Advances in the Study of Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic: New Insights for Reading the Old Testament. By Benjamin J. Noonan. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2020. 336 pp. Softcover $26.77.

Benjamin Noonan is an emerging scholar in the field of OT Hebrew studies. He teaches Hebrew and Old Testament courses at Columbia International University (SC), having received his training from Wheaton College (B.S., M.A.) and Hebrew Union College (M.Phil., Ph.D.). At Hebrew Union, he studied under the able guidance of leading Semiticist Stephen A. Kaufman of the Comparative Philology mold who is a leading contributor to the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project. Noonan has also worked closely with Hélène Dallaire, Professor of Old Testament and Semitic Languages at Denver Seminary, who penned the foreword for this book. Noonan is a member of the Evangelical Theological Society (he serves on the Pentateuch Program Unit Steering Committee), Institute for Biblical Research, Society of Biblical Literature, and National Association of Hebrew Professors. He has previously published two other works via Eisenbrauns, a scholarly branch of Pennsylvania State University Press that specializes in Ancient Near East studies, biblical studies, and archaeology, Assyriology, linguistics, and related fields. This resume more than qualifies Noonan to write his latest work, titled *Advances in the Study of Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic: New Insights for Reading the Old Testament*. Though also academic in nature, *Advances* marks Noonan's first foray into mainstream publication and provides a much-needed survey of current, noteworthy developments, questions, and trends in biblical Hebrew and Aramaic scholarship. Endorsements by reputable scholars like Robert Chisholm, Jr., Peter Gentry, and Miles Van Pelt authenticate its value, and it serves as the complementary volume to *Advances in the Study of Greek* by Constantine Campbell with a foreword by D. A. Carson (2015).

In the front matter, Noonan's concise introduction explains the purpose and rationale for the book, including his desired outcomes. He then presents 10 informative chapters that average 21 pages in length and address the following topics:

- Linguistics and linguistic theories
- History of biblical Hebrew and Aramaic studies
- Lexicology and lexicography (the study of word meaning and the formation of dictionaries)
- Verbal stems
- Tense, aspect, and mood
- Discourse analysis
- Word order
- Register, dialect, style-shifting, and code-switching
- Dating biblical Hebrew and Aramaic texts
- Teaching and learning Hebrew and Aramaic

Though he gives each subject thoughtful treatment, Noonan reserves his most extensive discussion for discourse analysis, followed by verbal stems second, then tense, aspect, and mood third. Giving increased attention to discourse analysis seems appropriate since it has emerged as a relatively new yet promising dimension of biblical interpretation.

The reader will appreciate Noonan's clear format and style. He arranges the chapters in a logical manner and numbers chapter sections and subsections as far as five levels deep, making it easy to trace your progress or return to information that interests you. Each chapter opens with a concise, three-paragraph introduction followed by a methodical explanation of key concepts, impactful developments, and noteworthy contributors. At appropriate junctures in each chapter, Noonan pauses to offer what may be the book's most valuable benefit, an evaluation of the advances he has traced. These evaluations culminate with a concluding section for each chapter entitled "The Ways Forward." The sections and subsections move from observation and analysis to synthesis and recommendation by highlighting especially crucial advancements, pressing questions, and promising avenues of further study to explore. The book ends with a brief conclusion.

Noonan's end matter features an impressive bibliography of approximately 900 sources. This vast inventory includes what seems to be everything from major, standby works and relevant articles by reputable influencers to pertinent dissertations by otherwise obscure scholars from around the world. This bibliography, in conjunction

with meticulous footnotes throughout the book, provides the reader with a massive intersection of pooled knowledge that will be invaluable for anyone doing serious research in the field of biblical Hebrew and Aramaic. The end matter also includes a one-page Scripture Index, a detailed subject index (with secondary levels), and a four-page author index.

Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic studies present an imposing and somewhat abstract spectrum of information that exceeds what any one person can comprehend in a cohesive way. Noonan's *Advances* has made a significant advance of its own towards tackling this daunting task of analyzing and synthesizing the current state of the many branches within this field in a way that feels both manageable and understandable. If Noonan had produced a complicated and erudite book, readers would certainly acquiesce due to the challenging nature of his subject. Surprisingly, though, he has not. He has presented a wide range of complex and even subjective knowledge, opinions, and research in an accessible, engaging, reasonable, and orderly way.

It seems unreasonable for me to critique Noonan at all since his accomplishments and expertise in the Hebrew Old Testament eclipse mine enormously (to say the least). What's more, my knowledge of biblical Hebrew and Aramaic has expanded significantly by reading this book, and I will likely read it again, whether in whole in or part. That said, I will offer the following measured critiques in the spirit of a complete review.

First, though a book like this requires the use of technical jargon, Noonan provides helpful definitions and explanations for specialized words along the way. Even so, a second edition would benefit from adding a concentrated glossary of terms in the end matter.

Regarding a second edition, footnote 56 in chapter 10 needs amended since it leads to a defunct WordPress site. To access the ASI Hebrew Bible by Audio Scriptures International (which he recommends), visit https://listen.talkingbibles.org/language/heb/ or https://www.mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/ptmp3prq.htm instead.

Second, for whatever reason, Noonan omits the nine-part Eisenbrauns series, *History, Archaeology, and Culture of the Levant*, which would seem to offer relevant insights for advances in biblical

Hebrew lexicology. This is a minor critique for sure since he demonstrates an unquestionably voluminous perspective.

Third, several times on pages 228–232 Noonan refers to "the P source" in his discussion of dating the Hebrew texts. In doing so, he recognizes the traditional scholarly consensus and approach of dividing the Old Testament by "source" rather than by book alone. He does not promote the JEDP theory himself because he accepts the Bible's self-claims regarding authorship/editing and believes the assumptions of source criticism may not always apply and may also not accurately reflect ancient Near Eastern practices of authorship and writing. For the record, Noonan prefers an approach akin to that of Richard S. Hess, who in his *Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007) evaluates classical source criticism, notes its shortcomings, and concludes: "The abiding value of the Documentary Hypothesis is the manner in which various types of Pentateuchal literature have been identified" (59). In Noonan's own words, "Even if the assumptions of classical source criticism are wrong, the Documentary Hypothesis reminds us that the Pentateuch contains a variety of (although not necessarily contradictory) emphases and concerns because it encompasses a variety of different genres and deals with a variety of topics" (personal correspondence). Thanks to Dr. Noonan for providing this clarification by email and for granting me permission to include it in this review.

These critiques aside, *Advances* stakes its claim as an indispensable resource for anyone studying biblical Hebrew or Aramaic at the graduate or postgraduate level and should be essential reading for any doctoral program focused on OT exegesis, interpretation, and exposition. It will heighten students' awareness of key concepts and issues and enable them to coordinate their research with recent advances and pertinent resources. *Advances* is also an indispensable resource for anyone teaching in this field since it brings the reader up to date with current progress and research beyond what former training provided. Even the most advanced scholar will enhance their perspective from Noonan's encyclopedic collation of data. With this book, Noonan not only brings the reader up to date on the state of biblical Hebrew and Aramaic scholarship, but he impacts the reader in a similar way to D. A. Carson's acclaimed *Exegetical*

Fallacies. He alerts us to how little we know and therefore encourages us to read and interpret the Old Testament with more prayerful humility and dutiful study. For that reason alone, this book deserves a resounding, heartfelt recommendation.

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Understanding Old Testament Theology: Mapping the Terrain of Recent Approaches. By Brittany Kim and Charlie Trimm. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020. 192 pp. Softcover $19.99.

Brittany Kim (professor at North Park Theological Seminary) and Charlie Trimm (associate professor of biblical and theological studies at Talbot School of Theology, Biola University) begin their *Understanding Old Testament Theology* by describing the consistent neglect and frustration most Christian's feel when approaching the Old Testament, leaving them unable to understand "how God is speaking to them through the Old Testament" (1). In response, the authors "seek to address this problem by offering a guide through the maze of publications in the field" (4). They do this by describing seven different approaches to Old Testament theology that is subdivided into the book's three major sections. The first section (chapters one and two) seeks to describe those methods which focus on the historical aspect of the Old Testament, while the second (chapters three and four) describes two approaches which focus on tracing one or more themes through the corpus. The final section is titled "Context" and describes Canonical, Jewish, and Postmodern approaches. Each chapter is described by common features that Old Testament theologians share when employing that particular approach, as well as a section on points of tension among those within that particular method. A test case evaluating an Old Testament Theologian's interpretation of Exodus concludes each chapter.

The first method discussed is that which seeks to deal with the Old Testament grounded in "Biblical (Hi)story" which "focuses on the progressive historical development of Israel and its faith according to the biblical presentation" (13). This method is different than the view of the chapter which follows it, that of the Historical Critical Method, but the title of the chapter seems out of place when compared to the rather straightforward and more properly academic titles of other views. By placing the "Hi" of history in parentheses, it seems to distract from the actual content of the chapter. Perhaps a better title would be that of "Narrative historiography" since the authors believe that most of the views they summarize seek to deal with both the historical aspect of the Old Testament as well as its narrative presentation. The second chapter describes the historical critical method well and notes the widespread influence of this method on Old Testament studies. The authors remain more than charitable to the historical critical methods, though they note that it has caused some, particularly Von Rad and Schmid, to doubt the historicity of the Biblical accounts (44, 46). The third chapter, discussing the multiplex theme propagated by Hasel questions how one should delineate the themes to be traced in OT theology (62) and well as what interpretive methods should be employed (67). The central theme approach of chapter four lists some common central themes, for which there is no consensus, and notes the difficulty of handling non-narrative literature. For the canonical approach, the author's draw attention to questions regarding which canon should be analyzed and bring to focus the emphasis on the history of interpretation (103). The chapter on Jewish Old Testament theology brings into question "whether it even exists" (119). Some Jewish theologians believe that this field is a purely Christian endeavor, and even if there is a place for Jewish theologians in the discussion, there is still the matter of the exact role of post-biblical Jewish material (119, 121). Postmodern Old Testament Theology focuses on the role of the interpreter, their communities, and subjective experiences, and particularly power dynamics. The main question around postmodern theologies is to what extent the Bible should be deconstructed (138), and how to handle the divergent interpretive methods and conclusions.

