigm will be of special interest to western Christians. As one would expect, Küng continues his very sharp attack on the "imperial" papacy and its doctrine of infallibility. He points a way for present-day Protestants and Roman Catholics to recognize in the medieval paradigm those common elements which could lead to greater ecumenical peace today as, for example, by noting that Luther was correct in his doctrine of justification by faith and that there were others in the medieval paradigm who had held to his position.

One does not have to be a professional theologian or church historian to profit from

these books. They can be absorbed with immense profit by anyone who is willing to take the hours required to read the more than 800 pages each. The extensive footnotes with bibliography will be of great help to those who wish to do further study.

Eugene Heideman

Marketplace Preaching: How to Return the Sermon to Where It Belongs, by Calvin Miller, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995. 198p., \$12.99 (paper).

Calvin Miller believes that the sermon in Christian worship has moved far away from its traditional purpose of teaching one point of God's truth in a passionate way that can be felt, understood, and remembered by its listeners.

Miller is an advocate of "marketplace sermons." Marketplace sermons meet a need or critical point of a target audience, and request the listeners to do something as a response. These sermons are in the common language, are sociologically sensitive, are open to the listeners' concerns and special situations, and put ministry ahead of theology. A marketplace sermon does not tell the listener what he or she should do or believe, but provides information so that the listener can make a decision. A marketplace sermon answers the listener's question in the listener's language, rather than dealing with the preacher's issues in his or her very unique situation.

Preparing this kind of sermon requires considerable contact with the listening community. The sermon is an audio experience because of the language and style. It is a video experience because the casual (yet very well prepared) delivery leads to direct contact between the preacher and the listener and the illustrations that are used conjure up very real images in the listener. Having very few or no notes makes this possible.

Miller shares his weekly preparation technique on a day-by-day basis. I found his explanation of "interest gigs," illustration

gathering, and the indispensable elements of form quite helpful. The illustrations should be dated, the people in the illustrations given a name, and the place where it happened should be specific. The key to effective sermonizing is honesty and openness; the more specific the information and the more real the feeling, the greater the power of the sermon.

If you want to preach a well-prepared, vivid, vital, image-driven sermon with few or no notes, read this book to learn some helpful techniques. In some traditions, the reader may be a little uncomfortable with Miller's love of the altar call, and some may place more importance on theology in sermonizing. This book will be well-received by most who preach on a regular basis.

Larry Klaaren

The Method and Message of Jesus' Teachings, revised edition, by Robert H. Stein, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994. xvi, 203p.

The author is professor of New Testament at Bethel College in St. Paul, Minnesota, and has published a number of books on the Gospels including *The Synoptic Problem, Gospels and Tradition*, and *An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus*. The first edition of this publication on the method and message of Jesus' teaching was published more than fifteen years ago. All but the first chapter have significant revisions.

Stein presents arguments for the historicity of some gospel passages and statements he uses in the work, but other scholars will differ with him regarding that which he accepts as teachings of Jesus, rather than the message of the Christian church or the words of the authors of the Gospels. For example, much of the form and content of the teachings of Jesus which we find in the Gospels is often ascribed by other scholars to the work of the evangelists.

It is interesting to read of Stein's conclusion that antithetical parallelism is a characteristic of the teaching of Jesus on which he must have worked in advance, perhaps

when he was alone not only for the purpose of prayer but also to prepare *what* and *how* he would teach, concerned with his listeners' ability to remember what he taught. This is in contrast to the more common idea that Jesus was more spontaneous and original in the presentation of his thoughts related to the situation in life or occasion of his teaching.

A further example of Stein's difference with other scholars is his interpretation of Mark 15:34, regarding Jesus' addressing God and his felt separation from God on the cross (p. 86). The separation is due to his bearing the sin of the world, but it is temporary since the Gospel later speaks of him commending his spirit into the hands of the Father (Luke 23:46). With reference to 2 Corinthians 5:21 he spells out the faith of the Christian church regarding Jesus as the sin-bearer. However, this would be seen by others as an example of how the church influenced the words of Jesus in the Gospels to express that faith which came to fruition after the cross event.

One also finds comments by Stein which stand out for their simplicity and profundity in presenting problems related to the teaching of Jesus. I would highly recommend this book to pastors and teachers, and to students and scholars as well, for the wealth of information and insight it provides.

David W. Jurgens

Missionary Conquest: The Gospel and Native American Cultural Genocide, by George E. Tinker, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993. ix, 182p.

