

BOOK REVIEWS

TRIBUTES TO JOHN CALVIN: A Celebration of his Quincentenary

David W. Hall, ed.

Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2010 568pp £26.99hb ISBN: 9781596380967

This is another volume of the “Calvin 500” series of books inspired by the quincentenary of John Calvin’s birth in 1509. Now that the hype (and in some quarters, excitement) of the anniversary itself has calmed down, there is still value in reflecting on the Genevan Reformer’s life and ministry, so this volume is by no means out of date. Indeed, with some of the best names in Calvin and Calvinist scholarship represented here, this is a very useful introduction to the literature on the man and his legacy which should stand the test of time and be a standard reference point on the aspects of his influence it covers, for many years to come.

The book originates in papers given at the Calvin500 conference in Geneva in 2009 and includes material from e.g. Henri Blocher, Hughes Oliphant Old, Daryl Hart, R. Scott Clark, Anthony Lane, Mike Horton, Bruce McCormack, and Herman Selderhuis. There are 23 chapters broadly divided into three, looking at ‘Calvin’s Times,’ ‘Calvin’s Topics,’ and ‘Calvin Today and Tomorrow.’ The first section covers Calvin’s contribution as, for example, a lawyer, a Frenchman, a preacher, a commentator, and a liturgist. The second examines things like his teaching on worship, assurance, soteriology, and the Lord’s Supper. The final section looks at his ongoing impact in areas such as the arts.

It is worth picking out a few highlights. George Knight III’s study of Calvin as a commentator is very useful indeed, as it reminds us that Calvin is more than the theologian of the *Institutes* and was in fact a skilled and diligent commentator on scripture who sought primarily to understand God as he has revealed himself there and anchored all his theologizing in the word. It is always worth remembering his stated principle in commentating of ‘lucid brevity,’ which was unusual in his day (and something many modern commentators have long forgotten!). Here is a preacher who writes commentaries for preachers. A.T.B. McGowan on Calvin’s doctrine of scripture is an examination of the issue of inerrancy from one who himself has caused ripples recently through his own published views on the subject. McGowan concludes that Calvin is neither an inerrantist nor an errantist but an infallibilist, who bases the authority of scripture on the connection between word and Spirit. He dismisses the syllogism, ‘God is perfect. Scripture is God’s word. Therefore the original autographs of scripture were perfect’ as Baconian rationalism, which I think is an inadequate response, and so this chapter is less edifying, for all its stimulating argument.

Finally, Jae Sung Kim gives us a fascinating snapshot of Calvin's ongoing impact in Asia, particularly in the Presbyterian churches there. His bold conclusion is that 'Embracing the Reformed faith and Calvinism as the best form of biblical Christianity is the only answer for Asians, as well as everybody else in the world.' Now there is a courageous and passionate conviction to stir up some discussion amongst those in the wider Reformed world who have also been influenced both recently and in the dim and distant past, by the cultured Frenchman who offered his heart 'promptly and sincerely to the Lord' and continues to have a powerful ongoing ministry amongst us through his writings. Will his impact on the English-speaking church of the twenty-first century be as great as it was in the sixteenth?

LEE GATISS

Church Society, Cambridge

PIETY'S WISDOM: A Summary of Calvin's Institutes with Study Questions

J. Mark Beach

Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2010 355pp
£14.99pb ISBN: 9781601780829

J. Mark Beach has provided us with the best and most trustworthy introduction to what the great David Broughton Knox called, 'the most important handbook of Christian theology so far written'—Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. After a biographical sketch of Calvin and some background putting the book itself into historical context, there are twenty-four chapters of about 15–20 pages each which explain and unwrap the *Institutes* in order. Each one ends with some questions for reflection and discussion, which are well-written to prompt further stimulating conversation and/or thought about the topic.

Dr. Beach is ideally suited to this task, being a pastor himself but also having written at a deep level about the Reformed tradition (his PhD is a very clear and solid work on covenant and grace in the theology of Francis Turretin). This book is not littered with erudite footnotes, however: there are none, and the text only contains references to Calvin or to the Bible, and quotes from both where appropriate. It is not, on the other hand, patronizing, though it assumes little prior knowledge since it was designed for lay education classes (the sort of adult Sunday school that many American churches run). I didn't find it twisted Calvin into modern theological modes as some commentaries do, and so his thought comes out clearly and not refracted through Karl Barth or some modern Presbyterian agenda. It's hardly a popular-level romp either, and there are no pictures!

It would be ideal for study groups who could be set a portion of Calvin to read and use this as an expert guide to that (or indeed, the leader alone could read this to help guide a group which just reads the *Institutes* itself, or people can just read the synopsis here instead of Calvin). It could also be profitably used by ordinands or ministers to help them get to grips with the Genevan Reformer's thought.

Others have attempted something similar: Niesel's and Wendel's books on Calvin give an overview and commentary on the *Institutes*, and T.H.L. Parker's introduction to Calvin's thought also does the same. Anthony Lane's recent *Reader's Guide to Calvin's Institutes* is not quite like this book, however, being a shorter and more suggestive roadmap rather than an attempt at a complete synopsis and study guide. So Beach's look at what he calls 'one of the magnificent classics of Christian literature' is a significant achievement and a useful addition to the ever-growing library of books on Calvin, and perhaps one of the most beneficial because it is actually readable and employable in a church context amongst motivated learners. It even stands alone as a manual of Reformed theology itself, and could be used without reference to Calvin's original, for those who don't want or need to go back to the sixteenth century.

LEE GATISS

Church Society, Cambridge

MORE THAN MATTER: Is Matter all we Really are?

Keith Ward

Oxford: Lion, 2010 224pp, indexes of subjects and names £8.99pb
ISBN: 9780745962474

Recently, my eye was caught by a book cover which hinted at yet another problem about to confront our culture. The title was *The Decisive Moment*, by Jonah Lehrer, but what really stood out was the strap-line: *How the Brain makes up its Mind*. 'What is so special about that?' you might ask. Only this, that it didn't say, 'how *we* make up *our* minds.'

We are often told that the Greeks passed on to Western thought a 'dualism' which affected our attitudes in ways not entirely helpful. In Christian theology, for example, it is blamed for a false division between 'body' and 'soul' and a consequent inadequacy in our ideas regarding this life on the one hand, and the afterlife on the other.

Now, it seems that scientific materialism may be introducing another 'pop dualism,' this time between the biological brain and the self-conscious mind. But here, instead of the soul being the essential element of our nature with matter as secondary, the self-conscious mind has become an illusion—indeed a delusion—created by the biological brain.

Step up Professor Keith Ward, who writes in the first chapter of *More than Matter?*, “I am more than ever convinced that the question of what it is to be a human person is the biggest intellectual question of our day.” And there is good reason to think he may be right.

