Book Reviews

A Sword between the Sexes? C. S. Lewis and the Gender Debates. By Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2010, 264 pp., $22.00 paper.

The September 8, 1947, issue of *TIME* magazine ran a cover story on C. S. Lewis—one he judged to be "ghastly," mainly because it said he disliked women. He retorted that he never disliked any group of people *per se*, commenting, "I wouldn't hang a dog on a journalist's evidence myself."

Journalists aside, feminist Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen is prepared to hang the early Lewis as a misogynist on the evidence of his writings—particularly *That Hideous Strength*, where the Christ figure urges a woman to choose motherhood over an academic career, and *Mere Christianity*, where the husband is declared the better party to execute the family's "foreign policy":

> [H]e always ought to be, and usually is, much more just to outsiders. A woman is primarily fighting for her own children against the rest of the world…. She is the special trustee of their interests. The function of the husband is to see that this natural preference is not given its head. He has the last word in order to protect other people from the intense family patriotism of the wife (29).

These and other passages drive Van Leeuwen to join Dorothy Sayers in the judgment that Lewis has written "'shocking nonsense' about women" (127). His sin, by Van Leeuwen's account, is that he was an essentialist and a hierarchicalist; he said that men and women had significantly different natures and that the difference better suited the men to lead.

But Van Leeuwen is pleased to contend that Lewis "repudiated" this stance in later years, and that, throughout his professional life, in his dealing with female students, colleagues, and visitors to his home, he was "a better man than his theories." Even when he opposed the ordination of Anglican women on grounds of dissonance with God's masculinity ("Priestesses in the Church?"), he granted that women were "no less capable than men of piety, zeal, learning, and whatever seem[ed] necessary for the pastoral office," for a woman was not "necessarily or even probably less holy or less charitable or stupider than a man" (48).

But the smoking gun that showed he'd done in his old "misogynist" self appeared in *A Grief Observed*, after the loss of his spouse to cancer:

> A good wife contains so many persons in herself…. What was [Joy] not to me? She was my daughter and my mother, my pupil and my teacher, my subject and my sovereign, and always,

> holding all these in solution, my trusty comrade, friend, shipmate, fellow soldier. My mistress, but at the same time all that any man friend (and I have had good ones) has ever been to me. Solomon calls his bride Sister. Could a woman be a complete wife unless, for a moment, in one particular mood, a man felt almost inclined to call her Brother? (10)

This poetic reflection accords nicely with an observation he offered in *The Discarded Image*: "There is, hidden or flaunted, a sword between the sexes [cf. the reviewed book's title] till an entire marriage reconciles them" (56). Thus we see Lewis freed from his "previous tendencies toward misogyny as a crude cover for the scars of an early-wounded, and in some ways insecure, man" (56), or so concludes Van Leeuwen, whose "formal training is in academic psychology" (13).

How did such a remarkable man as C. S. Lewis become so broken and confused in the first place? Van Leeuwen advances a variety of factors—the loss of his mother when he was nine, which, according to friend Ruth Pitter, "must have seemed like a black betrayal" (103); his youth in Edwardian times, an age which groomed girls for adornment and domesticity, rather than economic self-sufficiency" (91); the contentiousness of Janie Moore, for whom he became a "lifelong fictive son" after the death of her real son in WWI (99, 102).

It was not surprising then that he got gender concepts wrong, especially since he was a bachelor into his 50s, working within the predominately male world of elite academic leisure. (You can hear the echo of those who claim the Pope has no business "pontificating" on contraception or the unmarried Bill Gothard on child-raising.) But his heart and language became more tender through the years as his understanding of and appreciation for women grew.

Van Leeuwen would have been wise to leave it at something like that, happy to get on base with a walk or a single. But she insists on swinging for the fences—and fails.

For one thing, she's determined to show that the findings of empirical psychology can trump traditional readings of the Bible, and she uses Lewis as a foil. The poor man was leery of the social sciences, regarding much of what they offered as "either intellectually vacuous or potentially dehumanizing" (164). Though he shows traces of Freud and Jung in his thinking (30), his bondage to Cartesian dualism kept him from appreciating the sort of "bell curve" and "standard deviation from the mean" work that Van Leeuwen favors. He just couldn't let go of the conviction that soul and body were radically different entities and that it was absurd to attach equally the label "science" both to the study of thoughts and synapses.

To help matters, Van Leeuwen devotes a chapter ("Men Are from Earth, Women Are from Earth") to show how her science works effectively to embarrass the gender essentialists. She cites studies, traces refinements of those studies, and offers critiques of various studies to block whatever strategies the traditionalists might use to differentiate the sexes psychologically—whether through talk of averages, optimality, or thresholds. But the complexities she rehearses are dismaying, and the contradictory tides of thought she tracks can strengthen the impression that the social sciences are a very messy affair, in a different league from those disciplines served by Bernoulli and Mendel, Watson and Crick.

Granted, the table she supplies ("Some Effect Sizes … from Various Meta-Analyses of Studies of Sex Difference") is mathematically crisp, with men at a 2.18 standard deviation over women on "throwing velocity" and at .87 on "desires many sex partners." I suppose those are simple enough to measure: Just watch men and women hurl baseballs and ask them about the promiscuity of their hearts (though even here, they might be prone to tweak their answers to sound good). But when the study comes to "moral reasoning," where women score somewhat higher on "'care' orientation" and men on "'justice' orientation," I have to ask, what

counts as "care" and "justice"? (Even the chart puts these words in scare quotes.) Is "tough love" care? Does justice require that you turn your own child in to the police if you catch him shoplifting? Ethicists strive mightily over these notions, and I'm not confident that Van Leeuwen and her psychology colleagues are equipped to analyze successfully shades of moral reasoning down to the ".28s" and the ".19s" (181).

Then there is the problem of assigning "negligibility" to difference-scores lower than .20. When Van Leeuwen seeks in the next chapter to demonstrate that Lewis was right regarding the evils of divorce, she draws on an even smaller, more negligible, difference between the well being of children from broken and unbroken homes (at least according to one study). But here, we must take the "negligible" difference seriously, for we need to distinguish "statistical significance" from "practical significance" (209-10). Accordingly, she says that we should ignore "negligible" gender differences because they can be used for discrimination but should respond to the "negligible" child-impact differences because they can be used, like medical data (say, concerning the effects of second-hand smoke in the home), to protect kids from harm.

But what if the shoe were on the other foot? What if we found that grade-school teachers favored girls over boys because of "negligible" differences in their behavior patterns, the boys being slightly more inclined to squirm in the classroom or engage in "rough and tumble" on the playground? Would our anti-discrimination spirit drive us to count respect for that difference "practically significant"? And would our sense of justice reel at the sight of a judge who handled divorcees roughly despite psychologists's testimony that the impact on their kids was "statistically negligible"? In other words, judgments of "negligibility" and "significance" can be more ideological than clinical, and Van Leeuwen's priorities are clear.

Of course, the standard retort is *tu quoque*— "You, too." After all, the biblical complementarian has her own priorities, which can color her assessment of the data. But this is not a matter of moral equivalence. For what one makes of the Bible is decisive, and, on this matter, Van Leeuwen falls behind.

She does speak of "biblical wisdom" and notes that, at Pentecost, Peter quotes Joel on women prophesying. But this book sits very lightly on the Bible when at all. And she seems squeamish over biblical inerrancy, which she stereotypes and marginalizes—in mocking the "biblical positivist" who said that "novels are all lies" (26); in assuring us that "the Bible is not primarily a 'flat book' of doctrines and rules but a cumulative, God-directed narrative whose successive acts … comprise a continuing, cosmic drama in which all persons are players" (27); in disparaging a "docetic view of the Bible … that ignores the human side of its composition and treats its inspiration almost as a matter of divine dictation by God" (257).