Throughout the work the authors are extremely cordial towards all the methods employed. They seek to offend no one, and simply bring questions which warrant answers for each method. No one method was singled out for scathing rebuke, and none was offered as a particularly worthy method to employ in the future. The authors end their work with a review of each method in summarized form and a discussion on works which seek to perform OT theology on smaller levels and larger levels (151–152). Finally, the author's "suggest that you should first determine which approach most deeply resonates with you and then select one of the paths found in this book that leads to that peak" (157). Though this approach is safe for the authors, it would seem to minimize the inherent difficulties within certain approaches. For example, if post-modern theologies are employed and studied, would one then be removing the locus of meaning outside of the author and his original audience? If one espoused the historical critical method, would they be endangering their own faith as they come to doubt the historical reliability of the scriptural account? While Kim and Trimm's work serves as a good introduction to multiple approaches, their concluding exhortation would seem dangerous and could have devastating effects if everyone simply does Old Testament Theology as is right in their own eyes instead of critically evaluating the methodological foundations that undergird such approaches with an eye towards their logical end point.

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Raised on the Third Day: Defending the Historicity of the Resurrection of Jesus. Ed. W. David Beck and Michael R. Licona. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2020. 392 pp. Softcover $26.99.

This festschrift consisting of eighteen essays compiled by David Beck and Michael Lincona bears tribute to the extensive research and prolific writing of Dr. Gary R. Habermas on the resurrection of

Christ. Habermas is considered by many to be the foremost scholar and authority on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Of the eighteen contributors to this festschrift, statements such as the following bear testimony to the scholarship of Habermas:

> Robert B. Stewart: "I am not aware of anyone who has studied the historicity of the resurrection of Jesus longer and more deeply than Gary Habermas has." (1)
>
> J P. Moreland: "But by far the greatest thing that happened to me during my sojourn at Liberty was meeting, befriending, and laboring alongside Gary Habermas … the top expert on Jesus' resurrection." (15)
>
> David Baggett: "If I were to picture the array of apologetic resources as a star-studded baseball team, the case for the resurrection would likely reside at the center of the diamond as the prize pitcher. Nobody can take the mound and make that pitch better than Gary Habermas." (105)

Furthermore, in the introduction Lincona and Beck state, "This volume was a labor of love to honor our colleague and friend Gary Habermas. His accomplishments in apologetics, especially his work on the resurrection of Jesus, puts him at the very top of his field" (ix). Thus, this collection of essays honoring Habermas is, in the words of Habermas himself, "the absolutely outstanding lineup of scholars.… Further, the volume's topics largely revolve around the research areas that I have pursued most over the years.… The scholars' competencies are off the charts, and the chosen topics likewise. I have nothing but admiration for the exceptional job done by editors Beck and Lincona" (xiii–xiv).

I found some essays more interesting and edifying than others, specifically those of Stewart, Bock, and Lincona. Admittedly, many were above my paygrade and difficult for me to process or even appreciate, such as Moreland's discussion on near death experiences (NDE) and substance dualism (SD), and Beck's on the logical structure of moral arguments. Those who are more given to philosophical thought and content would no doubt benefit from a

study of these topics, but I found them ponderous at best. However, I was intrigued by the two essays of focusing on the Shroud of Turin by Foreman (37–60) and Schwortz (201–224). Overall, I found Bock's essay on women witnesses at the empty tomb, Lincona's on the primacy of Paul's discussions on Jesus' resurrection, and Turek's evaluation of Habermas to be the most beneficial. This is not to minimize the value of the other fifteen essays, but from a pastoral perspective these three were the most helpful to me.

Bock writes, "It is often said that women could not be witnesses in the Jewish ancient world. This point is applied to the resurrection empty tomb accounts and the kerygmatic event tied to them" (257). Bock's premise is that since women were the lone witnesses to the initial awareness of an empty tomb and alone heard the angelic announcement of Jesus' resurrection, then this bears weighty evidence to the historicity of the resurrection versus being a fabrication. Bock writes, "A fabricated story about the empty tomb would have a very different character, given the cultural hurdles already existing in the claim of resurrection. The women are in the story because they were at the event" (260–61). Amen!

Lincona's essay offers four reasons for viewing the apostle Paul as our best ancient source for answering the most important questions related to Jesus' resurrection. They are as follows:

- Paul's letters are early.
- Paul had been an enemy of the early Christians.
- Paul provides a link to the preaching of the Jerusalem apostles.
- Paul's teachings on Jesus' resurrection are consistent with the resurrection narratives.

Turek shares five tools that help historians mine nuggets of truth out of what might be considered largely unreliable texts:

- Multiple independent sources
- Enemy attestation
- Embarrassing testimony
- Eyewitness testimony
- Early testimony

Frank Turek concludes his essay with words that summarize the essence of Habermas's life and work, and this festschrift: "Gary Habermas's life work on the resurrection makes belief in that comforting hope a lot more certain. What work could be important than that? Thank you, Gary!" (338). Amen and amen!

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***John: Volume 2A* (Zondervan Illustrated Bible Background Commentary)**. By Craig S. Keener. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019. 272 pp. Hardcover $29.99.

If you happen to pick up a Bible Background commentary, the odds are you will see the name Craig S. Keener somewhere in it either as the author or a primary contributor. His first such commentary was the *IVP Bible Background New Testament* which was published in 2014 and has sold more than a half million copies. He was also a primary contributor to the well-received *Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible* published in 2016. One can see, then, that Keener is a well-suited author for the volume on John's Gospel in the *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Background Commentary* series.

It was truly a delight to read through this volume, not only because of my personal interest in the Gospel of John, but also because of the high quality of photographic images, the durable glossy pages, and its informative content. Keener writes concisely, yet the reader is satisfied with his comprehensiveness of the background information he presents.

As for the layout and organization of the material, there are 16 pages of front matter (Table of Contents; Introduction by Clint Arnold, General Editor of the series; List of Sidebars; List of Charts; Index of Photos and Maps; and Abbreviations) and 39 pages of back matter (Annotated Bibliography, End Notes, Sidebar and Chart Notes, and Credits for Photos and Maps). This leaves 217 pages of commentary proper. After a brief five pages of standard introductory

matters (standard for any New Testament book, e.g., author, date, setting, etc.), Keener jumps right into the background material of the biblical text. He covers the whole book section by section, first by a major division and then by a series of subdivisions within that. Perhaps it will give a clearer picture by showing the reader how Keener provides the background material to John chapter 2, which he covers in about seven-and-a-half pages of material with just two major divisions and their respective subdivisions. Here is his outline below:

Jesus' Wine Sign (2:1–11)	**The Raising of a New Temple (2:12–25)**
The third day (2:1)	Capernaum (2:12)
Cana (2:1)	Went up to Jerusalem (2.13)
Invited to the wedding (2:2)	Exchanging money (2:14)
Jesus' mother (2:2)	Whip (2.15)
Nor more wine (2:3)	Sheep and cattle (2:15)
Woman (2:4)	A market (2.16)
Why do you involve me? (2:4)	Zeal for your house (2:17)
My hour (2:4)	Prove your authority (2.18)
Servants (2:5)	Destroy this temple (2:19)
Do whatever he tells you (2:5)	Raise it again (2.19)
Stone water jars (2:6)	In three days (2:19)
Master of the banquet (2:8)	Forty-six years (2.20)
The servants … knew (2:9)	After…recalled (2:22)
The choice wine (2:10)	Not entrust himself (2.24)
Revealed his glory (2:11)	Knew what was in each person (2:25)

A glance at the headings above reveals that Keener has dealt with virtually every aspect of the chapter—certainly everything that significantly affects the proper understanding of the background. The length of each subdivision varies, ranging from a brief paragraph (ca. 25 words) to longer paragraphs (ca. 200 words). Even though this is a snapshot of just one chapter in John's Gospel, I would venture to say it is representative throughout. To be sure, there are longer paragraphs elsewhere, but not significantly so. Topics that require more detailed treatment or elaboration, Keener tends to place in a sidebar chart. [Note: There are a total of 64 sidebar charts covering such things as Samaritans, Holy Sites, Temple Guards, The Pool of

Siloam, Begging in Antiquity, Sheep Pens and Gates, The Sanhedrin, Footwashing, The Vine, Pruning, Historicity of Jesus' Trial, Pilate, and many others.]

Interspersed throughout the commentary are high resolution images, which one would expect in an *illustrated* book. Again, limiting it to just the commentary on John 2, Keener provides for the first major division (Jesus' Wine Sign) a photo image of what stone water jars from the first century would have looked like. In the second subdivision, he provides a color map of Galilee, Samaria, and Judea (which is the geographic area under consideration in the text), as well as an aerial view of the remains of a Capernaum synagogue. In addition, he provides a two-page spread of color photos, images, and drawings of the following: A Warning Inscription (photo), A Model of the Jerusalem Temple (photo of temple proper and the courts), Herod's Temple Mount (color drawing), Tyrian shekels (image), Jerusalem Temple cutaway (drawing), the Holy Place (drawing of top and side view), and the Ark of the Covenant (drawing). But then he ends the section with a "Reflections" inset (described below).

There are a total of twenty-one "Reflections" (one in every chapter). Essentially, these are practical applications and exhortations designed to encourage readers to put this information to practical use in their Christian life. Perhaps an example will give the reader a taste of what these are like. Here is the brief reflection by Keener from John 9:

> Afraid of being ostracized from their community, some were afraid to speak the truth about Jesus. Yet we know that eternity hangs on him. How can we counter the influence of peer pressure and other pressures to be silent about Jesus? Granted that we must share him lovingly and gently, but are we willing to suffer ostracism when people respond with hostility? (97)

This commentary is a great resource for any Bible student. I do, however, want to mention one criticism. There is no complete bibliography of sources cited. This was personally inconvenient to me since there was a particular reference I wanted to access, but when

I referenced the end note, I discovered that it was the shortened citation of the source. The full bibliographic detail is provided only at its first citation. Every time after, a shortened form is used (i.e., last name, abbreviated title, page number). Since I could not cross-reference it with a master bibliography, I had to comb through all the previous end notes searching for the very first citation of the source. It was a cumbersome and time-consuming task, but I did, at last, find it. My recommendation for the editors is to correct this in a future edition.

In sum, this volume is a worthy addition to the library of all Bible students who desire to increase their understanding of the Fourth Gospel. As with any background commentary, its benefit will extend beyond the book under consideration, making it profitable for NT studies in general, since many other NT books share much of the same background. By the same token, much of the material is unique to John, making this volume highly profitable for the study of the John's Gospel in particular. With all these considerations, I heartily endorse this volume.