Ward’s book therefore sets out to refute a view which is rapidly gaining adherents. Actually, Ward favours a ‘dualism’ of his own which, in a helpful glossary, he describes as ‘The belief that humans are made up of two parts, body and mind (or soul). They normally exist together but can in principle exist apart.’ And beyond this, he argues for ‘idealism’: ‘The theory that material objects would not exist without mind or consciousness, so that mind is the primary form of reality, and causes material things to exist.’

On the way, Ward introduces us to a range of philosophical and scientific concepts and schools of thought, but his style is never ‘heavyweight,’ and the content is always informative and helpful. Some may find the chatty comments wearing, though generally I appreciated the light touch, and Ward is not a theological ‘conservative,’ but his expertise is clear.

He does not succeed in presenting a knock-down case, but in fairness he could hardly be expected to. He does, however, manage to introduce the reader to the key issues and raise some interesting suggestions about possible answers. This is not a book that will do all the work for you, but it will certainly show you where the work needs to be done.

JOHN RICHARDSON
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METHODS FOR LUKE

Joel B. Green, ed.

New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010 157pp £16.99pb
ISBN: 9780521717816

This book is a helpful introduction to four key contemporary biblical studies methods for reading Luke: historical criticism, feminist criticism, narrative criticism and a Latino perspective. The book begins with a rationale for a variety of methods of interpretation as a result of the changing landscape of both society and interpreters. It ends with a short but useful introductory bibliography for each perspective.

Each of the following four chapters begin with a general discussion of how the method developed, some key terms and figures who have made use of the method, and then attention turns to examining either the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk 16:19–31), or Jesus’ warning regarding the scribes and the story of the women and the two small coins

(Lk 20:45–21:4). This enables the reader to see the method in action in the text of Luke.

The first method examined is that of historical criticism by Clare K. Rothschild, Assistant Professor in the Department of Theology at Lewis University. Rothschild provides an excellent examination of the growing movements in historical criticism beginning with text criticism, to source, form, redaction, rhetorical and finally social-scientific criticism. It is perhaps unfortunate that she did not move into composition criticism which has formed a helpful bridge between redaction and narrative criticism, as her conclusions draw attention to the method's limitations. In her examination of Lk 20:45–21:4 Rothschild finds the method helpful in highlighting many valuable insights in the text and yet her insistence on maintaining a bipartite division of the text in line with Bultmann, imposes limitations that the text itself may not suggest.

The second method examined is feminist criticism by Turid Karlsen Seim, Director of the Norwegian Institute in Rome. This chapter provides an insightful and engaging introduction to feminist critical methods and engages the reader with the questions and tasks of a feminist critical approach in ways that break down barriers and open doors. Its biblical engagement with the same text as Rothschild is balanced and, in my view, the most engaging in this book.

The third method is narrative criticism by the book's editor, Joel B. Green, Professor of New Testament Interpretation and Associate Dean for the Centre of Advanced Theological Studies, Fuller Theological Seminary. This chapter is a very valuable insight into the tools and tasks of the narrative critic. Green provides a detailed and well argued rationale for finding meaning in the text which is full of examples from Luke's writing. He also describes the key elements of narrative with further Lukan examples followed by an engaging and helpful look at the parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man. Green's knowledge of Luke-Acts coupled with his years of experience with narrative criticism makes this a sound and valuable chapter.

The final chapter is a Latino/Latina perspective from Justo L. González, a prolific author who is now investing his experience in developing support for Hispanic theological education. This chapter begins with a critique of the Western theological method in general which he shows as disadvantageous and even irrelevant to many Hispanics. González writes well and like Seim, breaks down the questions and tasks of biblical study in a way that draws the reader 'inside' his methodology. González notes how Luke-Acts as a text reflects many of the values of the Latino approach: community, care for the marginalised, subversiveness and reversals of power. His examination of the parable may lack the level of detail such as Green brings to the text, but shows how Hispanics can relate to its characters, setting and plot. He successfully provides a

reading of the parable from a Latino perspective that brings to light a theologically consistent and resonant Lukan reading.

This book stands to be a valuable introduction to new horizons in studying Luke. Its greatest strength is the contributors whose experience and belief in their respective methodologies is let down only by the historical-critical chapter, where one is left wondering if the author really believes the method still has currency.

SARAH HARRIS

University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

PREACHERS, PASTORS, AND AMBASSADORS: Puritan Wisdom for Today's Church

Lee Gatiss, ed.

London: The Latimer Trust, 2011 426pp £14.99pb (£13.99 from www.latimertrust.org) ISBN: 9781906327026

Preachers, Pastors and Ambassadors is the second volume of the modern St Antholin Lectures. The ten lectures from 2001 to 2010 are bound together with an interesting and comprehensive introduction. This volume offers readers real insight, not only into the history of the puritan tradition, but also its relevance to the challenges, errors and difficulties found in our contemporary ecclesiastical context. Obviously each chapter can stand on its own, yet together they complement each other in presenting a range of contemporary topics and drawing upon lessons learnt centuries ago. The chapters cover theological issues including the nature of revelation, ecclesiology, exegesis, preaching, and baptism.

The introduction relates the history of a group of 17th century puritans who were not content with the vast neglect of ministerial obligations across England. These faithful men took action into their own hands by training home missionaries to take the gospel out to the nation and for a time were quite successful in their endeavours. As the need for labourers to go into the harvest is as urgent as ever, the encouragement from this history is the fruitfulness from positive initiative and strategic deployment.

The two chapters on preaching were particularly helpful. Van Dixhoorn uses the debates of the Westminster Assembly to show a puritan theology of preaching. This theology is foundational for evangelical ministry and many evangelical preachers would benefit greatly and be profoundly encouraged by having a deeper familiarity with this doctrine. Peter Adam's contribution on the Evangelistic Sermons of John Donne was also inspiring. Such preaching can be both daunting and discouraging but this little account of a brother's efforts four hundred years ago ought to motivate us to press on in this most vital task.

Three other chapters are worth highlighting for their contribution to understanding particular ecclesiology that is often downplayed or neglected in evangelical circles. For the sake of evangelical fellowship across denominations, regularly distinctives are ignored and undervalued in fear of causing offense to brothers and sisters. For this reason I found the chapters by Benn, Gatiss, and Atherstone particularly refreshing. Wallace Benn's piece, 'Ussher on Bishops,' presents many persuasive biblical and historical arguments for episcopal oversight. These arguments are little known amongst evangelicals and offer a refreshing alternative rationale for bishops to that of the Anglo-Catholics. Lee Gatiss' chapter on John Owen's justification of infant baptism was compelling and thorough. And Andrew Atherstone's work on Charles Simeon and church order provides solid arguments challenging the commonly held notion that Simeon was always obedient to the laws of the Anglican Church. In fact, particularly in his early ministry, he was quite prepared to defy the law for the sake of gospel ministry.