When Van Leeuwen does get to textual specifics, the results can be odd, as when she declares, "Lewis made no appeal to the Gospels to defend his theory of gender archetypes and gender hierarchy, for the simple reason that there is nothing clearly there to draw on." One would think she would at least take the trouble to comment on Jesus' stipulation that God be called "Father" in the Lord's Prayer, as well as on Jesus' repeated use of the title, "Father" in his own prayer and teaching. But she is impatient with anything that smacks of a "patriarchal reading" (168), so attention to the Gospels's ubiquitous "Father" talk may be irrelevant in her system.

In that connection, I wish she had also spent time on clearing up the gender "confusions" generated by such passages as 1 Corinthians 11:14-15 (on the matter of unisex hair styles), 1 Peter 3:7 (concerning the "weaker vessel"), and Proverbs 31 (which describes the ideal wife, not the ideal generic spouse). Of course, feminists have crafted their rejoinders, but it would have been natural and useful to see Van Leeuwen's treatment of them in a book one endorser calls "magisterial."

I think it might sharpen our view of her project to use biblical archaeology as an analogue. Biblical inerrantists appreciate the work of archaeologists, many of whom are themselves inerrantists. We celebrate discoveries that help bring the text to life—inscriptions, implements, ash-laden strata, etc. But when the professor returns from his dig to announce that David was a fiction or that nothing horrendous happened at Ai, the believer simply says, "Keep looking, you missed something." We know the Bible is true, and if a journal article contradicts it, the journal article is wrong. Archaeology is good, but not so good as to put Scripture in doubt.

Similarly, the Christian has no use for psychological, sociological, or anthropological attempts to supplant or to qualify into triviality the biblical teaching on human nature and conduct. When Margaret Mead announced in *Coming of Age in Samoa* that adultery was innocuous and happily accommodated by these gentle islanders, the church didn't have to rethink its ethic, apologizing for its puritanical hang-ups. The people of God just knew that she was confused and/or devious in her work, both of which proved to be the case with Mead.

On the other hand, when such social scientists as Paul Amato, Bruce Keith, Elizabeth Marquardt, and Andrew Cherlin, all of whom she cites, trace the baleful effects of divorce on children, the Christian community can nod and say, "Surely they're on to something." This isn't inconsistency; it's deference to Scripture.

But Van Leeuwen risks the reverse. She thinks she knows what is "statistically significant," and if the traditional reading of a passage contradicts her social science, then she tells the biblical exegete, "Keep looking, you missed something." Alternatively, if she finds interpreters who serve her psychological conclusions (such as that gender differences are ephemeral), she will encourage them right along.

For Van Leeuwen, terms like "manliness" and "womanliness" are fingernails on the blackboard, and certainly, as Lewis once observed, talk of a "man's man" and a "woman's woman" can be off-putting (164). (After reading this section of the book in the Seoul airport, I saw a newsstand issue of *Esquire* bearing the cover question, "What is a man?" along with an article title, "How to be a Man." I was frustrated to discover the inside text was in Korean, though I did recognize a photo of Clint Eastwood.) But to suggest that the psychological and expectational distinction between men and women is nothing more than a cultural construct is to cross a bridge too far.

Nevertheless, she storms on across, urging us to use "gender" more as a verb than as a noun; "[G]endering is something we are responsibly and flexibly called to do more than to be" (70). Furthermore, "God is not 'for' androgyny or 'for' gender complementarity. God is for just and loving relationships between men and women—and because of this, we may be called to 'do gender' differently at different times and in different places" (188).

Van Leeuwen goes on to say this will work itself out variously in different cultures, whether to serve "nomadic herding," "nineteenth century family farming," or life in the "twenty-first-century post-industrial city" (188-89).

At this point, she acknowledges that some would find her approach "too loose and relativistic" or susceptible to the "polymorphously perverse," but she assures us that "experience does not allow us to make too many wrong turnings" (189).

Oh?

Then, she U-turns abruptly to announce, "Empirical social science and biblical wisdom have also begun to converge on other aspects of gender relations" (189)—which prove, in the next chapter, to be divorce and parenting. She made a similar move earlier in the book when she jumped from the awkward topic of Christ-male headship in Ephesians 5 to disputing the Father's eternal headship over Christ, a matter she found more congenial.

Back to Van Leeuwen's flirtation with the "polymorphously perverse." I think she has set herself up to accommodate homosexuality. Elsewhere,

she carefully hedges her language on the topic, as when she writes, "egalitarians hope to defend themselves against accusations of moving toward what is perceived as an unbiblical acceptance of homosexuality" (170). So is this alleged moving simply a matter of perception? Or is there a properly "biblical acceptance of homosexuality"? What is she saying? And it is fair to ask whether she is really prepared to rebuke those who are "gendering" their way into same-sex relationships.

There is really no way to tell where one will end up when rejecting essentialism. Sartre pictured the possibilities when he cast existentialism against ancient notions of a given human nature, using the now-famous paper-cutter illustration. The tool's "essence precedes its existence." That is to say, its design is set before it appears on the office supply store shelf. But, in contrast, man comes into existence before his essence is established. It is his job to shape his nature, and in doing this, he is not answerable to any external guidelines or authorities, neither can he find comfort in them. This makes him responsible, but for what?

This is not a happy philosophical path to take on gender issues. For one thing, it forsakes the clear teaching of Romans 1:26-27, which speaks of *natural*, gender-specific sexuality. For another, it makes Jesus' apocalyptic title "King of Kings" in Revelation 19:16 seem arbitrary, pointlessly offensive, and/or a toss-up. It could have just as easily been "Queen of Queens," since masculinity and femininity are just what we make of them, with nothing essential to it.

It is interesting to read Van Leeuwen's epistemological caveats, and then follow her performance. She cautions, "research in neither the biological nor the social sciences can resolve the nature/nurture controversy regarding gender-related psychological traits and behaviors in humans" (171). So "any conclusions about male and female 'essences'—biological or metaphysical—are purely speculative" (174). Nevertheless, she goes right ahead and rejects essentialism, much as methodological naturalists in the sciences become metaphysical naturalists in their philosophy.

She cautions against the "The Drunk under the Lamp Post" syndrome (he dropped his keys outside the tavern up the block, but he is looking for them under the lamp post "because that's where the light is") (191), and argues that Lewis was something of a drunk in searching for the truth on gender in the light cast by classical, medieval, and Renaissance literature. But it is fair to say Van Leeuwen undertakes her own search in light of the feminist agenda and hermeneutic.

In its favor, the book is packed full of information, often in generous footnotes, including one in which Van Leeuwen expresses disappointment at N. T. Wright's statement that Lewis's assignment of the family's "foreign policy" to the husband is "worth pondering deeply" (182). Along the way, the reader picks up such interesting tidbits as that Hannah Moore of the Clapham sect refused to encourage literacy among her poor Sunday School pupils (87); that Dorothy Sayers had a child out of wedlock (96); that Lewis never learned to drive (127), that he shared some of Chesterton's and Belloc's fondness of "distributivism"—"a kind of 'third way' between capitalism and socialism" (147), and that he was unknowingly indebted to Oxford colleague Helen Gardner for stepping aside when he reconsidered the offer of a chair at Cambridge (128).

The quotes can be arresting, too, as when Lewis observed, "The Greeks [sinned] in owning slaves and [in] their contempt for labor"; when, regarding apologetics, Lewis said, "[W]e expose ourselves to the recoil from our own shots; for if I may trust my personal experience, no doctrine is, for the moment, dimmer to the eye of faith than that which a man has just successfully defended" (122); when Lewis Smedes explained, "It is simple to make an idol. Just slice one piece of reality off from the whole and expect miracles from it" (28); when Dorothy Sayers wrote (not very inspiringly, in my estimation), "I do not know what women *as* women want, but as human beings they want, my good men, exactly what you

want yourselves: interesting occupation, reasonable freedom for their pleasures, and a sufficient emotional outlet" (106).