We should blush for the arrogance of our Euro-American missionary tactics, but also learn our lesson well, and then do a better job in any mission we undertake in the world today. George Tinker, a pastor and the associate professor of cross-cultural ministries at Iliff School of Theology, Denver, helps us do that. He analyzes both Protestant and Roman Catholic missions to his fellow American Indians.

Tinker's first chapter, "Missionary Intentions, Missionary Violence," presents his thesis "that . . . Christian missionaries—of all denominations working among American Indian nations—were partners in genocide" (p. 4). He means *cultural* genocide—political, economic, social, and religious (but never eliminating physical) genocide brought on by the ideology of white superiority. Missions intended to do good to the American Indians, but their notion of superiority resulted in doing violence instead. Tinker openly says: "My point is not just to chastise the missionaries. Not only would that serve little purpose, but it would be asking . . . [them] to have done the impossible . . . to have demonstrated an awareness beyond what was culturally possible at that time" (p. 9).

Tinker illustrates his thesis with four different missionaries: John Eliot, subtitled "Conversion, Colonialism and Oppression of Language"; Junipero Serra, "Spiritual Conquest and Famine in California"; Pierre-Jean De Smet, "Manifest Destiny and Economic Exploitation"; and Henry Benjamin Whipple, "The Politics of Indian Assimilation."

The final chapter, "The Enduring Dilemma: Where Do We Go from Here," discusses the pervasiveness of culture, defining culture as "consisting of habitual responses to the world." White superiority, as an appropriate response to the world, is still ingrained in Euro-Americans. Cultural rootedness becomes a systemic causation of all we do and say. We should be reminded of the heinousness of cultural genocide every time we hear of or observe the dysfunctionality of an American Indian group.

The cross-cultural missionary can never study too much the influence of his culture on his relationship with the people and culture that he/she wishes to win for the living God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul R. Meyerink

On Behalf of God: A Christian Ethic for Biology, by Bruce R. Reichenbach and V. Elving Anderson, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995. xii, 355p., \$22.95.

Rapid growth in the field of genetics, coupled with the pressures of a planetary population explosion, raises critical and complex ethical and pastoral issues. Families, pastors, medical personnel, and makers of public policy are forced often to make immediate and ultimate decisions with very limited knowledge. Reichenbach and Anderson combine their deep understanding of ethics and genetics, respectively, to provide insight into the moral controversies surrounding such issues as environmental exploitation, assisted reproduction and human sexuality, genetic manipulation, and brain/mind interrelationships.

The authors understand a Christian ethic for biology within the context of God's three commands in Genesis 1 and 2—to fill (qualitatively as well as quantitatively), rule over, and care for creation as stewards on behalf of God. They set forth a positive view of advancing technology while constantly remaining aware of the dangers of human hubris and greed in its use. Their careful balance and nuanced understanding of the issues is a refreshing statement in the face of so much public hyperbole from the left and the right.

On Behalf of God is an excellent complement to *Christian Faith, Health, and Medical Practice* (Eerdmans, 1989) by Hessel Bouma, et. al. The value of each book can be considerably enhanced when used in combination with the other. In view of the fact that the authors of *On Behalf of God* inform us at several points that they were in conversation with Hessel Bouma, one could wish that they had appropriated a wider band of biblical material than Genesis 1-2. And one misses Bouma's discussion of tragedy, suffering, and covenantal ethics in human life in relation to sexuality and reproduction, brain/mind issues,

genetic manipulation, and the potential of human technology.

Eugene Heideman

The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission, revised edition, by Lesslie Newbigin, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995. viii, 192p., \$12.99.

This book calls us to reemphasize the missionary character of the church. The "open secret" is "God's purpose, through Christ, to bring all things to their true end in the glory of the triune God." "Open" in that the good news is preached to all, and "secret" in that "it is manifest only to the eyes of faith" (p. 188). Thus church and mission are not different things; "mission belongs to the very being of the church," says Newbigin (p. 1). "A church that is not 'the church in mission' is no church at all" (p. 2).

Dr. Newbigin is one of the "old men" of missions and very profitable to listen to. Although he was born and grew up in England, he was ordained by the Church of Scotland in 1936. He served many years as a missionary in India, and, when the Church of South India was organized in 1947, he was elected one of its bishops. He has been general secretary of the International Missionary Council and an associate general secretary of the World Council of Churches.

