Book Reviews

Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism. By Alvin Plantinga. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011, 359 pp., $27.95 cloth.

For all the exacting philosophy Alvin Plantinga has brought us, his playfulness stands out in my experience. He is a happy warrior, supremely confident in his native (and regenerate) intelligence, his philosophical acumen, and the truth of Christianity. Thus armed, he takes on skeptics with a cheerful equanimity that must be as maddening and even unnerving to them as it is delightful to his fellow believers.

Those of us who came of age as Christians in philosophy in the 1970s were working more or less as servants in Caesar's palace. The lords of the manor were skeptics, children of the Enlightenment, offspring of Hume and Kant, of Ayer and Russell—and parents of Dawkins, Harris, Hitchens, and Dennett. They ruled and roared in the halls of the philosophical associations and major universities, both here and abroad. Yes, there were articulate saints in the realm, but they were relegated mostly to the back halls, where they could talk among themselves. The places of honor were reserved for such atheists as Quine and Wittgenstein, Heidegger and Sartre.

But somehow, by God's grace, Christians began to find their voice in the profession, or, more accurately, rediscover and reassert their voice. For their credibility had once for all been established by the likes of Anselm and Aquinas, Descartes and Pascal, Locke and Berkeley, to name a few. Philosophers began to take note of Mavrodes at Michigan, Yandell at Wisconsin, Alston at Illinois, and a cluster of Dutchmen in Grand Rapids, with curious names like Orlebeke, Mouw, Wolterstorff, Konyndyk—and, yes, Plantinga.

Heretofore, the skeptics' trump card was something like, "Well, I don't see that." Hearing this, the earnest believer would take a deep breath and then redouble the effort to please his audience, to make his point. But those of the Plantinga/Mavrodes school would more likely respond with something like, "So sorry to hear that. You may have a personal problem. Your

failure to see it doesn't entail anything about my ability to see it." It made for great theater.

Plantinga in particular seemed unimpressed with the conventional wisdom of the philosophical guild. For instance, he thought that the ontological argument (that "the being than which none greater can be conceived" must exist), long relegated to the list of ancient curiosities, deserved respect, so he wedded modal logic to Leibniz's eighteenth-century talk of possible worlds (as in "the best of all possible worlds") to resurrect it.

Taking on first one cause and then another, he coined fresh expressions, such as "properly basic" (to counter the empirical overreach of the positivists), "trans-world depravity" (to mount a free-will defense against the problem of evil), and "intrinsic (or "extrinsic") defeater-defeater" (to evaluate the rationality of a belief). He would generate page after page of precise modal logic (in *The Nature of Necessity*), accessible largely to professional philosophers, and then, in the popular vein, jab the pompous judge in the Dover case, who ruled the teaching of intelligent design in public school classrooms out of order (170-171). When the overreaching jurist presumed to exclude talk of the supernatural from the realm of testable discourse, Plantinga suggested he consider the statement that "an intelligent designer has designed and created 800-pound rabbits that live in Cleveland" (300).

For those who have not been reading Plantinga across the decades, this book brings much of what he has said before to bear on the question of whether Christianity and science are compatible. In these pages, one finds echoes, reassertions, and fresh applications of what he wrote earlier in such classics as *God and Other Minds* (1967) and *Warranted Christian Belief* (2000). Indeed, one might say the book is a valedictory, though he continues to be active in philosophy.

That being said, let's go back to what we might call his frisky, cheeky style: in arguing that the development of metaphysical and academically abstract thought fits the Darwinian model poorly, he observes that "it is only the occasional member of the Young Atheist's Club whose reproductive prospects are enhanced by holding the belief that naturalism is true" (349)—and the same holds true for "the occasional assistant professor of mathematics or logic that needs to be able to prove Godel's theorem in order to survive and reproduce" (133); he also mocks the histrionics of the anti-intelligent design crowd, noting their "screams of hysterical anguish, frenzied denunciations, accusations of treason (how could an actual scientist say things like this?), charges of deceit, duplicity, deviousness, tergiversation, pusillanimity, and other indications of less than total agreement" (228-229).