Van Leeuwen also provides some useful short takes on the philosophical writings of Thomas Kuhn, Karl Popper, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and G. E. M. Anscombe, as well as a look at competing schools of thought in the social sciences (the functionalists vs. the Marxists in sociology; the psychoanalysts vs. the behaviorists vs. the humanists in psychology). Her report on the Anscombe/ Lewis Socratic Club debate is instructive.

The book supplies a useful collection of Lewis's complementarian writings, and Van Leeuwen may unwittingly broaden the Lewis fan base in this connection, encouraging fresh or first-time reading of *The Four Loves*, *That Hideous Strength*, *The Great Divorce*, *Surprised by Joy*, and *Perelandra*, as well as *Mere Christianity*, which she finds particularly galling since it seems to place complementarianism among the Christian basics.

Throughout the book, Van Leeuwen would have done better to shy away from such rhetorical infelicities as false dichotomy (e.g., the consistent complementarian vs. the gentleman); argument from silence (e.g., "Lewis never suggested to her that [continuing to teach after becoming a mother] is an inappropriate choice" (118); and excessive hedging (e.g., "Lewis effectively retracted …" [29]; "there is evidence to suggest" [77]; "with a distinct nod toward" [61]).

After all is said and done, it is still not clear that Lewis "repudiated" his earlier complementarian, essentialist, hierarchical views. (John Steinbeck did not become a vegetarian when he wrote on the nutritional wonders of beans in *Tortilla Flat*; and no, I am not comparing women to beans.)

Of course, the big question is not whether Lewis moderated and even rejected his earlier views on women, but whether, if he did so, he did the right thing. We are all familiar with pastors who became more liberal on one subject or another the older they got, and in some cases the change was disappointing; where they used to stand firm in the truth, they went wobbly. Perhaps a biblical teaching hit too close to home. Perhaps they just tired of conflict. All this is understandable, but it does not impact the truth of things. Neither does Van Leeuwen's biographical and psychological sketch work.

Early on, Van Leeuwen speaks of a colleague who lamented "the 3:16 bait-and-switch." Here, the preacher evangelizes the woman with John 3:16, only to drop Genesis 3:16 on her ("your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you") once she is in the fold, victimizing her by his "crude proof texting" (32-33).

From what I read in *A Sword between the Sexes?*, the feminist offense may well extend to 2 Timothy *3:16* ("All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness"); to 2 Peter *3:16* (which recognizes scriptural authority in Paul's writings); and perhaps to James *3:16* (which warns against envy and selfish ambition).

Hard words? Yes. But Van Leeuwen could use a taste of her own medicine.

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The Human Faces of God: What Scripture Reveals When It Gets God Wrong (and Why Inerrancy Tries to Hide It). By Thom Stark. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011, xx + 248 pp., $29.00 paper.

It is no secret that some of the most fervid theological liberals tend to be former evangelicals. Evangelical-turned-agnostic Bart Ehrman has vindicated that truism with books like *Misquoting Jesus* and *Jesus Interrupted*, both of which seek to discredit biblical inerrancy by popularizing critical studies of Scripture. Thom Stark describes himself as a former fundamentalist, and his book *The Human Faces of God* belongs to the Ehrman-genre, though with at least one significant differ-

ence. Despite the Bible's many deficiencies, Stark wants to retain the Bible's privileged place as Christian Scripture. Even though Stark views the Bible as shot through with error and contradiction, he nevertheless thinks that it is an important book. "This Holy Bible is also my book because I continue to choose it. For everything I loathe about it, there is at least one thing I love about it: it has the power to show me who I am. When we look into the looking glass we see the aspirations, desires, insecurities, and utter obliviousness of humanity" (242). For Stark, the errors and foibles of the Bible are a reflection of the fallen human condition, and that rings true with him.

Stark makes no claim to be breaking new ground in *The Human Faces of God*. He does not aim "to advance knowledge within academic circles"; rather, he intends to reach a "wide audience" through the popularization of well-worn arguments (xvii). From the start, Stark has *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy* (CSBI) from 1978 in his crosshairs: "This book is an argument against that doctrine, particularly as articulated by the Chicago Statement, and it is an argument in favor of a different, more ancient way of reading the books that comprise the Bible" (xvi). Stark hopes his book will speak to Christians who struggle with biblical inerrancy and who have not found answers to their questions about the Bible. Stark wants them to know an "alternative way of being Christian"—a way that vehemently rejects the Bible as inerrant (xviii).

Through ten chapters, Stark makes his case. Chapter one contends that the Bible is "an argument against itself" and is hopelessly self-contradictory (1). Chapter two asserts that "inerrantists do not exist" in reality because of their inconsistent use of an historical-grammatical hermeneutic (which is required by the *Chicago Statement*). Chapter three adduces examples of biblical texts that would undermine "basic tenets of fundamentalist theology" if those texts were interpreted properly. Chapter four argues that the "theological unity" of Scripture founders on the observation that many Old Testament authors were polytheists (85). Chapter five attempts to demonstrate the moral inferiority of the Bible by showing that the authors believed in the "nobility and efficacy of human sacrifice" (99). Chapter six highlights "Yahweh's Genocides" in the Old Testament and concludes that God never commanded such things as the conquest of Canaan. Chapter seven argues that the story of David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 17 is a fictitious "hero-worshiping legend" that appears in Scripture as a kind of "government propaganda" aimed at buttressing the Davidic dynasty (159). Chapter eight takes aim at Jesus himself and says that if the Gospels are right then Jesus was "ignorant" and "wrong" about the timing of the final judgment (160). Chapter nine dismisses three hermeneutical approaches that have the effect of glossing over Scripture's theological and moral deficiencies: allegorical readings, canonical readings, and subversive readings. Finally, chapter ten consists of Stark's constructive proposal for reading the Bible in a way that allows Christians to retain the Bible as their Scripture.

It is in this final chapter that the futility of Stark's quest comes into full view. After nine chapters of attacking the historical, theological, and moral authority of the Bible, he thinks he can offer a way of reading the Bible that will preserve it as Christian Scripture for the church. Since the biblical text taken on its own terms has an "evil," "devilish nature" that reveals God to be a "genocidal dictator" (218, 219), Stark argues that the only way to read the Bible faithfully is to read it as "condemned texts." It will be useful to read Stark's prescribed hermeneutic in his own words: "*[The Bible] must be read as scripture, precisely as condemned texts. Their status as condemned is exactly their scriptural value. That they are condemned is what they reveal to us about God.* The texts themselves depict God as a genocidal dictator, as a craver of blood. But we must condemn them in our engagement with them" (218). Stark anticipates an objection: If the texts deserve censure, then why pay attention to them at all, much

less give them some kind of authoritative, canonical status? He answers:

> To do so is to hide from ourselves a potent reminder of the worst part of ourselves. Scripture is a mirror. It mirrors humanity, because it is as much the product of human beings as it is the product of the divine.... It mirrors our best and worst possible selves. It shows us who we can be, both good and evil, and everything in between. *To cut the condemned texts out of the canon would be to shatter that mirror.* It would be to hide from ourselves our very own capacity to become what we most loathe. It would be to lie to ourselves about what we are capable of. It would be to doom ourselves to repeat history (218-19).

So Stark says that the church must appropriate Scripture's regulative authority in two ways: one, it must face head-on the Bible's moral and theological deficiencies, and two, reject for its own life the negative examples in the Bible. In other words, the church should learn to shun the evil ways of the God of Scripture.