Newbigin says that Jesus is the ultimate authority for mission. Jesus announces the reign of God. He is the Son of God and is anointed by the Holy Spirit. The mission is presented in three different ways: (1) proclaiming the Father's kingdom, (2) sharing the life of his Son, and (3) bearing the witness of the Spirit. These ways are described in three chapters about mission being faith in action, love in action, and hope in action. In the remaining chapters Newbigin discusses some theoretical and practical matters using his three-fold model. He says the answer to universality and particularity is to be found in the doctrine of election. In the chapter on action for God's justice, there is an extensive

and useful discussion of liberation theology. The chapter on "Church Growth, Conversion and Culture" is a good analysis of the church growth school of thought, contextual theology, and the relation between conversion and culture. The book concludes with a discussion of how the gospel relates to other religions.

Newbigin's style sometimes produces awkward and involved sentences, but his message is clear: "Mission belongs to the very being of the church."

Paul R. Meyerink

The Openness of God, by Clark Pinnock, Richard Rice, John Sanders, William Hasker, and David Bassinger. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994. 204p., \$14.95 (paper).

The Openness of God is a biblical (Rice), historical (Sanders), theological (Pinnock), philosophical (Hasker), and practical (Bassinger) development of what Pinnock calls "free will theism." It presents a telling critique of classical theism's description of God's attributes in terms of timelessness, immutability, and impassibility. These ideas were drawn more from the metaphysics of Plato and Plotinus than the Bible's picture of a God who interacts with his covenant people and feels our hurts and suffering, who grieves at our sin and genuinely repents of his intentions as in regard to the judgment of Nineveh in the Book of Jonah or of Israel in Exodus 32.

Pinnock argues that theologians lose sight of the openness of God because of a "resistance to conceptualizing it, even though it is existentially familiar" (p. 105). The God of promise is "replaced by a metaphysical statement about abstract being" (p. 106). In both theological models, God is sovereign, but the mode of sovereignty differs between "power as total control" and love as "the mode in which God's power is exercised" (p. 114). "Divine sovereignty involves a flexible out-working of God's purposes in history" (p. 116). Therefore, the future is open to both God and us. Our decisions and choices are

significant. They are not predetermined. The future does not yet exist and therefore is inherently unknowable even for omniscience.

Both Pinnock and Hasker take serious precautions to differentiate the "openness of God" from process theology. While the future is "open" the relationship between God and creation is asymmetrical, it is not interdependent as in process thought. Hasker goes so far as to claim that the Whiteheadian synthesis is "even more damaging to the biblical conception of God than was the neo-Platonism of the early church fathers" (p. 141). Hasker affirms that God is capable of creating a universe in which every detail is under his control, but that a wise and good God has chosen an open universe in which he too awaits the eschaton, knowing that his sovereign plans will be accomplished even if he does not control every step (Rom. 11:33-36).

Lastly, Bassinger shows the practicality of the openness of God doctrine in regard to prayer, divine guidance, theodicy, social responsibility, and evangelistic concern. Certainly, most Christians believe prayer is more than being obedient. Prayer is an activity that initiates God's involvement which would not take place necessarily if we had not used our God-given power of choice to request his assistance.

The Openness of God does not answer all of our questions in regard to God's relationship with us. However, these questions are not only not answered, but impossible to answer with the classical emphasis of God's ineffable transcendence. The open doctrine of God is here to stay! It is a biblical personalism, seeing the root metaphor of theology as loving relation, the very essence of John 3:16.

Ronald B. Mayers

A Quest for the Post-Historical Jesus, by William Hamilton, New York: Continuum, 1994. 304p., \$27.50.

William Hamilton was a proponent of "the death of God" or radical theology controversy of the 1960s. The author still accepts this as

his "resting place" or "the world I happily inhabit." "How does one speak about Jesus in and to a world that does not need to believe in him?" he asks. The author firmly locates himself in a third zone, between belief and unbelief.

The title of the book plays on the title of Albert Schweitzer's earlier work, *The Quest for the Historical Jesus*. The present author's quest is for the "post-historical Jesus"—"the Jesus we can turn to after we have determined that the historical method (and its cousin, theological interpretation based on that method) has given us everything it is capable of giving" (p. 20). Hamilton sets his own rules for the quest by rejecting traditional theology with its interpretation of the classical texts and turning to the poets' interpretation of Jesus.