Along the way, he can spin a nice yarn, with attendant dialogue, as when he took on one group of philosophers trying to say that our remarkably tuned universe was not so special after all:

> Return to the Old West: I'm playing poker, and every time I deal, I get four aces and a wild card. The third time this happens, Tex jumps up, knocks over the table, draws his sixgun, and accuses me of cheating. My reply: 'Waal, shore, Tex, I *know* it's a leetle mite suspicious that every time I deal I git four aces and a wild card, but have you considered the following? Possible there is an infinite succession of universes, so that for any possible distribution of possible poker hands, there is a universe in which that possibility is realized; we just happened to find ourselves in one where someone like me always deals himself only aces and wild cards without ever cheating. So put up that shootin' arn and set down'n shet yore yap ya dumb galoot. (213-214)

This is fun reading, but it's also quite serious. And in between these moments of humor, he offers tight argument through pointed counter-examples, blunt counter-claims, and exacting definitions.

So what does he argue in this book? Very simply, that "there is superficial conflict but deep concord between science and theistic religion, but superficial concord and deep conflict between science and naturalism" (ix). Along the way, he

enlists theistic evolution, defends miracles, gives the intelligent design scientists some respect, and argues that you can't get truth-hunger out of Darwin or belief-motivated action out of neural states alone. He marshals scores of arguments, large and small, to make his case, and he engages a host of thinkers, from the venerable eighteenth-century Common Sense philosopher Thomas Reid to the modern skeptic Peter Atkins, whom he characterizes as "dancing on the lunatic fringe."

Despairing of doing his arguments justice in short space, let me simply highlight a few of the moves he makes:

1. Disagreeing with Richard Dawkins on the left and Philip Johnson on the right (and bemoaning the fact that the public at large has been convinced that evolution and Christianity are incompatible), he urges us to understand that "God could have caused the right mutations to arise at the right time; he could have preserved populations from perils of various sorts, and so on; and in this way he could have seen to it that there came to be creatures of the kind he intends" (11). Alternatively, God could have " set things up initially so that the right mutations would be forthcoming at the right times, leading to the results he wanted" (16). Only if we view evolution as operating in unguided fashion in a closed, material system do we stumble.

2. He explains that miracles are possible because the laws of nature are necessary only in the sense that "they are propositions God has established or decreed, and no creature—no finite power, we might say—has the power to act against these propositions, that is, to bring it about that they are false" (281). But, of course, God may act against them whenever and however he pleases, so it is proper to qualify statements of physical law with the antecedent clause, "When God is not acting specially . . . "(282).

3. He addresses the concerns of those in the Divine Action Project (DAP), who have a visceral objection to God's "violating" the natural order and human freedom by intervening in the world. He discounts their fears that God would be like the husband "sometimes treating [his] spouse's peccadilloes with patience and good humor and other times under relevantly similar circumstances responding with tight-lipped annoyance" (106). Rather, "there would be arbitrariness and inconsistency only if God had no special reason for acting contrary to the usual regularities; but of course he might very well have such reasons. This is obvious for the case of raising Jesus from the dead" (106). By Plantinga's light, their efforts somehow to insinuate God's actions through the wiggle room made by quantum mechanics is unnecessary and unsatisfying.

4. Drawing on the work of Patricia Churchland, he argues that you cannot get regard for truth or objectivity out of natural selection's "four F's: feeding, fleeing, fighting, and reproducing" (315). (One can't help but think of analogy between evolution and politics and wonder how, in either realm, a dispassionate interest in truth could ever surface.) To the one who objects that there is enormous adaptive value in "getting things right," as when the hungry frog correctly judges "the distance to the fly at each moment, its size, speed, direction, and so on," he insists that instinct is not belief (327-328). Similarly, he distinguishes between "mental states," which have propositional content, and "neuro-physiological properties," which don't, and this presents a big problem for the naturalist, who wants to reduce everything to material states (321-322). (Apparently, this latter argument is hitting home with one of his critics, Thomas Nagel, to the consternation of hard-core materialists. See Plantinga's review of Nagel's work and plight in the December 12 issue of *The New Republic.)*