Obviously a volume of ten lectures delivered over a decade means that there is a certain lack of cohesion in the book as a whole and while all the authors write well, some are relatively more engaging than others. The unifying theme of the volume is the presentation of puritan theology and each author is successful in demonstrating this theology from history and highlighting its relevance for today's church. The notable exception from this form is Holloway's chapter, 'Re-establishing the Christian Faith,' which doesn't really make a case from puritan history but is interesting nevertheless. In my opinion, *Pastors, Preachers and Ambassadors* is the kind of book that, once read, could be kept on the shelf as a reference about various theological issues and encouraging examples of how they have been dealt with in the past.

EDWARD LOANE
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GOD DOESN'T DO WASTE: Redeeming the Whole of Life

Dave Bookless

Nottingham: IVP, 2010 158 pp £7.99pb ISBN: 9781844744732

I did not react well to this book when it was first handed to me, perhaps because I was expecting an uncomfortable read that would reinforce feelings of guilt and inadequacy in the face of mankind's mistreatment of planet earth. What a relief to discover instead a warm, engaging, well-told narrative of the author's personal walk of faith, alongside his wife Anne, their four daughters, and an assortment of other fellow-travellers. Closely linked with the personal narrative is the story of the UK wing of

the Christian environmental conservation organization A Rocha, which Dave and Anne Bookless largely pioneered, and through which they have sought to express their love and care for God's created world and the people who inhabit it.

These two narratives are woven together by the author's theological reflections on creation and redemption. During his training for the Anglican ministry, as he studied the Bible, especially the book of Job, and reflected on the signs of God's love, grace, creativity and truth in everything that he has made, he drew the conclusion that 'the whole of creation (not just human beings) is at the heart of God's purposes.'

Dave and Anne's role in establishing the work of A Rocha in this country gave them the opportunity to model their ideas about creation and redemption in practical ways. Enlisting the first small band of A Rocha workers, and with the help of the local communities in Southall and Hayes in west London, they transformed a polluted area of wasteland in the heart of this urban jungle into a beautiful country park. At the same time, their desire to restore and care for God's creation and the multicultural communities around them led to some drastic changes in their own lifestyle. These enterprises, and the ongoing work of A Rocha in this country, have become a living testimony to the fact that, in God's economy, nothing is wasted, everything can be recycled, rebuilt, restored.

Dave Bookless makes no attempt to conceal the difficulties that he and his family have undergone in the process of modelling a new set of priorities to our sceptical, materialistic society. Serious long-term illness, miscarriages, accidents, constant house-moving, uncertainty about the future—all of these things and more have challenged their faith and sometimes brought them close to despair. Yet in the dark times, too, God has demonstrated his sustaining love, and his power to bring 'beauty out of brokenness.' It is perhaps a pity that the narrative closes with yet another dark patch in the Bookless family life, not completely worked through at the time the book went to press; but then all our lives are full of untidy endings and unfinished business.

Don't be discouraged by the subject of this book, for it gives some helpful theological and experiential perspectives on environmental matters. Give a copy to your Christian friends, especially those who are dismissive of the environmental movement and have not yet grasped our human responsibility to care for God's world. It is also a useful book to give to non-Christian eco-warriors who think that Christianity has nothing worthwhile to say about environmental issues.

ELIZABETH MAGBA
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WHO CHOSE THE GOSPELS? Probing the Great Gospel Conspiracy**C. E. Hill**

Oxford: OUP, 2010 295pp £14.99hb ISBN: 9780199551231

There is considerable confusion today over how the four canonical Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, secured their place within the Bible. At a popular level this is reflected in books like Dan Brown's *Da Vinci Code*. However, the account popularised there is but the tip of an iceberg which seeks to portray the inclusion of these canonical Gospels as arbitrary. This book by Hill is a thorough and valuable refutation of this idea.

The author addresses the subject by working back from the 3rd century AD. Some of the material can be fairly technical, but he does an excellent job of communicating the arguments clearly. He starts by questioning the idea that non-canonical gospels were ever popular, and then answers those who say the choice of the four Gospels was simply down to the idiosyncracies of Irenaeus, before looking at the writings of Justin Martyr. Finally, Hill works back to the apostolic age and argues that the Gospels were self-authenticating and could be said to have imposed themselves as canonical upon the church. Not only does this conclusion address the fanciful prejudices and conspiracies about Scripture which exist today, but the book thus inevitably deals with the essentially similar but older argument that the church created the Bible (whether through a Council or some other means).

A short review cannot do justice to the depth and quality of this work. For anyone who has to deal with the issue of why we have the four canonical Gospels in some detail, this is essential material. There is no guarantee that the purveyors of prejudice and conspiracy will listen to the solid arguments presented here, but at least one can hope that over time these weeds will wither and die. Of course the story of the place of the four canonical Gospels in the Bible is not the same as the closing of the complete canon of the New Testament, but the arguments about the Gospels go to the heart of the misinformation and confusion that abound today.

This book is very good value for a hardback and is therefore to be highly recommended. The only pity is that for some reason (no doubt publisher's policy) dates are referred to as CE rather than AD. Nevertheless I have a suspicion that the author has devised subtle ways to keep such references to a minimum!

MARK BURKILL
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CHRISTIAN ETHICS: A Very Short Introduction**D. Stephen Long**Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010 135pp £7.99pb
ISBN 9800199568864

Writing an OUP *Very Short Introduction* involves covering an immense amount of ground in a short space while trying to develop a singular and stimulating theme. Stephen Long goes a good way towards achieving these demanding goals in this readable book. Long is an ordained Methodist deeply indebted to orthodox Roman Catholic moral theology. He writes with great appreciation for a tradition not originally his own, though not without an awareness of that tradition's historical shortcomings.

After an Introduction which sets out some of core (trinitarian) contents of Christian doctrine, chapter 1, 'The sources of Christian ethics,' opens by summarising pagan Greek and Roman ethical ideas and explains how early and medieval Christianity sought to transform this ethical legacy by incorporating its more promising elements into a biblical moral theology. The chapter properly devotes more time to Jewish ethics—notably the Ten Commandments—as a formative source for Christian ethics. The title of this subsection, 'Jewish ethics: Torah as 'social project' and the Church as a 'social ethic,' highlights a key theme of the book, that 'Christian ethics' is not first a body of ethical principles but rather the lived life of the historical community of God's faithful people. This explains the narrative method by which both Jewish ethics and the ethics of Jesus are introduced and explained, and by which subsequent Christian practice is reported and critiqued in later chapters.