These "poets" include novelists, playwrights, film-makers, biographers, advertising copywriters, and poets proper. They range from Bruce Barton, Fulton Oursler, and Sholem Asch to Gore Vidal. On the way we also meet Dorothy Sayers, Robert Graves, D. H. Lawrence, Anthony Burgess, Francois Mariac, Shusaku Endo, and William Faulkner. Film-makers include Pier Paolo Pasolino (*The Gospel According to St. Matthew*) and Denys Arcand (*Jesus of Montreal*). Dickinson, Pound, Auden, Ferlinghetti, Countee Cullen, and Stevie Smith, as well as writers of Black gospel music, Country and Western are included in Hamilton's list of poets. He explains.

My interest in poets on Jesus has both a personal and a theological context. I suspect that the theologians and the historians have less and less to teach us about Jesus, and so I feel justified in adding the nontraditional, half-truths of the poets to the traditional half-truths we already think we know. This examination of the poets may also help locate my own relationship to the Christian tradition. My poets will turn out to be inside, outside, and partly inside and partly outside that tradition, and thus they may help me define the way I may be

inside, outside, or partly in and partly out. I will be asking the poets to help me locate a place that is beyond belief, neither belief nor unbelief (p. 1).

In the last chapter, Hamilton proposes his own fiction. He unveils his death of God or radical theology through an imaginative walk on the beach with a stranger (Jesus). It is the voice of Hamilton which speaks as the voice of Jesus, not Jesus speaking to the person of Hamilton.

While this book is entertaining and challenging, I was left with the impression that Hamilton had not answered the question with which he began this book: How do we speak about Jesus in and to a world that does not need religion? I believe Hamilton too quickly capitulated to his pre-understanding of radical theology, in which he rests, instead of struggling with the question of what is it that makes this Jesus unique. What Hamilton needs is a more restless soul.

Barry L. Wynveen

The Sacred Anointing: The Preaching Of D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, by Tony Sargent, Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1994. 344p.

This "Landmark Study," as J. I. Packer terms it, is a thorough biographical look at the preaching methodology of the late Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, described by Emil Brunner as the greatest preacher of Reformed theology in the twentieth century. This excellent volume highlights both the substance and style of his preaching as well as the dominant focus of his life and work: the prominence of the Holy Spirit in preaching. Having studied most of Lloyd-Jones' words in written and audiotape form, Sargent directs this book to those whose love is preaching or the study of great preachers.

Lloyd-Jones elevates the role of the Holy Spirit in great preaching, not only in the act of preaching, but also in the preparation of the sermon and in the life of the preacher. The need for the Spirit's unction in the entire

preaching process is modelled on Paul's dependence on the Holy Spirit in Colossians 1:29 and 1 Thessalonians 1:5. As Sargent notes, "Nothing is needed more in our world than ministers who grasp the message of Scripture and preach it with the unction of the Spirit. This is life-changing preaching" (p. 219).

Lloyd-Jones based his entire ministry on the conviction that when God is at work in preaching, powerful results will follow. The preacher's goal is to leave the listeners with a sense of God. Dominant in his preaching were these elements: (i) expository method, (ii) doctrinal content, (iii) orderly arrangement, (iv) popular style, (v) Christ-centered orientation, (vi) experimental interests, (vii) practical application, and (viii) powerful manner.

Sargent's conclusion is that the church desperately needs men of the caliber of Lloyd-Jones, Calvinists equipped with a theology and born along by the Spirit that enables them to proclaim the gospel. He concludes with these words of Lloyd-Jones that summarize his excellence in preaching: "These are the things that make the preacher. If he has the love of God in his heart, and if he has a love for God; if he has a love for the souls of men, and a concern about them; if he knows the truth of the Scriptures; and has the Spirit of God within him, that man will preach" (p. 297).

I enthusiastically recommend this volume to those who wish to study great preaching.

Frank J. Shearer

Science and Theology: Questions at the Interface, edited by Murray Rae, Hilary Regan, and John Stenhouse, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994. viii, 261p., \$29.99 (paper).

This volume contains six papers presented at a multidisciplinary conference held at Otago University in New Zealand in 1993. Each of the six main papers is accompanied by two responses. The six main papers are by Owen Gingerich, Norma Emerton, Nancey Murphy, John Puddefoot, Carver Yu, and John

Polkinghorne. Stephen May supplies a substantial introduction. A degree of integration is achieved because each of the six main authors is among the respondents. The unifying themes of this collection are the revival of natural theology based on the results of contemporary science, the use of current scientific ideas to make sense of divine action in the world, and the applicability to theological method of post-empiricist conceptions of scientific rationality. Although in some cases quite speculative, the essays are consistently clear and accessible to non-specialists. The main essays included here, as well as most of the response essays, are intellectually honest, thought-provoking explorations of significant problems confronting anyone who seeks an integration of Christian faith and a scientific world view. The material contained in this book is a welcome contribution to a universe of discourse in which too much that is written is tendentious, trivial, or obscure. The thirty-dollar price is rather high for this paperback volume, but it does represent Christian thought on matters of faith and science at its best.