On and on he goes, pulling the stinger out of first one skeptical wasp and then another. On one page, he says, in effect, "So what?" to Freud's dismissive claim that religion gives comfort and meaning to the insecure, for that alone does not make it false (148-149). On another, he answers those who say we do not need religion, now that we have science, with the retort that they have

said, in effect, "that now that we have refrigerators and chain saws and roller skates, we no longer have need for Mozart" (267). On yet another, he turns the tables on theologians who seek to explain away the simple believer's trust in miracles, suggesting that they "suffer from disciplinary low self-esteem" and "want desperately to be accepted by the rest of the academic, world," so they "adopt a more-secular-than-thou attitude." (74)

Along the way, he doesn't mind pulling the stinger out of a fellow-believer's argument, in this case Michael Behe's (*Darwin's Black Box*), with its claim that the "irreducible complexity" of, for instance, the human eye cannot emerge from the chance and brutal workings of natural selection. Plantinga replies that the case is not so airtight as all that, in that the emergence of such biological incidentals as spandrels and pleiotropy could conceivably pick up the slack (227). While he does give Behe credit for some success, for the "account of the structures he describes certainly do produce the impression of design" (259), he relegates Behe's work to "design discourse" rather than "design argument," with its higher canons of rigor. It fails, for instance, to match the tightness of Euclid's premise-to-conclusion demonstration that there is a greatest prime number (250-251). Rather, we are left with a compelling experience which leaves us with a conviction that is hard to shake, proof or no proof—the sort of thing we have with belief in the existence of other souls in the bodies around us (240-243). So Plantinga's affirmation is, in his own words, something of a "wet noodle conclusion" (264).

His hammer-and-tongs critique of foe and friend alike sets up the reader for cognitive dissonance, for when Plantinga presents his alternative account, the pattern of critical analysis gives way to sweeping assertion. One might call it a "destroy and dare" tactic: "Now that I've told you in great detail what's wrong with your ideas, I'm going to tell you my version of things and dare you to pick it apart." It is hard, though, not to ask, "Why don't you subject your own claims to the sort of scrutiny you've been exercising heretofore?" For once he has spun us up to a critical frenzy, it is hard to stop on a dime and say, "Oh, okay" to bold assertions about the world's "fascinating underlying mathematical structures of astounding complexity but also deep simplicity" (285) and the "*adequatio intellectus ad rem* (the fit of intellect with reality)" (296).

Where is the troublesome talk of "spandrel and pleiotropy" once he begins to wax eloquent on the congruence of algorithms with phenomena? Are there not recalcitrant cases and rival suggestions to wrestle into submission? And to go back, is macro-evolution so epistemologically winsome that it must be honored by all reasonable Christians? Is there nothing at all to consider in the puzzles raised by young-earth creationists over trans-strata nautiloid fossils, over massive limestone folds, and such in the Grand Canyon? And what about the way in which theistic evolution posits ages of "nature red in tooth and claw" before the Fall, when nature's torment is often thought to have begun (Romans 8:20-22)? In the short footnote he uses to dismiss the young earth perspective (10), can he not spare a single sentence on the possibility of "catastrophism" as opposed to "uniformitarianism"? After all, he has given a lot of space to other theories he has found wanting, even laughable.