Stark gives several illustrations of how his hermeneutic works out in practice. Since Scripture reveals that both polytheism and monotheism underwrite ideologies of slavery, war, genocide, and racism, the church must reject both polytheism and monotheism. Instead, Christians should embrace a new "conception of the divine nature"—one that recognizes its non-trinitarian "plurality" (221). Since Scripture affirms the nobility of human sacrifice, Christians should recognize their own evil propensity for human sacrifice. Once again in Stark's own words,

> Yet we continue to offer our own children on the altar of homeland security, sending them off to die in ambiguous wars, based on the irrational belief that by being violent we can protect ourselves from violence. We refer to our children's deaths as "sacrifices" which are necessary for the preservation of democracy and free trade. The market is our temple and must be protected at all costs. Thus, like King Mesha, we make "sacrifices" in order to ensure the victory of capitalism over socialism, the victory of consumerism over terrorism (222).

Stark goes on from here to apply his hermeneutic to biblical texts about genocide, Jesus' failed prophecies, etc.

This is a learned book that is well acquainted with critical biblical scholarship. Nevertheless, for a number of reasons, *The Human Faces of God* does not deliver on what it promises. Stark attempts to offer both a convincing case against inerrancy *and* a viable, alternative way of reading the Bible as Christian Scripture. He fails at both aims.

None of the arguments that he offers against inerrancy are new (as he himself acknowledges on page xvii), yet he treats his interpretation of the material as if it were the settled scholarly consensus. He promises to pay inerrantists the "deep respect of extensively engaging their arguments" (xvii) and then neglects to interact with leading scholars who have defended inerrancy over the last thirty to forty years. For example, Stark lodges extensive complaints against New Testament authors' use of the Old Testament (19-20, 29), yet he has not one word of interaction with the work of Greg Beale or other inerrantists who have done extensive work in typology. Stark dismisses out of hand the notion that inerrancy is the established position of the church (17, 32), yet he has not one scintilla of interaction with John Woodbridge's work (nor does he cite the Rogers and McKim proposal). I daresay that there is not a single objection to inerrancy that he raises that has not already been ably answered in the relevant literature. Yet Stark goes right on as if his case is the only one to be made.

I could multiply examples in which Stark trots out old objections that have already been answered, but I will limit myself to just one. In an attempt to show that inerrantists do not really accept the Bible's literal sense, he appeals to 1 Tim-

othy 2:12-14 and the fact that many inerrantists allegedly reject Paul's teaching that women are "inherently more susceptible to deception" (16-17). Stark says that "the most common strategy to explain away this blatant misogyny" is to impose a distinction between the cultural and the universal (41). For Stark, this is prima facie evidence that inerrantists cannot accept what the Bible really teaches and that they do not practice the hermeneutic that the *Chicago Statement* preaches. Yet anyone familiar with the literature knows that this is not the "most common strategy" used by inerrantists in dealing with this text. Stark appears oblivious to the work of Doug Moo, Tom Schreiner, and many others who argue on exegetical grounds that the prohibition on female teachers has to do with the order of creation, not with the relative gullibility of women.

Not only does Stark fail to produce a convincing argument against inerrancy, he also fails to offer a viable alternative. His proposal to read the Bible as a "condemned" text is clever but transparently bogus. It is a little bit like asking an abused wife to admire her abusive husband because of the "mirror" he provides into her own corruption. It is patently absurd, and I doubt that very many actual churchgoers will be compelled to respect the Bible as "scripture" based on the mountain of deficiencies that Stark alleges. If anything, Stark has given readers more reasons to give up on the Bible altogether.

In the end—even though he does not say so in so many words—Stark himself has given up on the Bible. He confesses that he rejects monotheism and the substitutionary atonement of Christ and that he is not in any sense an orthodox Christian (242). We have to conclude that Stark's approach is less a reading of Scripture than it is a raging against it. Stark loathes the God of the Bible and filters out any depiction of God in Scripture that does not fit into the Stark moral universe. Stark stands over Scripture as its judge. Indeed, his hermeneutic requires it. And he wants readers to join him in his cynical scrutiny of the Bible. The shortcomings of *The Human Faces of God*, however, are extensive and serious, and there are more than enough reasons for readers not to follow Stark down the dead-end trail that he is walking.

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Islam: A Short Guide to the Faith. Edited by Roger Allen and Shawkat M. Toorawa. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011, xviii + 177 pp., $20.00 paper.

In *Islam: A Short Guide to the Faith*, Roger Allen, of the University of Pennsylvania, and Shawkat M. Toorawa, of Cornell University, succeed in producing a helpful introduction to Islam. Allen and Toorawa bring together an authoritative collection of fifteen essays written by experts in their fields covering what they "deemed to be the most important aspects of Islam for a contemporary North American reader" (xiii). The essays range from foundational topics like the Qur'an, Muhammad, and Shari'a Law to topics of interest especially for a North American readership like "Women and Islam" and "Islam in America." The essays are short in length, yet are packed with the most salient information on the topic at hand, similar to articles in specialized encyclopedias or dictionaries of Islam.

The essays for the most part present an accurate and balanced portrayal of Muslim belief and practice. However, the reader should note that there are occasional apologetic comments, either in defense of Islam in general or of a progressive form of Islam. For example, Homayra Ziad criticizes the traditional role of women in Muslim societies and blames what she deems as misogynist beliefs and practices on culture, inauthentic *hadith* (110), and even biblical influence (109). Readers should be aware that the form of Islam advocated in a few of the essays stands in contrast to what is generally found in the Muslim world. However, this

perceived intent to defend Islam against critics or against traditional forms of Islam does not detract from the overall balance, accuracy, and trustworthiness of the collection of essays.

In spite of the overall usefulness of the book, the collection of essays has one glaring weakness. In their preface, Allen and Toorawa state that they chose the essays based on what they saw as the most important aspects of Islam for a North American audience. In light of world events in the last decade, the one issue that a "contemporary North American reader" wants to know about is Islamic extremism and terrorism. Is Islam a religion of peace or violence? Are Muslim terrorists being faithful to Islam or are they perverting Islam? It seems that these are the types of questions most North Americans reading an introduction to Islam would like answered. Though Allen and Toorawa recognize in their preface that there are other areas they could have covered (xiii), their omission of such an important topic is a major weakness of the book.

To conclude, Allen and Toorawa's, *Islam: A Short Guide to the Faith* would be a useful text to those researching specific topics addressed in the book. However, because only a limited number of topics are addressed, this introduction needs to be supplemented with other introductions to Islam that provide a broader and more cohesive picture of the faith. Readers could turn to John L. Esposito's, *Islam: The Straight Path* (Oxford) or Daniel Brown's, *A New Introduction to Islam* (Wiley-Blackwell). For an introduction to Islam from an evangelical perspective, readers could turn to Colin Chapman's, *Cross and Crescent* (IVP), which also addresses theological and missiological concerns.

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The Apologetics Study Bible for Students (HCSB). Edited by Sean McDowell. Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2009, xxx + 1,408 pp., $29.99.

Declining church attendance among high school graduates coupled with a rapidly growing secularism in the academy could leave a church leader with a sense of hopelessness. These challenges, however, should be faced with neither pseudo-intellectualism nor second-rate science, but with the gospel itself—for, according to Romans 1:16-17, the gospel alone provides the power of God unto salvation. In the face of, for example, the bravado of the new atheist regime, high school students may be tempted to doubt the salvific and explanatory power of the gospel. But the gospel alone is able to convert the sinner and convince the skeptic.

This is what distinguishes *The Apologetics Study Bible for Students (HCSB)* from a standalone book on apologetic issues. Instead of a separate work responding to Christianity's objectors, Holman Bible Publishers has provided a quality study Bible that integrates apologetics and study notes for the reader's convenience, personal growth, and witness. In combining a readable translation with substantive articles on apologetics, this study Bible allows students to see a more holistic picture of a biblical witness.