Chapter 2, 'A history of Christian ethics,' seeks to illustrate the way in which Christianity has sought to respond historically to the twin call to Abraham: 'do not be like the other nations...for the sake of the nations.' In the first section on 'internal' Christian ethics, liturgical practices such as penance receive mention, as well as Luther's revolt against late medieval legalism. Short summaries of Catholic, Anglican, Orthodox, Reformed, Evangelical and Anabaptist ethics then follow. The rest of the chapter discusses how Christian ethics has been put to use 'externally,' 'for the sake of the nations,' for example in relation to government.

Chapter 3, 'Christian ethics in and beyond modernity,' deals with the modernist rejection of Christian ethics, confronts Christianity's most egregious historical failures, and points to some major Christian responses to the ethical challenges of modernity and postmodernity (notably those stemming from Barth and De Lubac). Chapter 4 casts some interesting light on ways in which the Christian tradition has addressed the core ethical challenges of 'sex, money and power.'

While ultimately the book significantly underplays the distinctive ethical contributions of the Protestant Reformation, it nevertheless

serves to bring to the fore some characteristically Catholic emphases often neglected by Protestants. It could serve as a useful 'very short introduction to Catholic ethics' for those who have been exposed only to the Protestant tradition.

JONATHAN CHAPLIN

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CHURCH PLANTER: The Man, the Message, the Mission

Darren Patrick

Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2010 240pp £10.99pb
ISBN: 9781433515767

Church Planter is the first book on church planting to come out of the Acts 29 stable. This is not a book about church planting *per se* (like Mike McKinley's, *Church Planting is for Wimps*, or Graham Beynon's, *Planting for the Gospel*), but the men who plant churches. It's a call to be God's man, being transformed by and proclaiming God's gospel message, wholeheartedly pursuing God's mission. This call shapes the book, which falls into three parts: the first looks at the requirements for God's man, the second examines the message he's to be shaped by and proclaim, whilst the third explores the mission he's to undertake.

Church Planter is an easy and stimulating read. Personal highlights were the Preface ('Why focus on Men?') and the chapters on being 'A Dependent Man' ('As goes our walk with God, so goes our ministry'), 'A Determined Man' ('Often a pastor has the greatest impact on his church only after he has been there a number of years. When pastors fail to endure in ministry, they drastically cut short their impact'), and 'The Heart of Mission: Compassion' ('The motive for mission is compassion. We join Jesus on his mission not because we want to grow our church or because we like to dispense apologetic insights to skeptics or even because we like to hang out with unbelievers. We go on the mission of the Saviour because we share the compassionate heart of the one who sees people as sheep without a shepherd').

You can spot the influence of others, such as Darren Patrick's friend, Mark Driscoll, and Tim Keller. If you like them, I'm sure you will like this too. *Church Planter* is a thought-provoking book. It also left me with one or two questions. For example, how does its focus on the church planter relate to different models of church planting? Does every plant need a full-time church planter? We may find this desirable, but that's not to say it's essential. As Graham Beynon remarks, in *Planting for the Gospel*, what's needed is leadership, teaching, and pastoral oversight.

I would have liked more on the centrality of Word Ministry and Prayer—a reminder, to coin a phrase, that the Spirit of God does the work of God through the Word of God. I think this could have been more pronounced. But don't let this discourage you from reading it. It would be a shame if the title discouraged non-church planters from reading it, because this is a really helpful book for pastors and church planters alike.

MIKE KENDALL

St. Neots Evangelical Church, Cambs

“RIGHT REASON” AND THE PRINCETON MIND: An Unorthodox Proposal

Paul Kjoss Helseth

Phillipsburg, NJ, 2010 257pp £18.99pb ISBN: 9781596381438

It is a widely-held tenet in contemporary historiography that the theologians of Old Princeton (such as Warfield, Hodge, Machen, and Van Til) adhered to a form of rationalism in their theological method and approach to apologetics. This rationalism is believed to be the result of a naïve and uncritical accommodation to Enlightenment philosophy in general and to Scottish Common Sense Realism in particular. This ‘historiographical consensus’ has led some inheritors of the Reformed tradition to view the theologians of Old Princeton with suspicion. After all, if the leading Princeton theologians were hopelessly accommodated to the humanistic thought of the nineteenth century, what possible relevance can they have as models for the doing of theology today, in an age where the limits of unaided human reason are so widely recognized?

Dr Paul Helseth has written what he calls ‘an unorthodox proposal’ to challenge the view that the Princeton theologians were compromised by ‘epistemological assumptions that are directly opposed to those of the Reformed tradition.’ While conceding that ‘the Scottish philosophy had a marked impact on the theological method of the Princeton theologians,’ Helseth argues that the substance of Princeton theology, epistemology, and apologetic was not significantly altered or co-opted by Enlightenment thought.

With impressive scholarship and careful analysis, Helseth goes to great lengths to demonstrate that the Princeton theologians did not understand the reasoning processes to be detached from an individual’s spiritual and subjective condition. Instead, the Princeton theologians understood the act of reasoning to have a subjective and moral component to it, and their notion of ‘right reason’ reflects their faithfulness to Reformed convictions. Since the Princeton theologians ‘were more or less consistently Reformed scholars,’ Helseth argues that many misunderstood aspects of their

apologetic and theology are actually commendable facets of their overall contribution to Reformed and evangelical theology.

The first section of Helseth's work examines the epistemology, apologetic, and theological method of the Princeton theologians, focusing on Princeton's foremost theologians: Archibald Alexander, Charles Hodge, Benjamin B. Warfield, and J. Gresham Machen. Of particular interest is Helseth's discussion of Warfield, Machen, and Van Til's apologetic, where he argues that the presuppositionalism of Van Til and the 'evidentialist apologetic' of Warfield are not as far apart as is sometimes supposed. In the second section, Helseth applies the insights drawn from the Princeton theologians' epistemology and understanding of theology to 'the postconservative critique of conservative evangelicalism' raised by Roger Olson, Stanley Grenz, Robert Webber, and others.

Dr Helseth has challenged the prevailing interpretation of Old Princeton in previous articles and essays, and his most recent work is the capstone of numerous years of research in this area. With clear and careful argumentation, Helseth argues his 'unorthodox' point powerfully and with sufficient nuance to account for the diversity of statements made by the Princeton theologians. With extensive footnotes, this important work of scholarship carefully interacts with a wide range of contemporary sources and is sure to become a new standard for the discussion of Old Princeton going forward. It will be read with profit by any who are interested in Old Princeton, Reformed apologetics, Christian epistemology, and American intellectual history.

GARY STEWARD

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville

THE LIFE OF CHARLES HODGE

A. A. Hodge

Edinburgh, 2010 [orig. 1880] 655pp £17.00hb ISBN: 9781848710900

Charles Hodge (1797–1878) was one of the foremost theologians of the nineteenth century. His three-volume *Systematic Theology* (1871–73) and his exegetical commentaries are widely known and appreciated today. Less widely-known is his two-volume *Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church* (1839–1840) and the over one hundred and thirty articles that he wrote for the *Princeton Review*. Even less known than these are the numerous tracts, pamphlets, booklets, lectures, sermons, and letters that deeply impacted his contemporaries with his warm-hearted and learned reflections on God, the Church, and American culture.