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Analyzing and Translating New Testament Discourse. By David J. Clark. Dallas: Fontes P, 2019. 279 pp. Softcover $29.99.

David J. Clark (Ph.D., London School of Oriental and African Studies) is an experienced Translation Consultant for the UBS. Although retiring in 2002, Clark has continued to work in Russia on various translation projects on a voluntary basis. His book *Analyzing and Translating New Testament Discourse* is a compendium of individual articles written over his 25-year career tied together by the common "conviction that a clear understanding of an ancient Biblical text is dependent on a grasp of its structure" (xv). The book spans a total of fourteen chapters, covering an array of NT books, with a

sampling of each of the major divisions represented in the work. For the sake of brevity, this critique will deal with three main areas that describe the breadth of Clark's work: chapters dealing with lexical choice based on discourse features, the book's flagship chapter on Matthew's discourse structure, and a third section on those chapters dealing with vocative displacement.

Most of the application for discourse analysis was to locate pericope and paragraph boundaries, as well as other discourse blocks helpful for structure. The third chapter, introduced as "Discourse Structure in Matthew's Gospel," written with Jan de Waard, addresses these issues. Here Clark and de Waard show a variety of discourse methods to analyze plot structure through discourse functions. Particular attention is paid to establishing narrative and discourse blocks in blocks of three, which seems to be a Matthean predisposition. The attention paid to the verbal forms of the beatitudes is extremely helpful showing a chiastic structure in verses 6–7 (26), the use of a diamond diagram (29), and a footnoted diagram showing how the beatitudes move from beatitudes to principles expected of the hearers (34). The multiple graphs throughout this chapter alone are worth the price of the book for the Matthean scholar, and for replication by all NT exegetes. By focusing on the narrative and discourse blocks and their thematic cohesion, Clark posits three acts in Matthew. While not a new proposal, the argument that Clark submits to get there is uniquely creative (17–19). In the second appendix for the chapter, Clark shows how participial clauses can be seen to point both ways. Clark offers the helpful analysis that the nominative use is typically pointing forward (bringing a known agent into the forefront for future action), while the participle in genitive absolute construction backgrounds a character. It would be beneficial for the reader to remember the adage that "rules were made to be broken" and that the generalizations that readers were taught in basic syntax will not always apply in every instance of writing. This individuality of the author's employment of syntactical structure demands the exegete to put in the requisite study, such as Clark displayed, for each biblical author within their own corpus and even within individual letters.

The book also includes helpful insights on word selection when issues arise from word selection in their discourse functions. The first

chapter, "Our Father in Heaven," deals with the difficulty of translating the distinctively Matthean title of "Father in Heaven/Heavenly Father" in cultures who do not have a term for "heaven" and would be forced to supplement with the term "sky." Clark posits that the term "heaven" is often used in place of the term God in Matthew when parallel passages are considered in the gospel, and that a translation of "our Father in the sky" would mislead the reader "with another false message that God is distant" (2) that they should supply "God our Father" (6). The second chapter, entitled "After Three Days," lays out Clark's assessment that in cultures who have no emotional attachment to the "after three days" translation of those verses with μετά as the preposition should translate as "on the third day" (11) to maintain the Sunday distinction without the chronological difficulties that have proven to be a constant derision of the hyper-literalist who lacks the nuance of Jewish time concepts.

Though the work was written for translators, the attentive exegete can gain helpful methods through reading Clark's work. Particularly helpful for those interpreting and preaching from the Greek text is Clark's ability to show how different biblical authors use discourse functions differently. This can be seen when Clark draws attention to the displacement of the vocative. The fourth chapter "Vocative Displacement in the Gospels: Lexico-Syntactic and Sociolinguistic Influences," where Clark makes the argument that lexico-syntactic displacement of vocatives has fewer implications for the translator than socio-linguistic displacement (125). Lexico syntactic displacement seems to be linked with one-word adverbial phrases, other one-word phrases like fossilized imperatives, interjections, and occasionally the occurrence of a personal pronoun. The sociolinguistic influence deals with displacing the vocative due to a power differential between the speaker and the hearer, by age, social position, politeness, etc. (116–19). The sixth chapter "Vocative Displacement in Acts and Revelation" allows Clark to come to firmer conclusions on the displacement of the vocative, which normally appears sentence initial. He finds that "in some restricted situations . . . the vocative is automatically displaced. . . . Displacement in other settings, however, does indicate an increased social distance between participants in the dialogue" (147). The author does note that the use of the vocative in epistolary literature is a needed study in the future.

One suggestion for improvement is better formatting. The chapters of the book were uneven and assembled in a seemingly indiscriminate way. If the chapters were laid out in canonical order, or topically, for example, so that the chapters on vocative displacement were successive, and similarly those on the gospels, then this would have helped the reader build upon the previous content in a systematic manner. Dealing with topics in canonical order would have lent the work a logical flow for the exegete and the translator so that it could be more friendly as a reference work.

This book was written by an experienced, fair minded, and judicious translator for other translators. As such, the example of various methods, employed across a broad range of texts will make for a ready reference to the task of translating. This book will be rather difficult for the reader who is unable to work in the Greek text unaided, as would be expected with its emphasis on translation. However, for those who have built the facility in Greek studies, or those willing to translate and parse as they go, this book will prove an invaluable introduction to various discourse analysis methods. *Analyzing and Translating New Testament Discourse* is a necessity for those translators interested in learning how discourse analysis can aid in their task; and it is a useful tool for the exegete displaying the profitability of discourse analysis.

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Paul and the Hope of Glory: An Exegetical and Theological Study. By Constantine R. Campbell. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2020. 503 pp. Softcover $34.99.

Constantine R. Campbell (Ph.D., Macquarie University) was professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Seminary and is now Senior Vice-President of Global Content and Bible Teaching at Our Daily Bread. He lives in Canberra, Australia.

Among Campbell's several publications is a uniquely useful book entitled *Paul and Union with Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study*. The purpose of the study was to examine exhaustively the writings of Paul concerning phrases, metaphors, and implications of the union of believers with Christ. It contained a section on introductory matters that included the views of many NT scholars and theologians concerning the subject of the book; an exegetical section, in which each of the passages in Paul's writings were presented in Greek and in English translation followed by a commentary; a section of theological analysis; and a conclusion.

Paul and the Hope of Glory examines Paul's eschatology in a similar format. His introductory chapter includes a description of his methodology and the recent (1930–2013) history of discussion of the subject of Pauline eschatology. Part 2 is his presentation of texts (Greek and English) and his commentary on the pertinent elements of eschatology in the context of the quoted verses. The exegetical study is divided into the following topics: two ages and two realms; the parousia; the last day; judgment; resurrection; eternal life; inheritance; new creation; Israel; glory; and hope. These topics and others reappear in the theological discussion in the next part; for example, "Christ and His Parousia," "The Resurrection of Christ and Believers," etc. The theological section (Part 3) includes the following headings: "Christocentric Eschatology; Apocalyptic Eschatology; The Age to Come; This Present Age; and Conclusions." The book includes a bibliography, and Scripture, subject, and author indexes.

While reading the "Recent History of Pauline Eschatology" section, one could easily conclude that the various themes and views of Schweitzer through N. T. Wright in the debate concerning Pauline apocalypticism and eschatology discussed by Campbell will form the substrata of his presentation from that point forward. The question of whether in the exegetical treatment Paul's writings would sit in judgment over with the theological positions described, providing verification, vindication, or correction, or simply be another voice in the debate, was not answered in the Introduction.

Campbell answered that question in the Exegetical Study, in that he refreshingly set the debate aside and concentrated on a sympathetic discussion of the various texts subsumed in the topics mentioned

above. A primary critical question he asks is whether Paul can be said to have written on a particular eschatological subject, merely alluded to it, or did not mention it. One interesting example of this question at work is the relationship of the general resurrection of the dead, and judgment. Though in Jewish thought there is the belief in a general resurrection, Campbell states that whether Paul believed in one or not, he did not mention it in his epistles. Since he assumes that there will be but one judgment (of believers and unbelievers together), Campbell asserts that Paul leaves the question of whether the resurrection will occur before or after judgment unclear.

Campbell concludes that Paul's eschatology is similar to the Jewish apocalypticism in his day, including—as it does—mystery language, the coming of the Son of Man, two-age eschatology, etc. Yet the righteousness of God and a salvation-historical shape to apocalypticism is in Paul, but not in Jewish apocalyptic thinking. Paul's eschatology is "irreducibly" Christocentric, shaped by the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ, which impact the present and future of humans and the universe. Believing that "union with Christ would be the *webbing* that connects all of Paul's key theological commitments," Campbell agrees with Schweitzer that "eschatology provides the frame of the web" (453).

Campbell's explanation of the two ages/two realms thinking of Paul is well done, reminding the reader of Augustine's *City of God*. Two opposing ages, the present evil age and the age to come, and two realms, the realm of sin and evil and the realm of righteousness, are compared and contrasted throughout Paul's writings. Believers in the present live hopefully, knowing that because Christ Jesus was resurrected, we will be resurrected, too, and will enter into glory.

Campbell discusses some interesting and thought-provoking subjects in his theological section, carefully referencing the topics and exegetical passages explored earlier. Though this reviewer was impressed with the exegetical work preceding them, he struggled with some of Campbell's theological conclusions.

These include the question of whether Paul's position on hell, annihilationism, and universalism is revealed in his writings. Ultimately, Campbell dismisses the claim that a universalist position could be derived from Paul's writing but suggests that Paul's writings could be used to support annihilationism. Also, Campbell

thinks it possible that praying for the dead was not a problem to Paul, especially because the living and the dead in Christ are all connected. Aside from the exegetical foundation of that position, the influence of that position among people who regularly talk to ancestors or spirits deserves some thought. Taking the view that Paul emphasizes the difference between those who are Israel and those who are not in Romans 9–11, Campbell concludes that Paul's position concerning Israel is that the remnant who receive Christ as their Savior will be the Israel that will be saved, not national or ethnic Israel.

An area of some confusion is Paul's view of the interim body of the saint. Campbell mentions three views of the relationship of the post-death saint to resurrection: immediate arrival in the presence of the Lord in an interim body; soul sleep (in which the soul will not experience an interim between death and the resurrection), and a folding of time that will allow all believers at death to go immediately to the resurrection of the saints. Quoting only Philippians 1:23–24 and 2 Corinthians 5:1–10 as relating to the issue (but both ambiguous in his view), Campbell seems, reluctantly, to lean toward the disembodied intermediate state. The reluctance stems from the priority of the scriptural and Jewish emphasis on the "holistic view" of the body.