While I think he succeeds admirably in his stated task of showing that there is no real barrier between science and theism—and a big barrier between science and naturalism—he could have done better in addressing the clash between biblical inerrancy and evolutionary science. He admits as much in a footnote, when he says, "Of course there are conflicts between science and particular religious beliefs that are not part of Christian belief as such: belief in a universal flood, a very young earth, etc." (144). While assent to a literal reading of Noah may not appear in the Apostles' Creed, doesn't it deserve better than this? (In his review of *Where the Conflict Really Lies* in *The New York Review of Books,* September 27, 2012, Thomas Nagel tweaks Plantinga at this point, suggesting

that his view that the gift of faith warrants believers to stand against hostile popular opinion might well serve to strengthen the spirit of the Genesis literalist who seeks to hold the fort against the Darwin.) And when Plantinga says that the "scientific theory of evolution as such is not incompatible with Christian belief" (63), one wonders whether this is more hopeful than true, along the lines of "Islam, at base, is a religion of peace."

Finally, in a realm of discourse where comparative plausibility is more to the point than airtight proof, he could have given Behe higher marks than he did. It may have been "discourse" rather than "argument" on Plantinga's model, but with discourse so powerful as this, who needs "argument"?

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Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts. By Craig S. Keener. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011, 2 vols., 1172 pp., $59.99 cloth.

Within the last twenty years, the name Craig Keener has come to be associated with many significant New Testament reference works, commentaries, monographs, essays, and articles. It is a remarkable list of publications. Keener, professor of New Testament at Asbury Theological Seminary, has set an example for other evangelical scholars by consistently seeking to instruct and edify the church while demonstrating the highest standards of scholarly research.

The two-part thesis of *Miracle*s is straightforward: (1) Many people, both ancient and modern, give credible eyewitness testimony that they, or people they know, have experienced miracles; and (2) therefore, when judging the historicity of ancient works that report miracles, scholars should not, at the outset, eliminate the possibility that genuine supernatural phenomena were observed. Keener speaks forthrightly about his own biases and experiences throughout his two volumes, and he rightly rejects the myth of scholarly objectivity.

Volume one contains three divisions. The first section investigates miracle claims in the New Testament, ancient miracle claims outside the New Testament, and then compares the two. Keener notes that hardly any scholar, even of the most liberal persuasion, will deny that Jesus and his contemporaries agreed that he performed miraculous healings. While most ancient pagans would have sought healings in healing sanctuaries, a few comparisons with Greco-Roman healers can be made. Keener notes for example that "the most significant pagan parallels to Christian miracle-worker stories, such as the only extant literary account of Apollonius of Tyana, first appear in third-century literature, after Christian miracle stories had become widely known, and Christian and pagan expectations influenced each other more generally" (46). Indeed, early Christian miracles have little in common with the malevolent magic found in the Greco-Roman world. Although ancient Jewish wonder-workers had more parallel miracles to Jesus, their wonders only came through prayer and lacked the nature of eschatological invasion (76). In the Christian tradition, one should also note the comparatively short amount of time between the miracle and its reporting—a distinctive of New Testament miracles.

The second section of volume one is entitled "Are Miracles Possible?" Here Keener addresses antisupernatural skepticism, both ancient and modern. Indeed, ancient writers were not all gullible simpletons accepting every report of the miraculous, but in fact, often demonstrated sophistication in detecting fabricated sensationalistic claims. With the radical Enlightenment in the West, however, a far more foundational and unwarranted skepticism became entrenched in the scholarly world. Much of this second section of the book focuses on explaining and critiquing eighteenth-century philosopher David Hume and his objection to miracles. Indeed, Hume's foundational principle of historical analogy (i.e., miracles cannot have happened because peo-

ple now do not see them happening) is undercut by literally hundreds (if not thousands) of eyewitness testimonies of the miraculous that Keener recounts in the third section of volume one. Keener rightly notes that Hume's views no longer reign in broader culture. In recent years the western world has taken a noticeable shift away from skepticism toward belief in the miraculous, albeit often unaccompanied by Christian beliefs. Keener concludes that "contemporary approaches lack necessary grounds for *a priori* rejecting potential supernatural explanations, whether they are more open due to modern physics or multicultural postmodernism" (207).