This nineteenth century work will continue to be an indispensable resource, despite Andrew Hodge's more recent new biography of

Hodge, for it contains extended portions of Hodge's personal journal, as well as the text of over two hundred letters to and from Hodge. Also, the first two chapters contain extended sections from Hodge's autobiographical reflections of his early years (which he wrote during the last year of his life), and the last chapter contains a number of reflections on Hodge written by 'some of the most competent of his pupils and friends,' Benjamin B. Warfield being one of them.

In some ways, *The Life of Charles Hodge* reads more as an annotated compendium of primary source material than a cohesive biography, and this was by design. A. A. Hodge states in the preface; 'I do not purpose to intrude upon others my opinions of or affection for my Father, but simply to gather and present materials through which he and his work may speak for themselves, and the opinions of the most competent among his contemporaries may be impartially reflected.' While giving this book less popular appeal, this approach taken by the younger Hodge has ensured this book's usefulness for future biographers of Hodge and historians of Old Princeton.

This printing of *The Life of Charles Hodge* has been newly typeset from the 1880 original. The editors of this edition have also added around fifty brief footnotes, giving further explanation of various references made in the text. These are at times valuable and one could have hoped for more!

Although a dense and lengthy book, *The Life of Charles Hodge* deserves a wide audience. Charles Hodge was an important and great man. He deserves to be more widely known, and many valuable lessons can be learned from his interaction with the theological, ecclesiastical, and cultural issues of his day. Banner of Truth is once again to be commended for bringing such valuable treasures like this back into circulation. It is to be hoped that more works like this one will be reprinted and a renewed interest in Old Princeton and the great men associated with it might be encouraged.

GARY STEWARD

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THE THEOLOGY OF B. B. WARFIELD: A Systematic Survey

Fred Zaspel

Nottingham: Apollos, 2010 624 pp £26.99hb ISBN: 9781844744824

From 1887 till his death in 1921, Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield was professor of theology at Princeton Theology Seminary. Prodigious study, a phenomenal intellect and a dash of renaissance breadth combined to form one of Christianity's giants of theological teaching. When Warfield

turned his attention to an issue he tackled it exhaustively. Throughout his ministry, Warfield gave time to matters such as the truthfulness of scripture, sanctification, the atonement, and figures such as Calvin and Augustine. Surprisingly, Warfield never wrote a systematic theology—leaving that task to colleagues such as Charles Hodge. Warfield had first rate biblical theological skills, but stood unashamedly in the tradition of Reformed systematics.

Zaspel's book does an admirable job of summarising and ordering Warfield's corpus into the classic topics of systematic theology. After a chapter on Warfield's context and life, the work proceeds with chapters covering: Prolegomena, Bibliology, Theology proper, Christology (two chapters), Pneumatology, Anthropology, Soteriology, Ecclesiology and Eschatology. The book is concluded with a chapter which evaluates Warfield's significance.

This work also serves as a form of general systematic theology book, more Reformed than popular works such as those by Grudem or Milne. Warfield's ability across the fields of Biblical Studies, Systematics, and Church History testifies to the value of integration and cross fertilisation between theological disciplines. There has been far too much fragmentation in theological studies—not only due to postmodernity, but modern tendencies to divide, for example, ethics from systematics and ministry models from Biblical Studies. Warfield's breadth of study and range of thought challenges our modern capitulation to over-specialisation and fragmentation.

Warfield remains—it has to be admitted—a difficult read. His prose is dense, complex, and prolix. This book is a great help to those who have been put off by that. Hopefully those who read this worthwhile volume will venture again into the (deeply rewarding) depths of Warfield's own writings, so ably summarised in this survey.

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REVELATION RECLAIMED: The Use and Abuse of the Apocalypse

Jon K. Newton

Paternoster, 2009 124pp £9.99pb ISBN: 9781842276129

Jon Newton is head of biblical studies and director of research at Harvest Bible College, a Pentecostal institution in Melbourne, Australia. This is a popular-level development of his PhD thesis entitled 'Postmodernism, Christianity and the Book of Revelation.' Newton's aim is to see western Pentecostals move away from dispensational or historicist eschatologies

towards a distinctively Pentecostal eschatology which interprets Revelation as a missions-stimulating text.

In the opening chapters Newton outlines ways in which he believes Revelation has been misused by both historicist and futurist authors. Although sketching out the ideas of groups such as the Chiliasts and Joachimites, his main focus is on more recent interpretations which claim to find particular significance in the Cold War, Middle East, and European Union. Many of the rather unusual or highly speculative examples he cites are drawn from the scholarship of Judith Kovacs and Christopher Rowland in their *Blackwell Bible Commentary on the Book of Revelation* which extensively covers reception history. The third chapter is devoted to the *Left Behind* series by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins (a series of 16 best-selling novels which has spawned three movies and two computer games). Newton believes that the long-term effect of this brand of pretribulation, premillennial, rapture-fiction may well be disillusionment and scepticism about the use and relevance of the book of Revelation. Chapter four concludes Newton's examination of how Revelation has been mishandled by examining and rejecting both the historicist and futurist interpretations.

Before seeking to 'reclaim' Revelation he highlights the utility of the biblical book. It has: inspired witness, art, literature and music; contributed to Christian theology and worship; exposed the pretension of human power and religion; and inspired Christian hope. In chapters six to eight he suggests a better way to read Revelation, namely: by understanding its genre; recognising its extensive use of the Old Testament; and identifying its relevance to its first century recipients. In so doing, he is advocating a form of idealist interpretation. Newton's final chapter addresses the millennium of Revelation chapter 20. He critiques both premillennialism and amillennialism before distinguishing between Reformed and Pentecostal postmillennialism (both of which he acknowledges to be minority positions). Using the postmillennialism of the later English puritans as an example, he warns of the danger of an over-optimistic eschatology and instead closes by identifying the millennium as 'a real promise and hope set before the church at all times, to stir us to prayer, witness and even social action in the power of the Holy Spirit.'

This book will, of course, primarily be of interest to Pentecostals. For the constituency of this journal, it is not an obvious tool for expository preaching and, in my view, there are more helpful introductions to the reception history of Revelation e.g. Crawford Gribben's important works on millennialism, the most accessible being *Rapture Fiction and the Evangelical Crisis* (Evangelical Press, 2006).

MARTYN COWAN

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WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? Christian Hope and Contemporary Culture
 Stephen R. Holmes and Russell Rook, eds.