Campbell's take on the following debatable issues is interesting. On the question of renewal or recreation of the world and the universe, Campbell opts for a restoration and renewal. Based upon this, he encourages a view of ecology that both rejects trashing the world because it will be destroyed anyway, and that our intervention is necessary to bring about the renewal of the earth. Campbell believes that our hope for the future should prompt our respect for the earth. Similarly, he emphasizes that care for the body as the vessel to be transformed for everlasting life should discourage the unthinking use of cremation.

It should be apparent from this review that this lengthy and carefully crafted book is both scholarly and practical, and that it is worth the effort of the exegete and theologian to follow Campbell through his exploration of passages and themes of Paul's eschatology. No one will agree with everything he has written, but very few will personally take on the task he took upon himself. With that in mind,

the reviewer would encourage New Testament and theology teachers, and graduate students in New Testament to read this book.

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2 Corinthians **(The Story of God Bible Commentary)**. By Judith A. Diehl. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2020. 416 pp. Hardcover $27.99.

Judith Diehl (Ph.D., University of Edinburgh) taught New Testament and Hermeneutics at Denver Seminary. Her volume on 2 Corinthians is a commendable addition to the accessible *Story of God* commentary series.

Diehl's central thesis is that Paul wrote 2 Corinthians to defend his apostolic identity and ministry. According to Diehl, this letter was penned amid a time of deep emotional distress and conflict between Paul and his adversaries within the Corinthian church. As the likely fourth letter (second canonical letter) written by Paul to Corinth, this missive reveals the depths of Paul's inner psyche as a missionary-pastor.

Like other volumes in the Story of God commentary series, *2 Corinthians* was readable and relatable. Written by an author with both pastoral and academic experience, the commentary fairly crackles with relevant application. From story to poetry, from anecdote to exegesis, this work is not overly technical, and instead reads as a treatise on how to suffer and serve as a pastor. Whether she is mixing in illustrations from her own ministry, sharing poetry from Eugene Peterson, or citing the latest blogs from pastoral experts, Diehl crafts a work that is deeply in touch with the profound joy and agony of pastoral ministry.

In keeping with the series formatting, *2 Corinthians* discussed each section of the biblical text under the headings "Hear the Story," "Explain the Story," and "Live the Story." The latter section, focused upon application, might have been the strongest point of this

commentary. Diehl wrote as one who was in touch with the fears and foibles of pastors. She also demonstrated a unique interest in connecting the text to issues of racial reconciliation and justice. Like other volumes in this series, Diehl's work includes a section called "Listening to the Text in the Story." This sidebar, included near the beginning of each section of the text, provided the OT allusions and echoes that could be heard within 2 Corinthians. This feature is remarkably useful to interpreters, both pastors and scholars alike.

The chief weakness of the book was its lack of extended exegetical discussion. The reader might sometimes prefer additional information on a challenging interpretive question. Yet, Diehl (perhaps in keeping with the goals of the commentary series) maintains a brisk pace and refuses to get bogged down by troublesome textual details. *2 Corinthians* also seems to rely heavily upon the work of a few authors (N. T. Wright, Eugene Peterson, and Linda Belville are repeatedly referenced). Although these authors have much to offer the church, perhaps more breadth would have strengthened this commentary.

Overall, this volume by Judith Diehl is a significant contribution to the Story of God commentary series. Although *2 Corinthians* could benefit from further exegetical discussion and increased engagement with relevant literature, it still accomplished its purposes. It was a readable commentary that will be relevant and insightful, especially for pastors. Indeed, the volume is almost evocative, as it traces the depths of Paul's joy and agony as he ministers to a recalcitrant congregation. For pastors who write their resignations every Monday, this volume will come as a breath of fresh air.

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The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self: Cultural Amnesia, Expressive Individualism, and the Road to Sexual Revolution. By Carl R. Trueman. Wheaton: Crossway, 2020. 425 pp. Hardcover $34.99.

As the title suggests, this is a profound work of analysis that requires focused thought and reflection to properly absorb its arguments. However, Trueman's work is somewhat unique in its singular focus upon a certain aspect of modern culture. As Professor of Biblical and Religious studies at Grove City College, Trueman provides primarily a history (which he dates from the Enlightenment era) of how society has evolved to its present conception of the nature of human selfhood. In fact, he argues that the modern sexual revolution, whose culmination he identifies with the normalization of transgenderism, is more a byproduct than a cause of that evolution. Specifically, Trueman documents how inner psychology—"feelings" or "intuitions"—has come to be decisive for a person's sense of who the person is and the purpose of that person's life (23). What's more, as he subsequently observes, "If the inner psychological life of the individual is sovereign, then identity becomes as potentially unlimited as the human imagination" (50). Finally, such identities, whatever they may be, *must be* recognized by society as legitimate (63).

The book is divided into four main parts. In Part 1, he utilizes the writings of several philosophers to provide the broader categories and concepts for framing the issue at hand. In Part 2, he delves into the origins of the psychologizing of the self with special attention given to Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), who not only argued (as many do today) that society or culture is the true source of a person's problems but that a person is "at his best— he is most truly himself as he should be—when he acts in accordance with his nature," as he freely chooses to conceive that nature (123). He also analyzes the influence of Karl Marx (1818–1883), Frederick Nietzsche (1844–1900), and Charles Darwin (1809–1882), who "in their different ways provided conceptual justification for rejecting the notion of human nature and thus paved the way for the plausibility of the idea that human beings are plastic creatures with no fixed identity founded on an intrinsic and ineradicable essence" (166).

In Part 3, he discusses "the sexualizing of psychology and the politicizing of sex." The central figure for the first part is Sigmund Freud. Indeed, he identifies Freud as the person most responsible for making plausible "the idea that humans, from infancy onward, are at core sexual beings" and that "our sexual desires … are ultimately decisive for who we are" (28). For Freud "true happiness *is* sexual satisfaction" (205). The politicization of sex he ascribes first to lesser-known figures such as Wilhelm Reich (1897–1957), who drew upon the thought of both Freud and Marx to devalue the institution of the family (235). He also discusses the role that feminism has had in challenging the basic biological binary and the perceived differences they present. For example, Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986) argued that "biology is to be transcended by the use of technology; who or what woman really *is* is not her chromosomes or her physiology; rather, it is something that she becomes either as an act of free choice or because society coerces her into conformity with its expectations" (259). The similarity of this perspective (penned in 1949) to modern transgender ideology is striking.

Finally, in Part 4 he explores various facets of contemporary society to demonstrate how thoroughly the intellectual developments discussed in Parts 2 and 3 have so radically transformed Western culture. In this regard, he discusses the influence of Hugh Hefner (1926–2017) in mainstreaming pornography as well as the history of and tensions within the LGBTQ+ movement (e.g., feminism vs. transgenderism). In fact, recent judicial victories, such as the constitutionality of gay marriage, derive largely from the expressive individualism that began to take root centuries before (311).

There is much more that could be mentioned: for example, the "cultural amnesia" referenced in the subtitle reflects society's continuing choice to "forget" the moral (Christian) underpinnings upon which Western society was founded. Trueman also discusses how an emphasis upon a woman's psychological well-being has become the primary criterion to decide whether an unborn child should live (323). Equally illustrative of Trueman's thesis is the response of the gay community to the AIDS crisis, namely, "any inhibiting of sexual freedom—even that designed to prevent the transmission of a deadly disease—is considered unacceptable because of its perceived obnoxious moralizing or potential for

promoting such. That sentiment is entirely consonant with a therapeutic culture of expressive individualism, in which it is the present moment and the individuals' ability to perform their own selves in whatever way they choose in that moment that are the only significant ethical concerns" (348). Finally, Trueman ominously warns that "no culture or society that has had to justify itself by itself has ever maintained itself for any length of time" (381). Also, "as fewer and fewer people care about their own religious commitments, so they will care less and less about religious freedom as an important commitment for society as a whole" (400).

Without a doubt, Trueman makes his point in quite convincing fashion. The book is weighty without being overwhelming. An index of subjects and personalities is fairly detailed and helpful. My main criticism would be that four hundred pages of analysis are not well served by a mere five pages of "suggestions" (402–407) as to how the church should respond to this monumental change. Trueman rightly emphasizes the need for "long and hard" reflection, and, certainly, a better understanding of how people in the secular world think serves the church well in the task of the Great Commission. Such understanding should also serve pastors well as to what the typical congregant, who is unconsciously imbibing the modern perspective of the self, needs to hear from the pulpit.

Trueman also rightly calls the church to community ("human beings still need to belong, to be recognized, and to have community") and to recovery of "both natural law and a high view of the physical body" (405). These are important emphases, but one wonders whether they are too little too late. Certainly, secular society has largely left the Christian worldview in the trash heap of discarded perspectives. However, as Trueman reminds us, "The task of the Christian is not to whine about the moment in which he or she lives but to understand its problems and respond appropriately to them" (30).

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Theological Retrieval for Evangelicals: Why We Need Our Past to Have a Future. By Gavin Ortlund. Wheaton: Crossway, 2019. 218 pp. Softcover $21.99.

Gavin Ortlund (Ph.D., Fuller Theological Seminary) serves as the senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Ojai, California. His pedigree in the evangelical movement stems from his grandfather Raymond C. Ortlund, Sr. (host of The Haven of Rest radio program) and father Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr. (president of Renewal Ministries and a council member of The Gospel Coalition). Interestingly, Gavin's parents (to whom he dedicated this book) announced last month that they had joined the Anglican Church of North America. His father declared, "My soul needs the depth of Anglican tradition."

Theological Retrieval for Evangelicals encourages a constructive *ressourcement*, especially of the patristic and medieval sources (14). Ortlund has written "with pastors, theology students, and interested lay Christians especially in mind" (14). He claims that the average evangelical rarely engages in historical theology, and the rare exceptions tend to focus upon Protestant heroes like Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Jonathan Edwards (12). This general critique bears the ring of truth, although one could add that even in the exceptional instances, evangelicals often produce and consume popular-level histories rather that scholarly tomes. Which is why, as Phillip Cary and others have insisted, American evangelicals tend to turn Luther into one of their own, stripped of his sacramentalism.