The third and final section of volume one is entitled, "Miracle Accounts beyond Antiquity." Here Keener uses scholarly jujitsu—employing Hume's very principle of analogy to dethrone anti-supernatural skepticism in New Testament scholarship. In this case, the analogy is to countless eyewitness testimonies to the miraculous. This section constitutes perhaps the most extensively researched and documented account of miracles in church history, the modern majority world, and the modern western world. Undercutting Hume's objection that the principle of analogy should lead us to conclude the miraculous does not exist, Keener leaves the reader encouraged and sometimes surprised by the variety and number of miracles reported by reputable eyewitnesses. We have no excuse for remaining in the skepticism we have inherited from our western forbearers. (Who, indeed, wants to be tied with a racist, ethnocentric, imperialist western viewpoint?)

In the subsection, the "Raising of the Dead," Keener reports the raising of his wife's sister, an event which took place in Africa years ago:

> When Thérèse was about two years old, Mme Jacque, as my mother-in-law is locally known, stepped out briefly to take food to a neighbor. When she returned, Thérèse was crying that she had been bitten by a snake, so Mme Jacques began strapping the child to her back so she could run to evangelist "Coco" Ngoma Moïse. She quickly discovered, however, that the child had stopped breathing. I later asked how long the child stopped breathing, so Mme Jacques estimated the time based on the approximate distance between her home and where she would have to run to reach Coco Moïse. She had traveled up a mountainous area and down the other side, and she calculated that Thérèse had stopped breathing for about three hours.
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> Medical assistance was not available; once she reached Coco Moïse, they could only pray. They prayed, and the child began breathing; then they called Papa Jacques, who was at the time working in another town. He asked whether he should return home, but Coco Moïse assured him that the child would recover. Thérèse did begin to recover, and the next day she was fine. Today she is doing church work and recently completed her graduate-level seminary training in Cameroon. So far as humanly detectable to these person who knew firsthand the signs of death, a child who did not breathe for three hours recovered without medical treatment, without brain damage, and without ill effect (557-58).

Volume two responds to alternative explanations of miracles. Keener considers fraud, emotional arousal, psychosomatic healings, biases in studies, and the challenges of interpreting evidence. Keener claims that even though there are sometimes more reasonable nonsupernatural explanations for purported miraculous events, there still is plenty of evidence to undercut Hume's principle of historical analogy. Moreover, when one does not begin historical investigation with an antisupernatural bias, sometimes the miraculous is the best explanation.

Volume two concludes with more than one hundred pages of appendices, including Appendix A ("Demons and Exorcism in Antiquity"), Appendix B ("Spirit Possession and Exorcism in Societies Today"), Appendix C ("Comparisons with Later Christian Hagiography"), Appendix D ("Ancient Approaches to Natural Law"), and Appendix E

("Visions and Dreams"). It also includes more than two hundred pages of bibliographies, interview citations, and indices.

Keener's work has already earned high praise in the scholarly community. Craig Evans has called it "arguably the best book ever on the subject of miracles." Ben Witherington has referred to it as "perhaps the best book ever written on miracles in this or any age." The quality and importance of this work is without question, but any reader will inevitably have a few comments, questions, or concerns, and it is to these that I now turn.

First a few words of appreciation. I greatly appreciate two significant caveats that Keener makes clear in several places. For example, at one point, he writes: "One theological concern I do have is that no one reading this book thinks that I suppose that spiritual cures happen invariably—they do not, and most of those who supplied testimonies for this book recognize that they do not. Naturally we could fill books with stories where such cures did not happen. I could include there, for example, the eight miscarriages that my wife and I have suffered. But there seems little point in arguing a case that virtually no one questions. My interest in miracles is not triumphalistic, as if to play down biblical themes of suffering or justice that some writers contrast with the study of miracles. I have addressed these themes elsewhere; they are simply not my focus here. In the theology of the Gospels, signs are foretastes of the kingdom, not its fullness" (10-11).

So, here Keener importantly notes (1) that many healings desired by faithful Christians never happen, and (2) that both in the New Testament era and in modern times, healings are signs of the future wholeness found in a coming kingdom. Healings and miracles are not "universal guarantees of perpetual health" (736).