Paternoster, 2008 249pp £9.99pb ISBN: 9781842276020

This book has important connections to the 'One Hope' programme at Spring Harvest 2008. A number of its chapters were authored by speakers at that conference and one of the editors, Russell Rook, produced an accompanying Spring Harvest study guide. Holmes believes that the idea of eschatology affecting everyday life (something he regards as being widely accepted within academic theology) has failed to achieve 'common currency' within 'the mainstream evangelical churches of this nation.' Instead, 'the choice seems to be Tim LaHaye or an embarrassed silence' and he observes that 'British evangelical churches...have learnt to ignore discussion of eschatology, seeing it as merely divisive and irrelevant.' To counter this, the editors have assembled a collection of seventeen short essays, a number of which are written by leading academics, which together attempt to show the relevance of eschatology.

The first section, Hopeful Word, offers brief, popular-level, introductions to the biblical scholarship of, *inter alia*, John Goldingay (Eschatology in Isaiah), Howard Marshall (Eschatology at the Heart of New Testament Theology) and Richard Bauckham (Eschatology in the Book of Revelation). All three have written extensively on these topics and so it is fascinating to read them each summarise their work in around a dozen pages.

Section two, Hopeful Church, includes some historical work e.g. patristic eschatology (Thomas A. Noble) and a particularly helpful survey of eschatology in the British and American evangelical traditions (David W. Bebbington). There are also doctrinal chapters addressing 'Eschatology and Mission' (Tim Chester) and Heaven (Justin Thacker). Controversially, in this section Robin Parry, alias Gregory MacDonald, author of *The Evangelical Universalist*, contributes 'Hell—the punishment of the age to come.' The then editor from Paternoster seeks to argue from scripture, reason, and tradition for an understanding of hell as 'restorative punishment.' Parry summarises that 'many will go to hell but at some point they will be delivered from it (through union with Christ) eventually emptying hell' (p. 106).

The third section, Hopeful Culture, endeavours to offer eschatological perspectives on areas as diverse as music (Russell Rook), pop culture (Krish Kandiah), politics (Luke Bretherton) and work (Darrell Cosden). Again some of these chapters offer entry-level access into significant areas of modern theology e.g. Trevor Hart contributes a chapter on the relationship between theology and the imagination.

The final section, *Hopeful World*, considers eschatology's bearing on ethics (John Colwell), ecology (Ruth Valerio) and existence (Ann and Douglas Holt).

The book closes with quite a helpful glossary and a list of selected further reading. Sadly there is no index, and even more frustratingly, no list of contributors or explanatory identification of them beyond name at the start of a chapter.

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CALVIN AND CULTURE: Exploring a Worldview

David W. Hall and Marvin Padgett, eds.

Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2010 346 pp £12.35pb ISBN: 9781596380981

In this final volume of *The Calvin 500 Series*, thirteen authors contribute essays introducing the impact of the thought of John Calvin and those who followed in his theological tradition on a broad range of disciplines including history, the arts, philosophy, science, and journalism. Four chapters are devoted to the closely connected subjects of politics and economics; this is something of an imbalance, especially given that there are already two related titles in the series. The final chapter, by one of the editors, is intended as a coda to the volume, series, and celebration of the quincentenary of Calvin's birth.

These essays have much to say to contemporary evangelicalism. Leland Ryken's contribution, 'Calvinism and Literature,' is superb. The cultural mandate reinforced by a doctrine of vocation which values all lawful activity as religious service of equal sacredness, implies that the production of literature and, indeed, all art, is important to God. Seeing this, liberates us from an unwarranted burden of missionary anxiety to which evangelicals are often prone. The essay 'Calvin and Music' is another highlight, providing a comprehensive history of the development of the music and text of the French Psalter under Calvin's direction. Calvin engaged the finest musicians and poets he could find out of concern for weight and majesty in music used for divine service, and he differentiated between music performed for entertainment and music used consciously in God's presence. Calvin placed the singing of psalms at the heart of the church's worship. His reforms in Geneva draw attention to the shortcomings in much current evangelical practice.

Calvin's doctrine of vocation reappears in the chapters assessing his contribution to business and economics, alongside his view of the limited authority of the civil magistrate under the rule of law, his teaching about the freedom of the conscience, and his nuanced concept of interest as a

form of 'rent' for the temporary use of money. Calvin's objection to the compulsory extraction of wealth from the rich to give to the poor, and his teaching that charity is a moral obligation not a legal one, is a refreshing contrast to what passes for much of today's Christian social ethics, at least on this side of the Atlantic.

The essay on medicine is frankly bizarre. The author, a physician, claims that 'all the best of modern science and medicine is a direct legacy from Calvin' (p. 254) but clearly struggles to relate the topic of medicine to Calvin and the Calvinistic tradition. On the extremely tenuous basis that Calvin emphasised the Ten Commandments as the basis for morality, the second half of the chapter is taken up with the author's own applications of the Decalogue to modern medicine. These are neither logically nor medically sound and betray a disturbing ignorance of culture outside North America.

In *Calvin and Culture*, a picture emerges of a man who values creation for its beauty, not just its utility, and who wants us to enjoy it rightly, not pollute or abuse it: here is someone who after all enjoys drinking wine and playing darts! This survey of Calvin's doctrine and legacy powerfully demonstrates that no aspect of human culture can be unaffected by scripture, and we may find some of the implications for our own thought and practice surprising.

DANIEL NEWMAN
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PREDESTINATION: Biblical and Theological Paths

Matthew Levering

OUP, 2011 228pp (only 201 of actual text, the rest is bibliography
and index) £60hb ISBN: 9780199604524

This book says it is 'dedicated to Jesus Christ, the Lord. His love is my hope.' This is a great way for a book published by a mainstream university press to begin! The author's big question is how one can hold to God's eternal election and his redemptive love for every rational creature without falling into universal salvation. He begins by helpfully showing that such controversies are biblical in origin, and arise from the study of scripture in its canonical and historical context. He looks at what is good but only partial in the accounts of Origen, Augustine, and John of Damascus before exploring how the tensions in their theology were codified in the medieval period. Calvin and other early modern theologians have a chapter of their own, as do the Twentieth Century greats such as Barth, Bulgakov, Maritain, and Hans Urs von Balthasar.

Levering, who is a Roman Catholic, claims to find five basic positions amongst these various writers, and himself wishes to maintain a balance (as so many do on this subject). His balancing act is between God's equal eternal love for all against his predestination of some to life and permission for others to rebel forever. The depths of the relationship between these two things cannot be plumbed by us, he says, but the centre of the doctrine of predestination is Christ, who makes them both clear. This, in many ways, is good, and sounds pious, but the Reformed tradition generally is not so easily persuaded that further biblical reflection on these things is illegitimate. Nor must we be satisfied with the way the question has been framed here, as if it is undeniable that God's love for all is equal and 'superabundant' without qualification in scripture (is it really biblical to say God loves every rational creature with an equal and redemptive love?). So ultimately it is the biblical section and the overall thesis of this erudite but readable study with which I would most quibble, but there is much to enlighten along the way.