In Part I, Ortlund acknowledges the dangers of an unmitigated reclamation, which has led famous individuals to leave evangelicalism for the folds of Rome or Orthodoxy. The first chapter reviews past discussions, including the Mercersburg vs. Princeton debates. Ortlund maintains that B. B. Warfield oversimplified the theology of Augustine. In broad strokes, Warfield portrayed the Reformation as the victory of Augustine's doctrine of grace over his doctrine of the church. By contrast, Ortlund appeals to Reformation and post-Reformation models of responsible renewal nurtured by rooted continuity, including the works of Francis Turretin and John Jewel. Of course, if one were to place the likes of Jean Daillé into the mix (*Du vrai emploi des Pères*), the early modern Protestant approaches become more complex.

The second chapter addresses the "evangelical ache for history" (46). The "sense of rootlessness" and the "desire for historical depth" have been impulses toward Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism (49), as manifested in the cases of Hank Hanegraff and Francis Beckwith (one could now add the example of Mark Galli, the former editor of *Christianity Today*). Ortlund's response is "to further the intuition that *evangelical* and *ancient* are far from antonyms, just as *catholicity* and *Catholicism* are far from synonyms" (52). Besides the historical impulses, one also wonders about the influence of literary and apologetic icons from Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and the *via media* of Anglicanism (such as Tolkien and Lewis, both of whom Ortlund frequently references).

According to Chapter Three, patristic and medieval theology can bulk up areas where evangelical teaching is manifestly weak. Ortlund highlights current debates concerning divine simplicity, and he laments the lack of interest in angelology. Moderns may mock medieval disputations concerning "how many angels can dance on the head of a pin," but the medieval era was "perhaps the richest period of reflection on angelology in the history of the church" (69). One wonders if the modern focus upon empiricism and a redemptive-centeredness (rather than a more broadly doxological approach) may facilitate the relative neglect of angelology. Ortlund further contends that patristic and medieval theology can also reframe contemporary discussions by "providing a premodern perspective" (72). The heart of the chapter summarizes "the perils of retrieval," including distortion, artificiality, repristination, and minimalism (73–76). After calling for the exploration of neglected ecclesiastical figures, Ortlund wisely cautions against a facile mapping of the first millennium and a half of historical theology that overlooks the nuances of contour.

Part II moves from abstract inclination to concrete application. "I have always felt that the best shorthand way to commend theological retrieval is simply to do it. The process explains the procedure" (87). Chapter Four examines ramifications of the Creator/creature distinction. Specific topics include the Reformed *extra Calvinisticum* and Thomas Torrance's emphasis upon the ascension. While both examples make for fascinating reading, they remain somewhat unexpected entries, in view of the volume's stated focus upon patristic and medieval theology.

The following chapter wades into the doctrine of divine simplicity. Ortlund suggests that "divine simplicity (or better, some combination of divine simplicity and perichoresis) may provide a more solid grounding for a monotheistic Trinity than perichoresis alone" (137). Drawing from the wells of classical theology could also inform other flashpoints in the doctrine of God, such as debates concerning divine impassibility, the eternal generation of the Son, and eternal functional subordinationism within the Trinity (cf. 54).

The sixth chapter deftly argues that one may combine recapitulation and satisfaction in an understanding of Christ's substitutionary work. Ortlund maintains that the evangelical treatment of the atonement has been polarized by a reductive focus upon penal substitution alone or upon an unwarranted turn away from substitutionary atonement. Ortlund investigates the views of Irenaeus, Athanasius, and Anselm, and concludes that they all (to varying degrees) supported facets of both recapitulation and satisfaction. Even so, one may ask *how* Christ's "obedient act" (as the Second Adam) was able to overturn the initial transgression of Adam (Rom. 5:12-19)—could not penal substitution be *foundational* to the outworking of recapitulation? While the chapter highlights the restoration of humanity, one could add the restoration of the entire cosmos (Rom 8:20-22). Moreover, a fuller engagement with *Christus Victor* views in patristic and medieval theology would have been helpful (cf. Col 2:15; Heb 2:14–15).

The final chapter examines Gregory the Great, "a man of action, a great practical genius" (186). Ortlund mines Gregory's *Book of Pastoral Rule* for its balanced approach and pithy aphorisms. "The overall emphasis, however, is that pastoral exhortation must function with great sensitivity and balance, recognizing the different needs among the people in the congregation and not allowing the kind of exhortation needed for one particular vice to drown out the kind of exhortation needed for another" (199). The volume helpfully concludes with a general index and a Scripture index.

This reviewer empathizes with Ortlund's general call for theological retrieval, but remains guarded in concurrence, partially because of the need for nuance and the variabilities of historical development. Often the early church fathers did not speak with a united voice, highlighting the necessity of an objective framework for

historical retrieval, by which to forestall a "buffet" approach. Gregory the Great relayed treasures of practical wisdom. Yet he also developed sacramental, penitential, and purgatorial doctrines that were wielded against Protestants during the so-called "Counter Reformation" (cf. 202). Calvin praised John Chrysostom's homiletical exegesis but criticized his views on divine-human cooperation. An unbounded appropriation could, as Ortlund himself acknowledges, compromise evangelical identity. Those from free church traditions may sense the need for even more caution than the heirs of the magisterial reformers. Nevertheless, a responsible theological retrieval is one antidote (among others) to an evangelicalism constantly chasing its own fashionable tail. *Ressourcement* may be complex, but it remains inescapable for the sake of a robust evangelical identity. "Whether" to retrieve is a closed case; "how" and "to what extent" remain open questions.

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Understanding Spiritual Gifts: A Comprehensive Guide. By Sam Storms. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020. 364 pp. Softcover $17.99.

How well do you understand what Scripture teaches about spiritual gifts—their nature, significance, and practice? Though Sam Storms (Lead Pastor for Preaching and Vision at Bridgeway Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma) acknowledges that spiritual gifts have become a somewhat faddish and even divisive topic in recent decades, he hopes to bring increased balance and clarity to the subject for the benefit of the church in his newly published work *Understanding Spiritual Gifts: A Comprehensive Guide*. He concludes, "I do hope that it will contribute in some small measure to easing the tension over spiritual gifts that so often tends to put continuationists and cessationists at each other's throats" (316).

This lengthy volume divides into six parts. Part 1 addresses "The Nature, Purpose, and Prayerful Pursuit of Spiritual Gifts." In this

section, Storms explores biblical terminology, the number of spiritual gifts, and concludes that we should "pray and ask for" God to impart us with spiritual gifts (61). This conclusion reappears as a prominent emphasis throughout the book. Storms defines a spiritual gift as "a God-given ... Spirit-empowered capacity or ability to serve the body of Christ" (26). Part 2 addresses "The Debate over the Cessation or Continuation of Miraculous Gifts of the Spirit," in which he surveys the biblical and theological case for both cessation and continuationism, respectively. He gives special attention to Jonathan Edwards's conviction that the *charismata* have ceased and offers a guided survey of "evidence" for the practice of spiritual gifts throughout church history. Part 3 addresses "Revelatory Gifts of the Spirit." These gifts include the "word of wisdom," "word of knowledge," prophecy, and "discerning of spirits." In each case, Storms concludes that these gifts carry an inherent revelatory quality. Unlike canonical revelation, however, he suggests that these gifts are subjective and may occasionally convey inaccurate thoughts due to human shortcomings. Part 4 addresses "Speaking in Tongues." It examines scriptural data on both tongues-speaking and the interpretation of tongues. Storms concludes that the gift of tongues is "*not* the ability speak in a known human language" but is "a heavenly language, a language that derives from the supernatural enablement of the Holy Spirit" (213–214). Part 5 addresses "Faith, Healing, and Miracles." Storms presents the gift of faith as something more than a general faith that God *can* heal, as a heightened belief "that it is God's will to heal someone *right now*" (254), while also recognizing that it is not always God's will to heal. He also suggests that miracles not only still happen today but that "the spiritual gift of miracles is still operative in the church today" (261). Part 6 addresses "Other Gifts and Apostleship." In this section, Storms finally considers the ministry and leadership gifts mentioned in passages like Romans 12:3–8 and Ephesians 4:11–16. He also gives special attention to apostleship and concludes (albeit hesitantly) that this is likely not a spiritual gift but rather a role that consists of specially delegated authority that continues to occur today (294).

I read this book hoping for a thorough treatment of the subject from a fair, balanced, and biblical perspective. The author's

reputation as an experienced pastor, an accomplished theologian (having served as the President of the Evangelical Theological Society), a council member of the Gospel Coalition, and an all-around gracious person raised my hopes to this end. Yet sadly, I was largely disappointed, though the author's tone was generally gracious. To begin with, the title of the book is misleading since the book, though lengthy, is not comprehensive. Storms gives outsized attention to the miraculous and revelatory gifts while giving almost no attention to the less phenomenal (uncharismatic) ministry and service gifts. Such an imbalanced treatment belies the book's claim to be comprehensive. A more fitting title would be "*An Exhaustive Defense of the Continuation of Charismatic Gifts*."

To Storms's credit, he regularly presents a cessationist perspective followed by a continuationist rebuttal. At first glance, this seems to be a fair and gracious approach, but he frequently responds to the continuationist perspective with surprisingly weak and dismissive argumentation that consists of dogmatic statements, personal experiences, gotcha questions, logical fallacies (such as straw men, etc.), and cross-referencing between unclear and unrelated Scripture passages. It would take one or more journal articles or a lengthy paper to respond adequately to Storms' argumentation. Two arguments stand out as particularly curious. In one instance, he leans firmly on an account in the pseudepigraphal book, the *Testament of Job*, to support the idea that tongues-speaking consists of angelic languages rather than human languages (212). In another instance, he interprets Ephesians 4:11 in an inconsistent, unusual manner. On one hand, he claims that this passage speaks about spiritual gifts (100), yet on the other hand he suggests that apostles are not a spiritual gift but rather an "ecclesiastical position" (292).

Though I had hoped to recommend otherwise, this book is neither a balanced nor comprehensive survey of what Scripture teaches about spiritual gifts. It does, however, offer an insightful look at how a charismatic, continuationist understands spiritual gifts, especially those gifts that are revelatory and miraculous. In this way, Storms has provided us with a valuable resource—and one that has further affirmed my cessationist perspective.

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Asian Christian Theology: Evangelical Perspectives. Ed. Timoteo D. Gener and Stephen T. Pardue. Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Langham Global Library, 2019. Softcover $20.99.