Donald H. Wacome

The Silent Roots: Orthodox Perspectives on Christian Spirituality, by K. M. George, Geneva: WCC Publications, 1994. xi, 81p.

This little book sets a beautiful, wonderful goal for the reader. It pulls away from the theology of intellectually managed categories. It defines Christian spirituality as "the worshipful experience of the Triune God and compassionate love for humanity and the whole creation" (p. ix). It maintains that the "academic distinctions between theology and spirituality do not apply" (p. ix). The reader is well advised to incorporate a multidimensional theology which rests in three interpenetrating dimensions—a pregnant silence, an economic understanding of the incarnation, and the indescribable beauty of God's creation. This is an example of an exercise in the apophatic—as opposed to the cataphatic—method.

The mystery of the incarnation becomes more and more significant the more the reader-listener (the silent one) limits self to provide space for the rest of creation. The Christ himself incorporates the whole of creation by "the kenotic act of *dispossessing* the self" (p. 44). This is a paradox indeed. Paradox though it be, this is the paradigm for a sane and ecumenical Christian approach to creation and religion.

Since the ascetic-monastic tradition is paradigmatic for at least the Eastern versions of Christian spirituality, elements which constituted it are worthy of mention here. Silence, tears, and "madness" are the three elements the author chooses to include in this book. The silence is golden and constitutes the pause that truly refreshes. The tears are genuine and multigenic. The madness—or foolishness—is prompted by 1 Corinthians 4:9-13. All three point to the radical source and the revolutionary potential they possess.

Fr. George presents very little that we could term new in this little book. It will probably not be terribly controversial among readers in ecumenical circles. Even his choice of an authoritative definer, Matthew Fox, can be excused since the sentiment of the definition (pp. 80-81) could be considered quite common among thoughtful church people. This little book is at once a pleasant plea and an undisguised guide for an approach to ever renewable ecumenical efforts and to solutions to the contemporary ills of our society.

Michael Danner

So Much Sky, by Jan Willem Schulte Nordholt (translated by Henrietta Ten Harmsel), Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994. x, 62p., \$9.99 (paper).

Jan Willem Schulte Nordholt is best known, at least outside the Netherlands, as an historian specializing in American studies. In a decided change of pace, his slim volume of poetry is, in the words of Frederick Buechner from his Foreword: "a kind of spiritual rest or benediction." A number of the poems are

accompanied by Schulte Nordholt's black-and-white photographs of land and seascapes, historic paintings and sculptures, which themselves (Buechner again) "invite us to explore our own deep places."

While occasionally a poem, such as "Lavastone," seems merely to prolong unnecessarily a single theme or thought, most end with a startling twist which propels the reader unexpectedly into further rumination. One of the most arresting treatments of a religious subject is "Farmers' Supper," on a page opposite the photograph of an eighteenth-century fresco depicting the Last Supper. Most of the poems are simple and direct in expression, though a few—notably "Dream" and "Thomas"—require a good deal of pondering over the author's meaning. "Until He Comes" is perhaps reminiscent of W. H. Auden (as in the latter's Narrator's reflections at the conclusion of *For the Time Being*) in its opposition of mundane routine to the coming of Christ.

Adherence to rhyme schemes results in a number of infelicities in the verse. "River" begins with a tortuous sentence with a confusing pair of "as if's." Frequently a line's concluding phrase is jarringly colloquial and abrupt: "then gets lost" ("Polderland"); "blot them out for good" ("River"); "it makes us cry" ("Poem"); "it really comes to that" ("Lavastone"). For the sake of the rhyme, "Blumhardt" ends with our calling to God with our "sound." Twice "poem" is awkwardly rhymed with "home" ("Heartscript," "Wintergrove"). Syntax is frequently equally forced, as for example in "City View" with its concluding couplet: "I'll hear their answer from the sky/as crying through the night they fly." In one curious image, an extended metaphor in "Poem" likens a poet seeking the right word to a shepherd searching for a lost sheep.