The nearly fifty contributing authors respond to the most perennial questions related to the truthfulness of the Bible and the authenticity of the Christian faith. Students access these resources through—in addition to the articles and study notes mentioned above—quotes, personal stories, and bullet-point lists found throughout the pages of the Old and New Testaments.

That said, the advanced student of apologetics may find some of the articles to be a bit facile. Similarly, due to the space allotted for apologetics resources, some readers may desire more in-depth textual commentary. While a key strength of this work is its diverse contributors, readers will recog-

nize related limitations such as a lack of a cohesive theological framework or a consistent approach to apologetics (evidential or presuppositional).

The image of the thinking man carved of stone is used throughout this study Bible's pages, which provides perhaps a helpful analogy. Contemporarily known as the "The Thinker," this icon was originally part of a larger work commissioned for an art museum in France. The artist Auguste Rodin created the piece to resemble Dante's *Divine Comedy*. The Thinker represents Dante at the gates of hell, contemplating the destiny of men and women beneath him.

May pondering the reality of an eternal hell—a horrifying thought—serve as apologetic impetus for those reading *The Apologetics Study Bible for Students (HCSB)*, a Bible I recommend as an invaluable resource for students who are passionate about standing strong in the faith, making an impact in the broader culture, and reaching their fellow classmates.

—Dan DeWitt
Dean
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The Resurrection of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach. By Michael R. Licona. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2010, 718 pp., $40.00 paper.

The affirmation of biblical inerrancy is nothing more, and nothing less, than the affirmation of the Bible's total truthfulness and trustworthiness. The assertion of the Bible's inerrancy—that the Bible is "free from all falsehood or mistake"—is an essential safeguard for the Bible's authority as the very Word of God in written form. The reason for this should be clear: to affirm anything short of inerrancy is to allow that the Bible does contain falsehoods or mistakes.

Lamentably, the issue of biblical inerrancy has been and remains an issue of some controversy within evangelicalism. Addressing this crisis, a group of leading evangelicals met in Chicago in 1978 under the auspices of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy to adopt what became known as *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy*.

The opening words of that statement set the issue clearly:

> *The authority of Scripture is a key issue for the Christian Church in this and every age. Those who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are called to show the reality of their discipleship by humbly and faithfully obeying God's written Word. To stray from Scripture in faith or conduct is disloyalty to our Master. Recognition of the total truth and trustworthiness of Holy Scripture is essential to a full grasp and adequate confession of its authority.*

Those who affirm biblical inerrancy understand this affirmation to be essential, not just to the question of the Bible's perfection as the Word of God, but also to the question of evangelical consistency. Thus, the Evangelical Theological Society requires an affirmation of inerrancy for membership, and it has adopted the *Chicago Statement* as the guiding definition of that requirement.

The question of biblical inerrancy has recently arisen in connection with a book written by Michael R. Licona and published by InterVarsity Press last year. Licona is a well-known evangelical apologist who has served as Research Professor of New Testament at Southern Evangelical Seminary in Charlotte, North Carolina, and, until recently, on the staff of the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, which is based in Atlanta.

Licona's book in question, *The Resurrection of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach*, is both massive and important. Furthermore, it is virtually unprecedented in terms of evangelical scholarship. The 700-page volume is nothing less than a masterful defense of the historicity of the bodily

resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Licona is a gifted scholar who has done what other evangelical scholars have not yet done—he has gone right into the arena of modern historiographical research to do comprehensive battle with those who reject the historical nature of Christ's resurrection from the dead.

And Licona does so with remarkable skill and great erudition. He also writes with a commendable and quite transparent intellectual honesty. This is a very serious scholar making a very serious case for the fact that Jesus was indeed raised from the dead—and that this event is historically documented and accessible to the modern historian.

When Licona affirms the resurrection as a historical fact, he uses the definition of Richard Evans, who has argued that a historical fact is "something that happened and that historians attempt to 'discover' through verification procedures." Licona denies that the resurrection is inaccessible to the modern historian, and he asserts with confidence the fact that historians who deny the historical nature of the resurrection are simply operating out of their own ideological preconception that such things simply do not happen.

In making his case, Licona demonstrates his knowledge of modern historiography, the philosophy of history, and the work of modern historians. He confronts head-on the arguments against the historicity of the resurrection put forth by scholars ranging from Bart Ehrman and Gerd Ludemann to John Dominic Crossan.

In taking on Crossan, Licona documents Crossan's straightforward denial that the resurrection can be a historical event. Crossan operates out of a naturalistic worldview that precludes belief in anything supernatural, such as the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Crossan, a veteran of the infamous "Jesus Seminar" that sought to remove all supernatural elements from the New Testament, asserts that the body of Jesus remained in the tomb, where it decomposed and was eventually consumed by scavengers.

Licona offers a powerful rebuttal to Crossan, demonstrating, first of all, that Crossan operates out of a worldview that simply denies that a resurrection can happen. Licona takes Crossan's arguments and, one by one, he answers them convincingly. Along the way, he documents Crossan's own anti-supernatural ideological commitments and his use of psychohistory to explain the experience of the disciples.

But, even as Licona dissects arguments against the resurrection of Jesus as a historical fact, he then makes a shocking and disastrous argument of his own. Writing about Matthew 27:51-54, Licona suggests that he finds material that is not to be understood as historical fact.

The text reads:

> And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!" (Matthew 27:51-54, *English Standard Version*)

The issue of greatest concern with regard to Licona's own argument is how he deals with Matthew's report that "many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many."

Earlier in his book, Licona had suggested that some of the biblical material might be "poetic language or legend at certain points," specifically mentioning Matthew 27:51-54 as an example.

That statement is deeply troubling, but when he turns his full attention to Matthew 27:51-54, his argument takes a turn for the worse. He refers to "that strange little text in Matthew 27:52-53, where upon Jesus' death the dead saints are raised

and walk into the city of Jerusalem."

Licona then refers to various classical parallels in ancient literature and to the Bible's use of apocalyptic language and, after his historical survey, states: "it seems to me that an understanding of the language in Matthew 27:52-53 as 'special effects' with eschatological Jewish texts and thought in mind is most plausible."

Special effects? Licona then writes: "There is further support for this interpretation. If the tombs opened and the saints being raised upon Jesus' death was not strange enough, Matthew adds that they did not come out of their tombs until *after* Jesus' resurrection. What were they doing between Friday afternoon and early Sunday morning? Were they standing in the now open doorways of their tombs and waiting?"

This is a very troubling argument. First of all, if we ever accept the fact that we are to explain what anyone in the Bible was doing when the Bible does not tell us, we enter into a trap of interpretive catastrophe. We are accountable for what the Bible tells us, not what it does not.

Licona eventually writes, "It seems best to regard this difficult text in Matthew as a poetic device added to communicate that the Son of God had died and that impending judgment awaited Israel."

He even seems to catch himself at this point, conceding that if the raising of these saints, along with Matthew's other reported phenomena, is a poetic device, "we may rightly ask whether Jesus' resurrection is not more of the same."

This is exactly the right question, and Licona's proposed answers to his own question are disappointing in the extreme. In his treatment of this passage, Licona has handed the enemies of the resurrection of Jesus Christ a powerful weapon—the concession that some of the material reported by Matthew in the very chapter in which he reports the resurrection of Christ simply did not happen and should be understood as merely "poetic device" and "special effects."

This past summer, evangelical philosopher Norman Geisler addressed two open letters to Michael Licona, charging him with violating the inerrancy of Scripture in making his argument about Matthew 27:52-53. Licona, Geisler argued, had "dehistoricized" the biblical text. As Geisler made clear, this was a direct violation of biblical inerrancy. Licona's approach to this text, Geisler argued, "would undermine orthodoxy by dehistoricizing many crucial passages of the Bible."