The growth of the church in Asia over the last century is one of the remarkable trends in global Christianity. Unfortunately, there are still few resources available to Asian evangelicals that reflect evangelical theological commitments and address issues facing Christians living in an Asian context. In response to this need, Timoteo D. Gener (Chancellor and Professor of Theology at Asian Theological Seminary) and Stephen T. Pardue (Associate Faculty for Theology at International Graduate School of Leadership and Asian Graduate School of Theology) have gathered sixteen contributors (Gener included) to produce *Asian Christian Theology: Evangelical Perspectives*. According to the editors, "In the context of an expanding and strengthening Asian church ... this book has a simple goal: to offer an approach to Christian theology that is biblically rooted, historically aware, contextually engaged, and broadly evangelical" (2). The book is organized into two parts. The first eight essays reassess traditional Christian doctrines (Scripture, the Trinity, Christology, etc.) from an Asian perspective, while the final eight essays address topics bearing on important issues facing Asian evangelicals (5). Per the back cover of the text, the target readers of *Asian Christian Theology* include students at Asian seminaries, those

outside of an Asian context seeking to learn more about theology from a global perspective, and people belonging to an Asian diaspora.

Overall, *Asian Christian Theology* accomplishes its intended task. Outside of Ken Gnanakan's article "Creation, New Creation, and Ecological Relationships" (a solid and timely article yet does not explain how it distinctively contributes to Asian theology in particular), the authors provide readers with a clear window into the meeting of theology and the concerns of those living in an Asian context. Nevertheless, even the reader outside of this context will benefit from *Asian Christian Theology*. Kar Yong Lim's "A Theology of Suffering and Mission for the Asian Church" serves as a good example. Lamenting that Western missiological studies have mostly ignored the inevitability of suffering in the missionary enterprise (185), Lim reminds readers of Paul's understanding of suffering, one which was the expected consequence of his missionary work but was also used by the Lord to reveal his power in Paul's life, to bring unbelievers to faith, and to reveal Paul's love for those who need the gospel (185–189). This reminder of the centrality of suffering in missions is important for all believers, and especially those in the West, as Western believers face an increasing post-Christian context (cf. 193) and the temptation of personal glory and success (cf. 184).

As with most compilations, the articles in *Asian Christian Theology* are mixed in their quality and impact value, and the reader should be aware that he or she might not agree with all the conclusions of the contributors even if the articles make sound theological points. Ivan Satyavrata's article "Jesus and Other Faiths" is a case in point. Satyavrata does a solid job critiquing pluralism, a significant issue in an Asian context. Challenging Indian pluralist S. J. Samartha and his arguments that Christianity's claim to exclusive truth disrupts harmony between religions and that all religions lead to the same "God" (typical play-book pluralism), Satyavrata reminds his readers of the real differences between various religions (226–228) and that pluralism itself is exclusivistic in its outlook, and thus self-contradictory (229). Western Christians would do well to heed Satyavrata's arguments as the temptation to accept "tolerance" in the West grows as the threat of pluralism increases in Western contexts. However, some readers may not approve of the "fulfillment

approach" Satyavrata adopts in addressing Christianity's relationship to other religions. That other religions might contain elements of truth based upon Paul's addresses to Gentiles in Acts 14 and 17, along with his creation theology in Romans 1–2 (231), is true, as even fallen humanity knows something about the true God. However, while the fulfillment approach may have pure motives in addressing how Asian peoples can accept Christianity without radically renovating their culture (cf. 236), it seems to leave itself open to inclusivism (cf. 239). More work will need to be done in this area.

Simon Chan's "Towards an Asian Evangelical Ecclesiology" is another example. Chan rightly critiques common Western evangelical tendencies to center Christian practice on pragmatism and fulfilling individual felt needs rather than collectively rallying to accomplish evangelism and missions (145). While this critique is timely, Chan's solutions are mixed in theological soundness. For instance, writing on the need to establish the importance of the ordinances in the church, Chan writes, "Most Asians understand better the 'sacramentality' of the rite of baptism than most evangelicals. This is why many Chinese families are quite willing to allow their children to attend church but not be baptized. For them, baptism is no mere ritual; it is the point of no return" (148). Fair enough. However, in the very next paragraph, Chan argues for infant baptism, noting that "Infant baptism understands that the church as the household of faith consists not just of individuals, but that whole families are incorporated into the household of faith" (148), though Chan offers no biblical or theological justification for this conclusion. Perhaps, just as Western church practice may be influenced by Western culture's postmodernism (one that, ironically, cultivates a focus upon individuals and their felt needs) Chan's own cultural background (with the importance of the family in Asian culture) may be influencing his theological conclusions (cf. 145–148). Furthermore, more needs to be said regarding ancestor veneration (cf. 149–152), as missiologists have raised serious concerns regarding its incorporation into Christian practice that are not addressed here.

One of the aims of global theological texts like *Asian Christian Theology* is to offer a theological perspective from underrepresented people groups to benefit the universal church.

Even with its flaws, *Asian Christian Theology* has accomplished this universal objective. Its considerations of suffering and pluralism make the text worth reading, even if one is not Asian or serving in an Asian context. *Asian Christian Theology* will greatly benefit the global church for years to come as she marches onward into an uncertain future.

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The Spirit of Holiness: Reflections on Biblical Spirituality. Ed. Terry Delaney and Roger D. Duke. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2020. 232 pp. Softcover $28.99; Digital (Logos Edition) $19.99.

Delaney and Duke have gathered and edited a collection of eleven essays in honor of Donald S. Whitney, who has quite a wealth of ministry experience both as a pastor (15 years), and as Dean and Associate Dean at two different Southern Baptist Seminaries (10 years and 15 years, respectively). Whitney has authored multiple books on spiritual disciplines and has carried on an itinerant speaking and preaching ministry for many years. He is also the founder and president of The Center for Biblical Spirituality.

The eleven essays in *The Spirit of Holiness: Reflections on Biblical Spirituality* are carefully considered and arranged in a logical order. The word "reflections" in the subtitle plays on two nuances of the term. The first nuance signals a look back at past saints in church history with respect to their contribution to the doctrine of spirituality. Here the aim is to articulate how these great saints not only understood spirituality, but also how they practiced it and how today's readers can imitate it. The second nuance of "reflections" is a look inward as to how believers today can interact with three particular doctrines (providence, sanctification, and perseverance) so as to bolster their spiritual growth in "the local church as the locus of spirituality" (xii).

The opening essay is by Joe Harrod, who takes the reader through a survey of Puritan devotional writings on the Trinity to see how

accessible the Puritans made the doctrine at the lay level. He concludes (among other things) that Puritan devotional material did not shy away from weighty doctrinal truths for the common readers to "chew on."

The next two essays, reflect on the piety of Thomas Manton and Hercules Collins (by Stephen Yuille and Steve Weaver, respectively). Yuille explores the importance of meditation, which seems to be a lost art today. This is regrettable since it appears from Manton's piety that meditation is the one spiritual discipline that can present to one's mind the inestimable beauty of Christ, while at the same time prevent all kinds of vain thoughts. The essay by Weaver, on the other hand, explores the rich body of literature produced by persecuted Christians over nearly three decades by the established church. Such affliction lent itself to deep meditation on God's sovereignty, providence, and the sufficiency of Christ. Weaver gives particular focus to the prolific pen of Hercules Collins during his time of incarceration. Refusing to submit to the "Act of Uniformity of 1662," he was indicted and then put in jail in 1684. From then until his death in 1702, Collins churned out a dozen works out of "the furnace of affliction" which Weaver describes as "deep and vibrant spirituality that was like pure gold" (46).

Tom Nettles and Michael Haykin provide the next two essays, respectively, on Jonathan Edwards and Andrew Fuller. The title of Nettles's essay is "The Sixth Sense of Jonathan Edwards." Here, he aims to convey to the reader the adeptness of Edwards at casting spiritual truths in such a way that it moves one's affections. He shows how Edwards sees ten layers of *sensibility*, through which God opens the eyes of his people so that they come to have "an experimental knowledge of the nature of holiness" (69). In a similar vein, Haykin's article shows how Andrew Fuller used the medium of letter-writing in his day to refute an opponent who scoffed at the notion of the use of means in reaching the lost. He shows how Fuller affirms a compatibilism between God's sovereignty in salvation and man's access of the means of grace whereby "truth makes progress" in one's heart (72).

The last essay in the first section of the book is an article by Brian Albert on Charles Spurgeon and his well-known bouts of depression. Very helpfully, he shines the spotlight on the role of Scripture during

these times of darkness. Accessing his *Treasury of David* (4:1475), he cites these words: "That which in the day has kept us from presuming has in the night kept us from perishing." He observes that Spurgeon spent two decades on his *Treasury of David*, which was "the largest commentary on the Psalms ever assembled" (106). He notes that Spurgeon was never commissioned to that task but took it on primarily because he "wrote it as a man convicted and comforted by the word" (106).

The second part of this book begins with a transitional essay by Albert Mohler entitled "Rescued by Theology." He begins the essay with a very moving testimony of how he lived at a time and in a spiritual milieu where he thought spirituality was all about the "higher life." But he could never attain. He writes, "I began to hate myself for my inability to feel what I was supposed to feel, pray as I was supposed to pray, and direct my heart only to things from above" (110). He testifies that he found himself at a theological crisis. What brought him out of this crisis (gradually) were what he calls three "movements": J. I. Packer and *Knowing God*; John Piper and *Desiring God*; and Donald Whitney and *Obeying God*. In my opinion—even though it is a tough call—this may just be the best essay of the collection.

The final four essays are the following: "The Spiritual Advantages of Faith in Divine Providence (by Joel R. Beeke); "Freedom of Inclination and Its Implications for the Christian's Growth in Sanctification" (by Bruce A. Ware); "Pressing On" (by Steven J. Lawson); and "The Integrity of the Local Church" (Jim Elliff). Beeke centers his article around the Heidleberg Catechism's Question 28 which affirms that God will provide for believers and how that helps believers face an uncertain future with freedom and boldness. Ware's article deals with the thorny question of the freedom of the will, interacting significantly with Jonathan Edwards's understanding that man's volition always chooses according to "the 'good' that it most wants" (150). He then offers practical suggestions as to how Christians can promote the right kind of inclinations and desires in keeping with God's character and will. Then, Lawson's article underscores the importance of perseverance, using Philippians 3 as a basis from which to draw his thoughts. Finally, Jim Elliff closes out the collection of essays by underscoring the importance of the

local church as the "society" God has provided to promote spirituality among its members.