LEE GATISS

Church Society, Cambridge

THE GOSPEL AND THE MIND: Recovering and Shaping the Intellectual Life

Bradley G. Green

Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2010 224pp £11.99pb
ISBN: 9781433514425

Brad Green is a first-rate theologian and church historian whose recent book challenging Colin Gunton's misunderstandings of Augustine helpfully defended and vindicated the latter from the charge of fundamental error. This book on the gospel and the mind comes with four pages of commendations from people such as Graeme Goldsworthy and Peter Leithart as well as several professors of philosophy. In it, Green makes the perceptive point that wherever the gospel goes it seems to generate intellectual deliberation. 'Why has the Christian faith always seemed to spur on the intellectual life?' he asks. In answering this provocative question, he ranges widely over the history of Christian thought itself, from Augustine (predictably) to Aquinas, from Athanasius to Bonaventure to Calvin.

The author is familiar with contemporary secular thought but comes at his subject from a firmly Reformed viewpoint. Some of the material may be familiar to readers of *Churchman* since Prof. Green wrote an article for us back in 2009 which has been woven into the argument of this book. Yet here is an even greater feast, as he meditates on the thought that Christ died

to redeem every part of us, including not just body and soul, as it were, but also the life of the mind. Much of modern thought is adrift without direction or purpose, and knowledge is often seen as morally neutral, while theory is separated from practice. Dr. Green seeks to reintegrate these (and us) in this stimulating and serious tome. The Christian understanding of reality provides a coherent account of the possibility of intellectual life, in a way that no other system of thought can possibly rival: there is no understanding without the cross. This is a powerful apologetic for use amongst secular intellectuals, but also a much-needed call for the church to abandon its own (too prevalent) anti-intellectualism.

LEE GATISS

Church Society, Cambridge

THINK: The Life of the Mind and the Love of God

John Piper

Nottingham: IVP, 2010 222pp £8.99pb ISBN: 9781844744886

John Piper is one of those Christians who has certainly applied his mind to the gospel and vice-versa over a lifetime of ministry as both pastor and scholar. In this typically Piper book, he enlists the help of Jonathan Edwards (naturally) and others, to encourage us to think more clearly and passionately and carefully as Christians. This is an easier book, in one way, than Bradley Green's above, but in another sense it is far harder to read because Piper is a man who always seems to want not just our complete attention but our heart, soul, mind, and strength as well. The chapter on 'unhelpful anti-intellectual impulses in our history' has some penetrating and insightful things to say to those who are suspicious of these cerebral pursuits (or entertain some doubts about their gospel-usefulness). It is better to think carefully and accurately than carelessly and inaccurately; and not thinking at all is no solution for thinking arrogantly. Piper the preacher comes out in his constant recourse to the Bible to secure and illustrate his points which, incidentally, is a good way to persuade biblical but intellectually-suspicious people of the value of this endeavour. He is not aiming for more formal education or replacing humility and faith with 'extensive learning,' but thinking carefully about how people can be sanctified in the truth (John 17:17). There are also good sections on the cross and on wisdom, but the burden of Piper's book seems to be summed up near the end when he exhorts us to be avid Bible readers who take immense joy and delight in thinking God's thoughts after him.

LEE GATISS

Church Society, Cambridge

**THE PASTOR AS SCHOLAR AND THE SCHOLAR AS PASTOR:
Reflections on Life and Ministry**

John Piper and Don Carson

Crossway Books, 2011 128pp £7.99pb ISBN: 9781844745418

In similar vein, John Piper, the pastor-scholar is joined in this little paperback by Don Carson the scholar-pastor to talk us through the tensions and advantages of this dual role. This would be an excellent little paperback to give to aspiring theological educators and the more scholarly types of ordinand who wonder how they can continue to integrate their new found love of theological scholarship with the busyness of a parish ministry. Piper writes well about how writing itself helps him think, about logic in biblical interpretation, and about how at seminary he found all his Arminian presuppositions being undone as he engaged in exegesis. He tells us he has always preached from a full manuscript and it is clear that his scholarly nature has enabled him to be a clear thinker, writer, and preacher. But he also speaks about how such a scholarly bent can over-intellectualize the faith into something 'academic rather than heart-wrenchingly real.'

Don Carson speaks about how the excellent Dallimore biography of George Whitefield is one of the few books that makes him weep. He writes about how, 'Nothing is quite as deceitful as an evangelical scholarly mind that thinks it is especially close to God because of its scholarship rather than because of Jesus,' and how important it is for PhD students to be engaged in ministry of some kind at the same time as their studies. In typical Carson fashion he informs us that during his three years at Cambridge, alongside his doctoral studies, he taught the Bible 2.6 times per week (so precise!). At one point he got excited that as a Cambridge student he 'was walking on stones where John Owen walked' - which shows he is a better biblical scholar than historian (Owen was at Oxford). Nevertheless, he speaks well of the subtle forces at work in academic environments to lure evangelicals away from the truth and towards academic respectability. The personal stories of both Piper and Carson help to anchor the good advice they give to prospective scholar-pastors and pastor-scholars in this useful book of reflections on life and ministry.

LEE GATISS

Church Society, Cambridge

THE OXFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE**Michael D. Coogan, ed.**Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011 2 Vols (600pp; 578pp)
£265hb ISBN: 9780195377378

Those who have the great privilege of studying the Bible know firsthand its tremendous riches, its profound depths, as well as the intricacy of its composition, consisting, as it does, of a plurality of individual and distinct books, each with their own history. Commentaries on individual books of the Bible abound, but this encyclopedia presents the reader, within a single set, with a survey of critical scholarship not only on every book which has at one time or another been considered to have formed part of the Bible, but also on broader topics relating to the Bible such as canon, the targumim, text criticism, and individual translations of the Bible.

The encyclopedia aims to address a wide variety of audiences with an interest in the Bible. The articles are arranged alphabetically rather than in biblical order, not least since ancient versions of the Bible differ in the arrangement of the books. Biblical passages are translated into English using the NRSV. The articles themselves follow a standard pattern including subsections on the canonical status of the book, authorship, date of composition, literary history, structure and contents, interpretation, reception history, and bibliography. This facilitates comparison, although not all articles conform rigorously to this format.

The text is easy to read, with references to other scholarly material minimised and kept within the text itself. The focus is on providing a summary and synthesis of the various views that exist in the scholarly community. Furthermore the relative brevity of the articles furnishes the reader with the key questions he or she may need when confronting the secondary literature. As such the encyclopedia is an invaluable first point of reference for any study on a book of the Bible or on broader topics related to it.