Geisler called upon Michael Licona to change his position on this text and to affirm it as historical fact without reservation. But Geisler, a member of the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) for many years, made another very important point. He reminded Licona that such arguments had been encountered before within the ETS, and it had led to the expulsion of a member.

Amazingly enough, the issue in that controversy was also centered in the Gospel of Matthew. New Testament scholar Robert Gundry had written *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art*, published in 1982. In that volume, Gundry had argued that Matthew was using the literary form of midrash and that he had thus combined both historical and non-historical material in his Gospel in order to make his own theological points. Gundry had written that readers of Matthew should not operate under the assumption "that narrative style in the Bible always implies the writing of history." Gundry proposed that Matthew freely changed and added details in his infancy narrative to suit his theological purpose.

Scholars including D. A. Carson and Darrell Bock argued, in response, that Matthew was not writing midrash and that his first readers would never have assumed him to have done so. Scholars also noted that Gundry's approach was doctrinally disastrous. Gundry had argued that Matthew "edited the story of Jesus' baptism so as to emphasize the Trinity." Thus, Matthew was not reporting truthfully what had happened in terms of historical fact, but what he wanted to report in order to serve his theological purpose. Gundry had suggested that Matthew changed Luke's infancy narrative by changing shepherds into Magi and the manger into

a house. As one evangelical scholar retorted: "For Gundry, then, the nonexistent house was where the nonpersons called Magi found Jesus on the occasion of their nonvisit to Bethlehem."

In 1983, the Evangelical Theological Society voted to request that Robert Gundry resign from its membership. The arguments for his expulsion from the ETS are exactly those that are now directly relevant to the argument that Michael Licona makes about Matthew 27:51-54. The suggestions that these events reported by Matthew are "special effects" and a "poetic device" are exactly the kind of dehistoricizing that led to Gundry's removal from the ETS. Gundry's argument concerning Matthew's use of midrash is virtually parallel to Licona's argument from classical references and Jewish apocalyptic sources.

The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy explicitly declares that these approaches are incompatible with the affirmation that the Bible is inerrant. There is every reason within the text to believe that Matthew intends to report historical facts. Matthew 27:51-54 is in the very heart of Matthew's report of the resurrection of Christ as historical fact. Dehistoricizing this text is calamitous and inconsistent with the affirmation of biblical inerrancy.

Article XVIII of the *Chicago Statement* makes this point with precision: "We affirm that the text of Scripture is to be interpreted by grammatico-historical exegesis, taking account of its literary forms and devices, and that Scripture is to interpret Scripture. We deny the legitimacy of any treatment of the text or quest for sources lying behind it that leads to relativizing, dehistoricizing, or discounting its teaching, or rejecting its claims to authorship." Furthermore, the *Chicago Statement* requires that "history must be treated as history."

In a response to Norman Geisler, Michael Licona stated his affirmation of inerrancy but did not retract his arguments concerning Matthew 27:51-54. In fact, he made no reference to "special effects" but said that his position had been that the text should be interpreted as "apocalyptic imagery." He also stated: "When writing my book, I always regarded the entirety of Matthew 27 as historical narrative containing apocalyptic allusions."

But what can this really mean? In his book, he clearly argues that the raising of the saints was not to be taken as historical fact, leaving no other option but to understand that Licona understands at least some of the "apocalyptic allusions" he sees in Matthew 27 to be something other than historical in nature. Thus, "the entirety" of Matthew 27 is not to be taken as consistent historical narrative at all.

Licona also wrote: "Further research over the last year in the Greco-Roman literature has led me to reexamine the position I took in my book. Although additional research certainly remains, at present I am just as inclined to understand the narrative of the raised saints in Matthew 27 as a report of a factual (i.e., literal) event as I am to view it as an apocalyptic symbol. It may also be a report of a real event described partially in apocalyptic terms. I will be pleased to revise the relevant section in a future edition of my book."

This hardly resolves the issue. As a matter of fact, Licona's only real concession here is to allow that Matthew's report of the raised saints may be as likely as his earlier published argument. That is not a retraction. Further, he says that his slight change of view on the issue came after research in the Greco-Roman literature. As the *Chicago Statement* would advise us to ask: What could one possibly find in the Greco-Roman literature that would either validate or invalidate the status of this report as historical fact?

There is one crucial difference between the cases of Robert Gundry and Michael Licona. Gundry had written a major commentary on Matthew that demonstrated throughout his approach to Matthew as midrash and his argument that Matthew was changing historical facts to suit his theological agenda. Michael Licona has written a massive defense of the historicity of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. His treatment of Matthew 27:51-54 is glaringly inconsistent with his masterful defense of the resurrection as his-

tory and of Matthew as a faithful reporter of this central historical fact.

We can only hope that Michael Licona will resolve this inconsistency by affirming without reservation the status as historical fact of all that Matthew reports in chapter 27 and all that the New Testament presents as historical narrative. He needs to rethink the question he asked himself in his book—"If some or all of the phenomena reported at Jesus' death are poetic devices, we may rightly ask whether Jesus' resurrection is not more of the same."

In his book, he asked precisely the right question, but then he gave the wrong answer. We must all hope that he will ask himself that question again and answer in a way that affirms without reservation that all of Matthew's report is historical. If not, Licona has not only violated the inerrancy of Scripture, but he has blown a massive hole into his own masterful defense of the resurrection.

It is not enough to affirm biblical inerrancy in principle. The devil, as they say, is in the details. That is what makes *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy* so indispensable and this controversy over Licona's book so urgent. It is not enough to affirm biblical inerrancy in general terms. The integrity of this affirmation depends upon the affirmation of inerrancy in every detailed sense.

Michael Licona is a gifted and courageous defender of the Christian faith and a bold apologist of Christian truth. Our shared hope must be that he will offer a full correction on this crucial question of the Bible's full truthfulness and trustworthiness. I will be praying for him with the full knowledge that I have been one who has been gifted and assisted by needed correction. Leaving his argument where it now stands will not only diminish the influence of Michael Licona—it will present those who affirm the inerrancy of the Bible with yet another test of resolve.

—R. Albert Mohler, Jr.
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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

James M. Dunn and Soul Freedom. By Aaron Douglas Weaver. Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys, 2011, 196 pp., $18.00 paper.

"Everybody wants a theocracy," James Dunn famously said. "And everybody wants to be 'Theo.'"

I probably quote that at least once a semester in Christian ethics class here at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, not only because it is pithy but because it is so true. Dunn, longtime head of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, was nothing if not quotable. The other famous (or infamous) quote from him that comes to mind is his one sentence defense of "soul freedom": "Ain't nobody but Jesus going to tell me what to believe."

Love him or hate him, Dunn was a powerful force in Baptist life in the twentieth century, and a new book seeks to set him in historical and theological context. Aaron Douglas Weaver's *James M. Dunn and Soul Freedom*, just published by Smyth and Helwys, is that book, and it is well worth reading.

Weaver, easily the most gifted young historian of the moderate Baptist movement, crafts a winsome and engaging narrative and, unlike many historians, refuses to ignore theological analysis of his subject. I think Weaver will be a major force in Baptist historical scholarship in the next generation, precisely because of his analytical ability and his gift for prose.

Weaver is, of course, sympathetic; at times, I think, overly so. He, for example, treats Dunn's anti-Catholicism quite gently, and argues unconvincingly that Dunn's argument that abortion should be between a woman and her doctor is remaining neutral on the pro-life/pro-choice debate. That aside, the book should be read not only by Dunn's sympathizers but by those of us who are theologically conservative as well. Here there are a number of lessons to be learned.