For a thin little book, it offers much for the reader. There is good historical information here on the Puritans and church history. There are solid doctrinal truths that are teased out. And there are practical suggestions that can help the reader in his own "biblical spirituality."

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Preaching Hope in Darkness: Help for Pastors in Addressing Suicide from the Pulpit. By Scott M. Gibson and Karen Mason. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2020. 259 pp. Softcover $23.99.

Suicide disrupts families, communities, and churches. Pastors can face the challenges of suicide and work to prevent suicide through their preaching and pastoral care. Preachers announce hope in the face of tragedy. The gospel provides the resources of true hope. Scott Gibson, professor of preaching at Baylor University and Truett Seminary, and Karen Mason, professor of counseling and psychology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, invite readers into a conversation "between a preacher and a suicide preventionist" (1). Chapter one offers ten facts to help preachers understand suicide. The facts show the importance of dealing with suicide from the pulpit and provide clergy with skills to offer hope to congregants. The skills include developing a theology of suffering and a willingness to enlist the help of mental health professionals. Chapter two challenges unbiblical cultural assumptions: suicide can be "justified when life is painful" (26), philosophy supports suicide, and human dignity is tied to a person's productivity. The authors offer seven ideas for prevention of suicide in chapter three: a connection to others, the dignity of each individual, a preaching emphasis on hope, moral reasons to live, developing self-control, understanding grief and suffering, and a willingness to reach out for help. The theme of chapter four is the priority of preaching in a pastor's ministry. Chapter

five offers a guide for pastoral care after a suicide crisis with reminders to listen well in ministry to families and to refer to suicide preventionists when help is needed. Chapter six considers the funeral and ongoing care. The funeral sermon should aim at providing care for the family of the deceased with other attendees invited to listen. Chapter seven provides resources for teaching youth and young adults about suicide prevention. Case studies in each chapter offer practical application throughout the book. The appendixes offer sample sermons, liturgies, letters, and Bible study lessons.

Gibson and Mason provide a straightforward and concise guidebook for pastors in responding to suicide. The book offers clear and practical guidance. They instruct pastors to "avoid detailed descriptions of the suicide, … romanticizing or idealizing the person who died, …[or] oversimplifying the cause of suicide" (18). They suggest someone from church could "send a 'caring letter' that says something like the following: 'I'm praying for you at this difficult time. I look forward to seeing you on Thursday'" (42). Preachers should avoid euphemisms about suicide and speak directly, "'He died by suicide' or 'She killed herself," and can refer to family and friends as "'survivors of suicide'…or 'the suicide bereaved'" (65). The book is rooted in biblical wisdom and filled with Scripture references. Biblical themes and stories strengthen the book's application. The greatest strength of the book is the direct message of hope. Gibson and Mason remind the overwhelmed pastor and offer the key pastoral strategy in facing tragedy, "The pervasive message of the Bible is that there is always hope" (46). Too many pastoral guides offer a new and improved ministry paradigm, but pastors do not need a restructured model of ministry to handle the challenges of suicide. Instead, in the face of suffering, pastors extend the gospel. Pastors offer the hope of the resurrection to their hurting congregations and communities. Compassionate pastors create room for lament. They offer a theology of suffering to strengthen and sustain listeners. An important aspect of the pastor's ministry is pastoral involvement at times of crisis. The pastor's ministry of presence and willingness to listen provides comfort. Gibson and Mason provide the reminder that preachers are not alone but have mental health professionals to whom they can refer the vulnerable. The pastor need not shoulder the burden alone nor be the fount of all wisdom. Presence with the hurting provides care.

Even admitting "I don't know" when confronted with the question, "why would God allow this to happen?" can be a powerful reminder of trust in God's faithfulness (85). Gibson and Mason share an encouraging theological framework to strengthen their practical instructions.

The book's weaknesses do not negate its usefulness. When Gibson and Mason offer critique of cultural voices that advocate or allow for suicide, they offer examples from ancient Babylon to current Netflix dramas, but space limitations allow only a sketch of modern culture's failures. Their references to the "'death with dignity' movements" pass quickly (29). The authors lament "that few churchgoers are hearing sermons about suicide prevention," but this narrow focus on specific mentions of suicide seems to overlook the broader framework the book develops about a theology of suffering to respond to a variety of tragedies (37). Congregants are emboldened in the midst of tragedy not merely by a sermon that names suicide, but by every sermon that offers gospel hope. Yes, preachers would serve their congregations well to speak directly about suicide prevention, but every sermon that points to the resurrection fortifies listeners. The concise book serves the pastor in the midst of crisis and allows a helpful refresher even between a family visit and the funeral, but only 125 pages are devoted to the main text with the remainder filled by appendices and notes. The recommended resources, listed in both the body of the book and an appendix, can help supplement the book's brevity (108, 165). The four funeral sermons all offer gospel hope, but they are uneven in following the authors' advice. The sermons do not all include the encouragement for the hurting to reach out for help nor are they all text based. One of the example sermons quotes more Johnny Cash than Scripture (172).

Preaching Hope in Darkness is a refreshing and gentle encouragement to pastors as they serve survivors of suicide and work to prevent suicide. Gibson and Mason offer practical advice rooted in biblical wisdom. Although pastors need to be aware of the specific challenges brought to families, congregations, and communities by suicide, pastors already have the primary tools to shepherd those in need. Preachers have the rich hope of the resurrection, examples of biblical lament, and an understanding of sin and suffering to fortify

their congregations in the power of the gospel. Gibson and Mason serve the church well in providing a pastorally sensitive resource with the insights of suicide prevention. New and experienced preachers alike will be served by the text. When the tragic phone call comes, the pastor will be equipped to respond in a ministry of prayer and presence. Then, in preparation for the funeral and ongoing care, the pastor can return to the guidance of Gibson and Mason. Death does not have the victory. Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

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Leading Small Groups That Thrive. Ryan T. Hartwig, Courtney W. Davis, and Jason A. Sniff. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020. 247 pp. Softcover $22.99.

Various ministries and churches are looking for effective ways to communicate the gospel and disciple believers in Christ. There is a plethora of options to choose from, but one that has received significant attention and has benefited from careful analysis is the use of small groups. Although the Scriptures affirm the value of groups to accomplish God's purposes in the lives of his people, in recent decades the value of small groups to connect people together and achieve meaningful change has seen a significant resurgence. In addition to the public pulpit ministry of a local church, small groups must be considered as a powerful, dynamic means of communicating God's truth and helping people with life-changing application of his truth.

It is obvious that there are numerous resources available to assist a ministry in small group outreach, but *Leading Small Groups That Thrive* is a great tool that must be considered. This book helps to refine the process of moving your group ministry forward from where it is a mere conceptual idea to placing it on a trajectory for a successful outcome. A particularly refreshing aspect of this book is that it is more than a collection of ideas about small group work. It brings to the reader's attention the practical steps that should be considered for every phase of preparation and implementation. The

authors consistently point the reader to the research that they have gathered in support of these practical steps. For example, the second chapter of the book is devoted to identifying the makeup of a catalytic group leader. Perhaps many of us picture in our mind a composite of essential qualifications for a group leader, but these assumptions may not be accurate, and this chapter challenges some of these common assumptions and expectations. As a ministry endeavors to find qualified and successful leaders for their small group ministry, this chapter helps to provide an evaluative process that assists in identifying leaders who will assume these positions. Beyond that, the purpose that is emphasized in this book is the successful replication of group leaders so that the ministry's propagation of small groups is accomplished.

Another portion of the book that should be highlighted in this review is the ninth chapter that discusses burnout. People-helping will always be an emotionally and spiritually taxing endeavor, and nobody who leads a small group should be ignorant of the toll it can take over time. This chapter helps a leader to identify the concerns that need to be considered when a threshold is being crossed and how to put together a preventative plan to avert the disastrous consequences of burnout. Also included in this chapter on the leader's care of self in order to serve well is an emphasis on the intentional and meaningful assimilation of God's word, participation in prayer, and the worship experiences of the leader. Although a leader can conclude that these valuable admonitions are rudimentary, they are not. They must be revered as essential; ignoring these admonitions will likely put a leader's spiritual vitality and effectiveness in peril.

Finally, in this review, it should be mentioned that this book concludes with some very helpful appendices. They are worthwhile sources of information that will clarify insights from each chapter and encourage further exploration. *Leading Small Groups That Thrive* is an informative and helpful addition to enhance the mission of the local church.

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Another Gospel? A Lifelong Christian Seeks Truth in Response to Progressive Christianity. By Alisa Childers. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum, 2020. 288 pp. Softcover $17.00.

Paul's warning to beware against those who distort the gospel is the same warning that Alisa Childers addresses to the contemporary church in *Another Gospel: A Lifelong Christian Seeks Truth in Response to Progressive Christianity.* Childers is a writer, apologist, and blogger and therefore designs her text to walk the line between a personal narrative of encountering progressive Christian thought and a formal refutation of progressive arguments. *Another Gospel* surveys the rise and beliefs of the progressive movement, how historic Christianity counters the movement, the role of scriptural authority, and a refutation of the progressive theologies of hell and the atonement. The audience is twofold, including Christians who struggle with how to counter progressive Christianity's claims and those familiar with the recent inroads of the movement in Christian culture (12). Childers's aim is to reveal that "Christianity is not based on a mystical revelation or self-inspired philosophy" (10) but is instead based in scriptural truth that is preeminent over feelings-based pseudo-Christianity.

For a book that is conversational as well as apologetic, Childers is complete in her exposition. Referencing church history and contemporary progressive documents, she outlines the claims of

progressive Christianity and how Christian faith refutes its attacks. For example, she counters the underlying premise of the deconstruction movement that affirms "another Jesus–and another gospel" (76) by discussing objective truth as an issue of language. Naturally, she concludes that when an interpretation of Scripture drifts from a literal, grammatical, and cultural framework, it becomes simply a subjective interpretation rooted in critical theory. Because progressive Christianity defines familiar theological terms in ways that affirm personal attitudes, Childers affirms, "We cannot redefine what God calls sin and still presume to identify that ethic as Christian" (53). The most helpful defense is her exposition of scriptural authority in Chapters 7–9, where she reviews the principles of textual criticism, the basic defenses for the veracity of the word, and refutes the progressive claim that Scripture is a matter of cultural interpretation. Scripture is the final authority of the holy God in that "it has the authority to correct our thinking and behavior–and not the other way around" (169). Her emphasis on the authority of Scripture is not unique. Yet, she significantly demonstrates that interpretation is the crux not only of progressive Christianity as a whole but also of the insidious parts of progressive Christianity. It is the hidden parts of progressivism that well-meaning believers accept because they have not seen fit to recognize their thinking as subservient to the literal commands of God. Here, Childers is essentially clear: to accept the critical theory of interpreting Scripture as less than absolutely authoritative is to "choose to follow the whims of a godless culture" (176).