In section three of volume one, Keener recounts hundreds of eyewitness accounts of miracles, but at this point he suspends theological judgments since his point is simply to show that there is much credible eyewitness testimony for miracles. As an evangelical Protestant, however, I hesitate to place a believer's faithful prayer for healing alongside miracles supposedly performed in association with relics or religious pilgrimage in the Catholic tradition. Keener notes that the Catholic church has some of the most extensive medical documentation for the miraculous—at Lourdes, for example—but is not theological analysis inextricably linked to historical evaluation?

Another question concerns relegating the material on demonism to an appendix. This may suggest a concession to modern skepticism over demonism. The New Testament, however, does not give warrant to the idea that Jesus' exoricisms were any less important as public testimonies to the invasion of God's kingdom. Are they not also supernatural events? Is there not some unintended concession to Hume or other skeptics in failing to include testimonies to the miraculous defeat of the demonic alongside the miraculous defeat of disease? Western biases deriving from Hume and other scholars should not mislead us to segregate the exorcisms from the healings. The prominence, frequency, and placement of exorcisms in the synoptic gospels alongside physical healings argues for their inclusion in the body of the text.

The apparent triviality or incompleteness of some miracles that Keener includes invite theological analysis. For example, on page 739, footnote 152, Keener writes that "when as a young Christian I used to pray in a wooded area, my arms quickly filled up with mosquito bites; after I prayed for the bites (and for those of anyone praying with me, on occasions when anyone did), they vanished within a few minutes (at most half an hour), which had not been my usual experience before my conversion. This happened on numerous occasions and, at that time in my life, without exception." I think a skeptical scholar might ask why God did not keep the mosquitoes away in the first place and secondly, why God would intervene so directly and repeatedly in this instance but in points of more serious physical need in your family's life (some of which he relates quite transpar-

ently in his book), there would be no healing.

I think a cessationist would question the testimonial value of many of the partial healings recounted. So, for example, on page 738, note 147, he describes a woman who began walking after being confined to wheelchair, but Keener reasons that she had to use a walker because her muscles had atrophied during her years of confinement to the wheelchair. This healing (and other partial healings he mentions) seem quite different from the instantaneous and full recovery that recipients of miracles experienced in the New Testament. Granted, Mark chapter 8 reports a two-part healing of a blind man. To this formerly blind man, people did, at first, appear like trees walking around, but the full recovery of the man happened a moment later, and the placement of this two-part healing in Mark's narrative argues for an intended parabolic function for the momentary delay in full healing.

In a New Testament survey class of the gospels this semester, I had a student ask, "Did other people claim to do miracles in ancient times and what were they like?" Keener's work answers the question well. These volumes are lengthy but they can be well used as class textbooks. They may be too long to have students read them completely unless assigned for an elective seminar on miracles, but many portions will serve excellently as supplemental readings for classes in New Testament, philosophy, apologetics, epistemology, and church history.

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Parade of Faith: A Biographical History of the Christian Church. By Ruth A. Tucker. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011, 509 pp., $39.99 cloth.

One of the challenges for those of us who teach church history is finding a way to keep students engaged with the story of Christianity. For many students, church history—like history in general—seems like little more than a barrage of names, dates, and controversies. Throw in the loaded theological terms that are associated with church history (*communicatio idiomatum*, or infralapsarianism, for example) and many students get lost in the fray. Church historians would do well to spend some time reading Ruth Tucker.

Tucker is a historian who has taught at several evangelical seminaries, including Fuller Theological Seminary, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and Calvin Theological Seminary. Though she has written scholarly works related to gender roles and missions history, Tucker is best known as a master popularizer of the latter topic. Her award-winning book *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions*, first published in 1983, is one of the most widely used popular introductions to the history of Christian missions. In *Parade of Faith: A Biographical History of the Christian Church*, Tucker applies this same method to general church history.