First of all, enough time has passed for conservatives to appreciate some genuinely commend-

able facets of Dunn's work. He was right to argue that separation of church and state is a Baptist distinctive worth preserving, even when he stretched the definition beyond what most of us would agree with. He was right to assert that the Supreme Court decision *(Smith v. Oregon)* that removed the "compelling interest" test with regard to religious liberty is dangerous.

He was right to oppose the government underwriting religion in such ways as state-written "nondenominational" prayers and funding for religious initiatives (which, as we have seen, ultimately cut the evangelistic and Christocentric heart out of those initiatives). And, perhaps above all, Dunn was right to warn of what a Christless civil religion does to the witness of the church, which is to freeze it into something useless if not satanic.

Here, though, is where the warning for us all comes in. Dunn was not exempt from the pull toward a civil religion and a politicized faith. It is fair enough to say that some of Dunn's critics opposed him with an uncritical Reaganism rather than with a gospel-centered theology. But Dunn consistently showed an unwillingness to break from his own partisan commitments too.

On the issue of abortion, for instance, Dunn refused to call for the protection of unborn human life. Why not? His principle of "soul freedom" gave a theological basis for the right of a woman to choose to abort her child. But what about the question of the personhood of the fetus, what of his or her "soul freedom"? After all, "soul freedom" would not mean the freedom of a white supremacist to lynch, would it? Of course not. Can a corporate executive claim the "soul freedom" to pollute a water stream? No. Can a magistrate claim the "soul freedom" to whip a dissenter for refusing to baptize his baby or to preach without a license? Leland and Backus would say, "no." So would, come to think of it, Smyth and Helwys.

If there is only one person involved, soul freedom is an easy rallying cry (as was, and is, "states' rights"). If there are two (which even most abortion-rights advocates would admit now, while still defending the priority of the woman's choice), then soul freedom does not answer the question. Dunn saw the limits of "soul freedom," and courageously so, when it came to issues of segregation, economic predation (including the state lottery system), and so on. It is a tragedy he could not see it here.

This book demonstrates why Dunn succeeded where he did, with some genuine pluck and courage. It also shows why he failed to lead Southern Baptists where he wanted to go. Some of that is due to the cultural and social and theological factors in the Convention at the time. Some of that is because of Dunn's acerbic disposition and his all-too-often refusal to transcend partisanship. Matching reflexive Reaganism with reflexive anti-Reaganism tends to dilute a prophetic witness.

Resurgent conservatives should see in this book where both Dunn, and we, have succeeded and failed. Our witness is often compromised by politicians who seek to use us (just as, arguably, Bill Clinton used Dunn and his allies). Our leaders want to adopt whole-cloth the agendas of those with whom we might agree on some transcendent issues. Politicians seek to co-opt our religious figures for "prayer rallies." Our religious figures prognosticate on partisan elections, with thinly-veiled endorsements of candidates, often in shockingly carnal terms. And we do not even notice that our neighbors see what we are really after: power. We also do not notice that our neighbors are wondering: if we are this easily duped by political maneuvering, how can we be trusted to talk about the question of the resurrection from the dead?

I do not agree with James Dunn's anti-creedalism. Neither does he. "Ain't nobody but Jesus" is a creed. Jesus, after all, refers to someone, and there is some theological content there. I do not agree with Dunn's theological liberalism, and I think he was all too willing to mute his "prophetic" witness when it came to his political allies.

But I agree with him on the big picture, if not always in the details, that the church is too important to be tied up with the state. The temptation for

all of us is to want to be "Theo." There is no arguing with that.

—Russell D. Moore
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BibleWorks 9. Norfolk, VA: BibleWorks LLC, 2011, $359.00.

Every time *BibleWorks* comes out with a new version, I am amazed at their ability to maintain a simple, intuitive user-interface while adding seemingly endless additional excellent resources. The recently released version, *BibleWorks 9*, is no exception. I just demonstrated the program to my intermediate Greek class today. There are a number of reasons why I think *BibleWorks 9* is the best Bible software available.

The first reason is its intuitive interface. Do not let anyone fool you. Every Bible software program (or website, for that matter) has a learning curve. It takes at least a brief investment of time to learn how to use a new program, app, or webpage. But, once one has made that initial investment of time, how easy is it to continue using the program and poking around to learn new stuff? *BibleWorks* receives an "A+" for ease in use. I find that there are usually four or five ways of accomplishing the same task in the program (drop down menus, button bars, context-sensitive right click options, etc.). So, if I have momentarily forgotten how to do some task, I can usually figure it out with little help.

The second reason is its speed. On the front row of my class today sat a student with a super-powerful laptop computer onto which was loaded a major Bible software program that is a competitor to *BibleWorks*. The student was almost drooling as he saw the speed of *BibleWorks* searches and the ease of moving among the interlinked resources—all on my ancient (three year-old) laptop. After class, the student told me that he plans to buy *BibleWorks*.

The third reason is its excellent, abundant, and free training videos. *BibleWorks* comes standard with clear, helpful, and logically organized help videos. Granted, *BibleWorks* did not pay big bucks for a radio announcer to record these, but no owners of *BibleWorks* can complain that they have not been given abundant, free, and well-designed training videos.

The fourth reason is that it has the right resources, rightly linked. *BibleWorks* comes standard with virtually any major original language text (morphologically tagged) or resource you will need: NA27 Greek New Testament, Leningrad Hebrew Old Testament, Apostolic Fathers in Greek, Josephus in Greek, Philo in Greek, the Latin Vulgate, the entire Greek New Testament diagrammed, multiple Greek and Hebrew lexicons, etc. Of course, scholars will want to pay extra to get BDAG and HALOT, but those resources never come standard on any program.

The fifth reason is its ancient manuscripts. One of the new features of *BibleWorks 9* is the inclusion of transcriptions and complete image sets of seven significant Greek New Testament manuscripts (Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Alexandrinus, Bezae, Washingtonianus, Boernerianus, and GA 1141). Like everything else in *BibleWorks*, this new feature is seamlessly integrated into the existing program. Without referring to any of the help features, I was able to show my class examples of textual variants on the PowerPoint screen today.

It is difficult for me to think of enough superlatives to describe this excellent Bible software program. The only two drawbacks I can think of are: the program does not currently have a mobile device app, and if one runs it on an Apple computer, one must use the PC emulator function.

—Robert L. Plummer
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As Christ Submits to the Church: A Biblical Understanding of Leadership and Mutual Submission. By Alan G. Padgett. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011, xviii + 151 pp., $19.99 paper.

Alan Padgett, a professor of systematics at Luther Seminary, defends mutual submission in this work, emphasizing particularly that Christ submits to the church, just as the church submits to Christ. Padgett has written on the topic of male-female roles (or the lack thereof!) for many years, and much that is in this book has appeared in journals elsewhere in a more technical form. The book is written in an engaging style, which makes for a quick read, especially since it is brief and to the point.

How does Padgett argue for or advance his case? He distinguishes between two different kinds of submission, maintaining that one type of submission is militaristic and political. This first kind of submission is generally involuntary and is also not mutual. The second kind of submission is different, for it is rooted in personal relationships, and is voluntary and mutual. According to Padgett, the submission called for in Ephesians 5 is of the second variety, i.e., personal, voluntary, and mutual. On the other hand, the submission required in 1 Peter and the Pastoral Epistles fits with the first type, so that it is externally imposed and is not mutual. The apologetic and missionary situation of 1 Peter and the Pastorals explains why a different kind of submission is demanded.

How can Padgett say that Jesus submits to the church when Scripture never says this explicitly? He argues for a canonical Jesus-centered hermeneutic, a hermeneutic of love. The Bible cannot be understood merely by unearthing the meaning of the author but must be read in light of the heart of the gospel and the person of Jesus. A sophisticated and subtle and profound reading of Scripture recognizes that servant leadership is another way of talking about submission. Hence, Jesus' giving himself up for the church, which Paul unpacks in Ephesians 5:22-33, demonstrates that Jesus submits to the church, for submission and servant leadership belong in the same conceptual category. Similarly, the great text on Jesus' living for the sake of others and humbling himself for our salvation (Phil 2:6-11) supports the notion that Jesus submits to the church.