Childers's text is successful in equipping readers to identify the different appearances of progressive Christianity so that they may understand and refute it in all its forms. At its most subtle, progressive Christianity appears in the church as smaller reinterpretations of Scriptural truth to affirm personal desires; at its most extreme, all the tenets of orthodox faith are destroyed. Though the claims of each version may differ, Childers understands that both types are dangerous. For example, she counters the progressive interpretation of the atonement that interprets God's wrath as "based on the type of wrath that humans experience rather than the true wrath of God" (213). This distinction necessarily refutes the heresy of Christ appeasing God's unjust wrath. Yet, Childers also correlates this idea

her earlier principle that interpreting the terms of Christianity is of utmost importance. To fail to understand terminology is to be unable to defend the faith. Therefore, the text's primary strength is in showing the nuanced ways in which progressive claims appear. Finally, this book meets the challenging task of defining the unities of the seemingly disparate progressive movement. The author's personal experiences as part of a progressive Christianity discussion group enable her to provide straightforward definitions of progressive tenets. Her experiences also demonstrate that progressive Christianity sounds harmless to those searching for hope but is ultimately a hopeless faith.

Yet, her experiences also weaken the text. Each chapter includes overly detailed illustrations that would have benefited by more succinct ties to the main defenses of each chapter. More analytical and less summative material would add to the richness of her conclusions about how historic faith rebuts the false teaching of progressive 'faith.' For example, the idea that a literal hell demonstrates the cultural hatred of "dogmatic claims about reality" has significant ramifications, but these were left unexplored (200). Further, the central idea implicitly raised throughout the text was also unaddressed: why are Christians not informed enough to counter the suspected problems in progressive Christianity? The text would have profited from an explicit discussion about how the church and parachurch may better equip believers to refute the claims of false teaching and support the validity of orthodox Christianity.

Childers's text would benefit both the new believer who may be unknowingly encountering progressive thought and the believer more familiar with the contemporary dangers of deconstructing the Christian faith. With its replete use of primary excerpts and contrasts between progressive and Christian beliefs, this book is an effective primer for why the historic Christian faith rests not only on the claims of Scripture but on the veracity of Scripture.

For the believer who is versed in hermeneutics and postmodern attacks on faith, another text is needed to provide a more detailed refutation of progressive Christianity. For all readers, *Another Gospel* is a necessary reminder to defend Scripture's legitimacy and reject the subtle facets of progressive subjective interpretation.

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Embracing Evolution: How Understanding Science Can Strengthen Your Christian Life. By Matthew Nelson Hill. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2020. 152 pp. Softcover $20.00.

This work by Matthew Hill on integrating evolution with the Christian worldview provides an interesting attempt to merge two perspectives that actually contradict one another if biblical theology is the basis for Christian truth. Hill is an ordained elder in the Free Methodist Church and serves as associate Professor of Philosophy in the Department of Theology at Spring Arbor University. This book is not Hill's first foray into the field of evolutionary thinking and its impact on Christian living. Earlier he penned the book *Evolution and Holiness*, a work he mentions at times in *Embracing Evolution*. To understand the latter in greater context, it would be wise for the reader to review the former first. The fundamental assertion in the current work is that a Christian believer must seek to understand the truth of his evolutionary roots in order to develop his or her ongoing spiritual sanctification, a tenuous thesis on several counts as the evaluation below will show.

Embracing Evolution begins with an introductory chapter entitled "Opening a Dialogue." The audience that Hill is targeting for dialogue appears to consist of those professing believers who may struggle with their faith in light of accepted scientific evidence and the presumed reasonable proof for evolution. His work is an attempt to help such readers to navigate the Bible and science debates, accepting both evolution and faith in Christ. The main sections of the book are organized in three parts dedicated to 1) understanding the biblical lens needed to read Scripture faithfully, 2) understanding the

scientific lens by which we should appreciate evolutionary thinking relative to the reality of the world of nature, and 3) providing an integrated approach to evolution and the Christian faith.

While a young-earth creationist like this reviewer will struggle with the vast majority of the book, good points about the work can be acknowledged. First, the writing style is usually easy to follow especially given the fact that the topic is not an easy one for the average layperson in the church. Hill gives many illustrations, some of them personal, which clarify his argument. However, readers should be cautioned that illustrations do not give rational arguments that support, just information to bring clarity. Second, near the end of the book, he provides a two-page study guide with discussion questions for each chapter. These can be used for individual study or in a small group setting working through the teaching of Hill. Third, to his credit, Hill acknowledges the difficulty of harmonizing evolution with one of the most significant teachings of the Bible, namely, the issue of the origin of death. In evolution, death is a regular feature in the ongoing process of nature for millions of years. In the Bible, death is part of the curse brought into the universe because of Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden. Hill correctly understands that this difference provides a great hurdle for him to overcome.

Despite these positive elements of *Embracing Evolution*, the work deserves strong criticism on several fronts. First, Hill abandons the introductory focus on opening dialogue later in the book. In a somewhat pejorative section, Hill clearly shows he has no interest in dialogue with young-earth creationists like Ken Ham or ultra-Darwinists like Richard Dawkins (74–75). He portrays his position as a reasonable mediating position between these two extremes. Treatment of young earth creationists, Ken Ham in particular, is somewhat jaded. Hill appears to take an undeserved potshot (as do many evolutionists) at the lack of scientific credentials of Ham and his staff. Further, he shows no recognition and makes no mention of the scientist-led modern creationist movement spearheaded by the Institute for Creation Research and other scientific groups. This dismissive attitude toward young-earth creationists, who deal with scientific evidence and do far more than spout Bible verses from Genesis, produces an unwelcome "caricature tone" to the book.

A second problem is the potential that Hill's approach yields for downplaying the authority of Scripture. Following the Methodist tradition, he affirms the Wesleyan Quadrilateral—Scripture, tradition, reason, and personal experience with God—where the Bible is usually viewed as the primary source of authority. In this way, Hill does not intend to downplay Scripture. In several places, however, he casts doubt upon any straightforward understanding of the text in order to allow for evolutionary thought. One particular example goes to the heart of Hill's focus on the necessity of understanding our evolutionary roots in order to arrive at the needed sanctification in the Christian's life (102–104). This is a clear denial of the sufficiency of Scripture. This is particularly egregious in light of direct teaching of passages like 2 Peter 1:3: "His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence" (NASB). In the first century, the believers who first read that text did not have access to information from the teaching of modern evolutionary thought. If they had everything they needed to grow in the Lord in the first century, then today's Christians also have no need to add evolution to their worldview in order to change their behavior.

A third issue with the book is the lack of a definitive presentation of the concept of science. With seeming ease, Hill appeals to events of the distant past going back millions of years as if they have been verified empirically. This is a common but faulty presentation of origins by evolutionists. Origin science is of a different order than modern verification by means of experimentation. It is impossible to go back in time to the Big Bang and put it in a test tube to verify its actual occurrence. Hill seems to be unaware of this difference in the way he portrays his material. It will do no good to appeal to the present as the key to the past and investigate the supposed crumbs left by nature for us. The interpretation of such a trail is highly debated by scientists of all kinds. Hill also treats science much like a modernist and does not acknowledge the rise of postmodernism's critique of the arrogance and overly certain nature of modern scientific assertions. While postmodernism in general has many problems, so does modernism.

A fourth problem in the book is the way that Hill handles microevolution versus macroevolution and overall speciation issues.

Most young-earth creationists will acknowledge that at the level of microevolution (horizontal evolution) speciation occurs. That is, the development of new species happens in nature. What is rejected is vertical evolution that teaches that lower life forms evolve into higher life forms. But Hill goes beyond the wrongful assumption that evidence for microevolution proves macroevolution. In fact, there is no real distinction between the two according to Hill (52–57). He goes on to assume that change in populations within nature equals evolution. Surprisingly, one of his examples is the peppered moth, an example that has long been refuted but is still used in evolutionary arguments. The peppered moth existed before the Industrial Revolution but became dominant in England afterwards as the white moths were more easily picked off the darkened trees by the birds. In this example, there is no change whatsoever in the species. Both moths of different colors existed before and after the change in the overall population due to environmental events. The example simply has nothing to do with either microevolution or macroevolution.

A fifth problem with *Embracing Evolution* is the aforementioned conundrum of how death originated. In evolutionary doctrine, death has been part of the universe from the beginning. We walk around with dead fossils under our feet that, by evolutionary reckoning, died millions of years ago before there was an Adam and Eve to sin and bring the curse of death on the world. Hill acknowledges that his handling of this issue is not entirely satisfying (41). He even suggests that the problem may not be solvable. Nonetheless, his attempt to say something on the issue is to note that "in the Christian faith, the idea that death is necessary for life is nothing new" (41). Thus, death could be a good thing that God has placed in nature as part of the normal processing of the evolutionary timeline. One can only hold that this is true if the straightforward reading of Genesis 3 and other biblical texts is rejected outright. However, if one gives up evolution, the difficulty disappears. The origin of death will always be one of the problems that evolution will never be able to handle.

In the end, Hill assumes that the scientific evidence for evolution is assured. He also is embarrassed, as his quotation of Augustine shows (26–27), by Christians who read the Scripture in such a way that they do not consider evolutionary teaching. Thus, pastors must be cautious in using *Embracing Evolution* for study in the local

church. It has a place in the clash between those who reject evolution and those who affirm it. Those who want to involve themselves in the details of the dispute (perhaps seminary level) will benefit by a careful reading and analysis of Hill's claims. However, to integrate evolutionary teaching with the Bible, as Hill's work does, emasculates the biblical text at the exegetical level due to a presupposed belief in evolution. A better source for understanding the issues of science in the conflict would be agnostic Michael Denton's books *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* and *Evolution: Still A Theory in Crisis*.

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