The encyclopedia as a whole does not subscribe to a particular view on the authenticity or authority of Scripture, or on a particular process of composition, although the different views that exist on a particular question are acknowledged. The exegete will find the sections on structure, theology, and interpretation particularly useful, although inevitably the space afforded by a single article will not account for all the existing views. Furthermore, the bibliography section of each article allows plenty of scope to pursue other lines of enquiry. The sections on authorship and date of composition often take a critical stance. For example, although the article on Isaiah briefly acknowledges the existence of views both ancient and modern treating the book as a unity and accepting the possibility of predictive prophecy, the notion that Isaiah 40-66 was instead written much later is adopted uncritically on the grounds of being 'the most widely

accepted conclusion of critical biblical scholarship.' More interaction with evangelical views of authorship would have been desirable.

Taken as a survey of existing scholarship serving a variety of different constituencies, it is a mine of valuable information, and of great potential value. The only caveat is that the price tag ensures it will only really be consulted in a library.

ROBERT CRELLIN

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THE GENDER AGENDA: Discovering God's Plan for Church Leadership

Lis Goddard & Clare Hendry

IVP: Nottingham, England, 2010 171pp (including glossary
and further reading) £8.99pb ISBN: 9781844744947

Lis Goddard and Clare Hendry undertake a significant task as they debate the place of women in public ministry. This book takes the form of an email exchange, with chatty asides and glimpses into their relationship outside the discussion. It is easy to read in terms of the content, and in terms of tone: working hard at disagreeing with integrity, and keeping the conversation free of ill-will.

There are several features of the book which make it a useful resource. First, it is accessible. It covers complex arguments on both sides of the question in, usually, no more than several pages. It refers to doctrinal and grammatical issues, but not unnecessarily, and some of book's summaries of these points are particularly helpful because of their clarity. The weakness of any accessible book is usually that it does not do justice to all the depth in the arguments with which it engages and this book is no exception, far more could be said. However, it is a useful starting place for anyone interested in exploring this issue.

Second, this is a genuine dialogue between two women who are involved in ministry, and committed to Scripture and to living out their faith in the Lord Jesus. It is not a theorisation removed from reality. Further, as they disagree regarding the shape their ministries should take under God, their conversation acts as a worked example of how to genuinely, deeply disagree without resorting to slander or deliberate misunderstanding. It is a useful model of how to listen, disagree, listen some more and continue disagreeing without minimising the differences or attacking the opponent. It is worth reading for this feature alone.

Finally, the book is useful to see how deeply the division runs on the issues on debate. It can be tempting to think that because it is so hard to think through this issue properly we should happily agree to disagree. Their debate shows how unworkable that is. The disagreement

over women in ministry involves significant differences in interpreting the Bible and in a range of doctrines. In the course of the book Clare rightly notes that the decision of how to read Genesis 1–3 makes the difference for how they read the rest of Scripture. This is useful in learning how these interpretative decisions work and how one doctrine affects others so decisively, even where both women are determined to read Scripture as inspired, in its context and with the gospel message at the centre. Behind this issue lie serious theological and practical differences.

The most thought provoking thing raised for me was whether this issue is becoming a gospel issue for some people. At one point Clare acknowledges that the two authors disagree about a great deal but states that this is secondary in light of what they share in Christ. In reply Lis seems to only partially agree and, in her concluding comments, states that for her this issue is not merely about women in ministry but ‘...who I am in Christ.’ (p. 150). That is, for her this seems to have become a gospel issue, because her views on this matter are connected to her identity in Christ. It is an intriguing statement for evangelicals have often appealed to ‘who I am in Christ’ to *overcome* differences among them. Now there is at least a hint that the differences are tied to things closely linked to the gospel itself. I wonder whether this shift we see here might make unity among evangelicals across this issue increasingly difficult if it is held more widely.

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THE ARCHER AND THE ARROW: Preaching the Very Words of God
Phillip D. Jensen & Paul Grimmond

Matthias Media, 2010 148pp £8.99pb ISBN: 9781921441806

This is a book which is mostly written by Paul Grimmond but mostly about Phillip Jensen’s preaching. The book carefully unpacks their definition of preaching: ‘My aim is to preach the gospel by prayerfully expounding the Bible to the people God has given me to love.’

Like its sister book on providing supporting structures to assist prayerful preaching in this Matthias Media series (*The Trellis and the Vine* by Colin Marshall and Tony Payne) this book also makes use of an extended metaphor for preaching: the archer and the arrow. The three parts to the arrow are: the head, the shaft, and the feathers. In this analogy, the head—the part which does the most damage—is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The shaft represents the exegesis of the biblical passage, that which determines the flight and impact of the arrow head on its target. The feathers are what is required for the arrow to fly fast and

straight, and in the case of their example, this relates to the systematics, biblical theology, and other disciplines which bring the biblical thought system into order and clarity. And lest this illustration seems rather too violent they are careful to talk of a 'target *audience*' rather than 'prey' or 'quarry'!

Most of the book explains the three parts of the preaching process using as a test case a sermon preached by Phillip on Matthew 5:13–16. I particularly appreciate the way in which the reader is taken through the preparation of the passage from first read to final form sermon (the sermon itself can be accessed at www.matthiasmedia.com.au). It is also useful to have the preacher 'think out loud' about problems in the text and to anticipate questions which the congregation would be asking. He also discourages an assumption that, because the reader might be familiar with the passage, they automatically know what words such as 'salt' mean.

It seems me that readers will benefit greatly from Phillip's incisive and challenging preaching, and the comments which are made in this book represent a helpful analysis of what good preachers do well. In this respect we should be most grateful to Paul Grimmond for extracting this wisdom from Phillip!

My quibbles are not major. After a great section on Calvin and the relationship between the writing of *The Institutes* coinciding with the publication of exegetical commentaries, the short section on biblical theology and hermeneutics is less satisfying. Evangelical scholars would do well to nuance the relationship between Biblical Theology and Systematic Theology, each providing benefit for different parts of our preaching preparation. Also, whilst more scholarly and also far harder for the average reader to grasp, writers such as Kevin Vanhoozer have helpfully interacted with the challenges of postmodern assaults on hermeneutics indicating where we should be more reader-attentive and value the role played by community.

Secondly, the latter part of their working definition of preaching is 'the people God has given me to love' in fact only receives five pages at the end of the book. I thought that, with such a good definition of preaching (including a prayerful, people-focus as well as a book/task focus) it might have been good to spell out further the important pastoral role that accompanies good biblical preaching.

Both of these points are quibbles and may in fact merely acknowledge that there is more mileage in the author's definition of preaching that could perhaps issue in a third book in the series along the lines of *The Scholar and the Pastor*.

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