The issues addressed in this book are scarcely new and have been rehearsed repeatedly, though Padgett definitely has some new twists here and there. I asked a friend before reading the book what he thought Padgett would say. He accurately predicted the substance of the author's argument without even reading the book, confirming that the heart and soul of the argument are not substantially new. Padgett does rightly point to 1 Corinthians 7:3-4, which indicates that complementarians must beware of a rigid and militaristic kind of hierarchicalism. Complementarians must not fall prey to a fortress and defensive mentality in which we reject everything our critics say. We must listen to all of Scripture so that our marriages conform to the balance found in the Scriptures. Otherwise, conservative Christian homes could become quite strange and even bizarre, so that the wife is virtually treated like a slave.

It must be said, however, that the main thesis of the book fails. Padgett rightly warns of the danger of using authority selfishly, reminding us that those who are in authority must serve those under them. Such observations, however, do not cancel out the distinction between Christ and the church taught in Scripture. Padgett's attempt to drive a wedge between the two types of submission does not work lexically in the texts he cites. The submission that Christians are called upon to give is always voluntary in all the marriage texts in the New Testament. Nor, despite Padgett's protestations, are husbands ever called upon to submit to wives. That remains a stubborn fact that cannot be washed out of the text. First Peter 3:1-6 can be adduced as an example of the weakness of Padgett's thesis. It is scarcely evident that Peter believes that the submission is different in character than what we found in Ephesians 5:22-33. The situation differs to some extent because

some of the wives have unbelieving husbands, but Peter commends submission out of fear to God, not to satisfy external authority. And Padgett does not read the text carefully enough. Peter does not limit his call to submission to wives with unbelieving husbands. He says "some" (1 Pet 3:1) husbands disobey the word, not all. It is simply not the case that all the husbands in 1 Peter were unbelievers. Hence, the evidence Padgett adduces for a different kind of submission collapses upon closer analysis. Similar criticisms could be raised about his analysis of the word "submit" relative to the Pastoral Epistles or relating to slaves and the government, but space precludes a detailed treatment.

The weakness of Padgett's case is also illustrated by his discussion of the word "head" (*kephalē*), which he argues means "source" in Ephesians 5 and other texts. But Padgett does not investigate the immediate context to decipher the meaning of the word, for wives are called upon to "submit" because husbands are the "head," just as the church is called upon to "submit" because Christ is the "head" (Eph 5:22-24). It makes much more sense in context to submit to one who is an authority. Furthermore, what does it mean to say that I as a husband am the "source" of my wife? I am certainly not the source of her spiritual or physical life. In addition, Padgett's whole discussion of "head" is unpersuasive. He says it means "source" in Colossians 2:10, but that text is talking about Christ's authority over demonic powers, and hence the text functions as a parallel to Christ's enthronement and authoritative headship over all in Ephesians 1:19-23.

Padgett claims that those who dismiss his case on the basis of the definition of "submit" are prone to superficiality. He raises a good caution here, but he actually falls into a trap on the other side. We need to be careful of restricting unduly the semantic domain of a word, but we must also beware of lumping words together that need to be distinguished. Padgett's case fails, for he does not establish convincingly that the two types of submission he posits actually inform the texts on husbands and wives.

In some ways Padgett sets up the case so he cannot lose. If one objects about the meaning of words and the author's meaning, he can appeal to a canonical Jesus-centered hermeneutic that promotes love. A canonical hermeneutic is important, and I agree with Padgett that we need to look at the whole Bible canonically to determine its meaning. There is a divine author. But again we must beware of over-reacting to the mistakes of others. We can appeal to "love" to justify just about any behavior today, but the ethical norms and commands in the Scriptures flesh out the nature of love (Rom. 13:8-10). A canonical reading accords with and does not contradict the clear words of Scripture, which are accessible to ordinary readers.

Padgett's words on a canonical reading seemed ironic upon reading his exegesis of 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 and 1 Timothy 2:8-15, for his interpretations are of a standard historical-critical variety, though with different conclusions. Hence, he argues that 1 Corinthians 11:3-7a represents the Corinthians's view, not the standpoint of the Apostle Paul. And he proposes a midrashic reading of 1 Timothy 2:8-15 which is, if nothing else, remarkably creative. Most evangelical feminists do not subscribe to the interpretations proposed here, and Padgett suggested these readings in scholarly journals some years ago. It is far-fetched to argue that Christ submits to the church as well, for Christ acting as a servant must not be equated with submission. Jesus Christ is a servant leader, but he is our leader and our Lord. We are called upon to submit to him and to obey him. Never the reverse.

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Brevard Childs, Biblical Theologian: For the Church's One Bible. By Daniel R. Driver. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010, 328 pp., $91.73 paper.

In this revised version of his doctoral thesis completed at the University of St. Andrews, Daniel R. Driver seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of Childs's oeuvre and to uncover the inner workings of his brand of biblical theology.

After surveying Childs's life and the history of the canon debate, Driver divides his analysis into three main parts. In part one, Driver gives a sort of reception history of Childs's work both in English and German contexts. In part two, he exposits Childs's canonical approach itself and examines its internal coherence. According to Driver, Childs makes two major shifts or turns in his career. The first is Childs's movement from a focus on "form" to a focus on "final form." In part three, Driver examines the second major shift in Childs's career, which relates to his reflection on the relationship between the Testaments. Childs's concern in this area is to affirm that Christ is the subject (the *res*) that both the Old and New Testaments witness to in their own discrete voices. After providing a test case for the issues raised throughout his discussion (on the scope of Psalm 102), Driver concludes with an epilogue that surveys recent work on the canon and suggests its relevance to Childs's approach.

One of the consistent criticisms of Childs is that he is inconsistent and that his approach is in need of reconstructive surgery. This perception was encouraged by James Barr's biting criticism of Childs throughout his career. According to Driver, this critique in particular has helped generate a "bipolar Childs" in much secondary literature (36-50). On the one hand, Childs champions a focus on the final form of the text, but on the other he engages in various forms of historical criticism in his treatment of biblical material. Many critical biblical scholars would decry a privileging of a final form, which they view as arbitrary, and many evangelical biblical scholars would balk at the use of critical methodology, which they view as dangerous.

For Driver, what is missing in the contemporary discussion is the historical Childs, or better, the canonical Childs. Though one might surely still take issue with elements of Childs's work, Driver maintains the importance of recognizing that for Childs, there is an internal logic to his version of the canonical approach. Driver points out that the "missing link" many critics neglect is the notion of canon-consciousness (71, 144ff) and that Childs sees an integral connection between the "precanonical" forms of texts and traditions and the shape they take in the canon as part of the church's Scripture. Driver's articulation of Childs's "career thesis" is that "the historically shaped canon of scripture, in its two discrete witnesses, is a Christological rule of faith that in the church, by the action of the Holy Spirit, accrues textual authority" (4). Driver's overall contention is that Childs's approach is complex but ultimately coherent.

Evangelical and historical-critical scholars alike who are wary of all things "canonical" would do well to situate Childs in his academic context. Driver demonstrates that throughout his career, Childs reflected on the relationship between historical-critical and biblical-theological methods and assumptions. And there are important differences between his application of these critical tools and "business as usual" in the scholarly guilds. In a sense, the burden of Driver's volume is to answer thoroughly the question, "What happens if Childs's work proves to have a logic of its own, even if it is a logic one finally chooses not to enter?" (59). It is this suggestive yet balanced approach that makes Driver's volume an instructive hermeneutical guide for reading Childs.

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