From a literary point of view, the reader must look elsewhere for poetry of genuine significance. Schulte Nordholt's *So Much Sky*, however, has considerable value as a

devotional work, a guide to one's personal meditation.

George Ralph

Spiritual Life—The Foundation for Preaching and Teaching, by John Westerhoff, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994. xv, 80p.

Westerhoff maintains that it is not possible to have a fully effective ministry without a vibrant personal spiritual life. The author defines spiritual life as ordinary, everyday life lived in an ever-deepening and loving relationship to God and one's true, healthy self.

The attainment of this essential relationship is directly related to the amount and quality of time spent consciously with God on a daily basis. In chapter 3, Westerhoff stresses that spirituality is linked to one's commitment to silence and solitude. In chapter 6, he outlines significant and helpful steps for developing spiritual discipline: regular time and familiar space; focusing full attention on God; the clearing of the mind through body relaxation; the practice of receptive awareness and trustful openness; journaling; the establishing of a relationship with a spiritual friend, whom the author describes as a sensitive, caring, open, flexible person of faith and prayer who listens and maintains confidentiality; and the praying of the Scriptures.

Westerhoff concludes by reemphasizing his thesis that spiritual life and prayer are the only condition under which the work of preachers and teachers can be properly done. "It is the preachers and teachers whose spiritual lives are deep and strong whose ministries are also deep and strong" (76). He holds one's vibrant spirituality as the antidote to today's epidemic of ministerial burnout. He cites a letter of Evelyn Underhill stating her belief that what the church needs most is to call the church's preachers and teachers to a greater interiority and cultivation of their spiritual lives, convinced as she was that the real

failures, difficulties, and weaknesses of the church were spiritual.

This book will be helpful for those who believe that the church's deepest need is the spiritual renewal of those who preach and teach and through them all the people of God. Calvin himself recommended "that our hearts be fired with a zealous and burning desire ever to seek, love, and serve God."

Frank J. Shearer

Spreading the Flame: Charismatic Churches and Missions Today, by Edward K. Pousson, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992. 195p.

Pousson belongs to an independent charismatic local church. He writes more like a coach than a critic; he wants his team to do its best for God.

Of the ten chapters, the first four are historical, speaking of the emergence and development of the independent charismatic churches. The author says that most of the literature about charismatic renewal speaks of it as it appears in historical denominations. However, the important word here is *independent*. In the last six chapters he describes how these churches are doing mission, and how their major teachings can enrich evangelical mission theology and vice versa. In the last chapter he discusses methods and strategies.

Charismatic churches are local-church oriented, but most now realize that they need to be connected in some way. However they do not want to use the word denomination. That is too hierarchical, for them, and blurs the primacy of the local church. Therefore they choose the idea of "networking," which means "working through informal, horizontal links between members of an organization who share ideas, information, and resources, in pursuit of common goals" (p. 62, referring to John Naisbitt, *Megatrends*, 1984). Naisbitt seems to be talking of networking *within* one organization. The multitude of local churches seems to conflict with a concept that he does

not state, but which I assume to be a part of charismatic theology—that the church is one.

The independent charismatic churches certainly have a great potential for mission. I spent a month in Omsk, Siberia (Russia) in 1994, watching and participating in the church planting program there under the Association of Vineyard Churches. The church is growing and it was heartening to see the courage and good sense, under the leading of the Spirit, which the missionaries demonstrate.

Paul R. Meyerink

Unbounded Love, by Clark Pinnock and Robert Brow, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994. 192p., \$12.99 (paper).

Unbounded Love is another expression of the openness-of-God movement. It takes issue with the classical theological tradition in favor of what is believed to be the biblical model of God's vulnerability and openness to a history that is not predetermined by his omniscience and omnipotence. This book is primarily practical and pastoral, not just historical and theological. It is meant to be read by laity and clergy alike. Therefore chapters discuss implications for the church, baptism, and prayer and healing as well as on judgment, hell, and salvation as liberation. Each of these is seen as love—be it victorious, personal, caring, freeing, etc., love!

Pinnock and Brow desperately want to present the good news of the gospel. However, "the good news can even be made to sound like bad news" (7). This they want to correct! Presentation of the gospel only in forensic rather than familial terms has made the gospel unattractive. It is time to refocus and this book is meant to help in that endeavor. It will sharpen debate between academic theologians, but more importantly it should direct ministry in a more compassionate direction that replaces the picture of God as the trial judge with the picture of God waiting as a father for the wayward but penitent's return.

Ronald B. Mayers