As with most church history surveys, Tucker adopts a more or less chronological structure in her book. Each chapter begins with a personal anecdote followed by some introductory comments to provide context. The bulk of each chapter, however, focuses upon key individuals who epitomize the era under consideration. Smaller information boxes provide biographical synopses of other prominent figures. The style is narrative, focusing upon events rather than ideas. Each chapter includes a helpful list of suggested readings, most of which are either classic studies or recent scholarly monographs.

Tucker's results are mixed. She provides an "earthiness" in her storytelling that is missing in many church history textbooks. She gives us a glimpse into the actual lives of noteworthy Christians from bygone eras, though at times it can be difficult to tell the difference between known historical facts and Tucker's own musings. Despite the possible presence of some speculative biographical work in some instances, the emphasis on

individual stories is a welcome contribution. Another major positive is the extensive treatment that missionary pioneers receive in *Parade of Faith*, not at all surprising considering the author's longtime interest in global missions. Tucker demonstrates as well as anyone that church history is, in many ways, the history of the advance of Christianity.

Unfortunately, there are some shortcomings to the work that detract from its usefulness. Tucker is a well-known proponent of egalitarianism, and her biases come out in nearly every chapter. On the one hand, her sensitivity to the stories of Christian women cause her to give helpful introductions to some of the more influential women in church history. Many readers will appreciate this facet of *Parade of Faith*. On the other hand, at times some of the choices seem forced. For example, Macrina receives greater treatment than the Cappadocian Fathers. While Macrina is no doubt an important, even inspiring figure, it is doubtful her role in Christian history is more influential than her brothers Basil and Gregory. Jacob Arminius is relegated to a small information box in a chapter where Susanna Wesley—important, to be sure—receives as much treatment as her far more influential son, John. The legendary "Pope Joan" gets a short section to herself, yet feminist theology, a very influential topic, is almost totally neglected, presumably because there is no evangelical-friendly role model to put forward. Tucker almost always tells us which male figures were progressive in their views of women and which were more regressive. These opinions are, of course, colored by her own views of the matter.

Two additional weaknesses in the book are its lack of attention to social history and its insufficient engagement with historical theology. This is no doubt due to Tucker's emphasis on personal biography. The result is an often overly "preachy" approach to church history that lacks nuance and treats ideas as secondary to narrative. The exception, of course, are figures with more proto-feminist ideas about gender roles or figures whom Tucker is attempting to rehabilitate for an evangelical audience (see her discussion of Peter Abelard, for example).

Though Tucker intends for *Parade of Faith* to be used as a college and seminary textbook, I cannot recommend it for classroom use at those levels because of the aforementioned shortcomings. The narrative, popular style seems better suited for use in Christian high schools, homeschooling families, and local church reading groups, though complementarian readers will need to note the egalitarian flavor of the book. Though *Parade of Faith* would not make an ideal church history textbook, every church history professor should keep it close at hand when preparing lecture notes. Whether you agree with Tucker or not, she is a master storyteller. She will no doubt help many professors to be better lecturers and introduce them to a treasure trove of helpful stories to share in the classroom. This will help professors to bring individuals from church history to life for students. Though it is not the wide adoption Tucker understandably hopes for, I would argue that this would be a most welcome legacy for *Parade of Faith*.

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Documents of the Christian Church, by Henry Bettenson and Chris Maunder, eds. Fourth ed., New York: Oxford University Press, 2011, 528 pp., $29.95 paper; and *Creeds, Councils and Controversies: Documents Illustrating the History of the Church, AD 337–461*. By James Stevenson, ed. Third ed., Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012, 504 pp., $45.00 paper.

The student of the history of the Church faces an arduous task: he or she must read widely in close to two thousand years of Christian historical texts and must also have an awareness of the global reach of the faith, especially in the past two hundred years or so. Sourcebooks are an indispensable aid for such an endeavor, and church historians in the last fifty years or so have been well served by a number of standard readers like these two works, both of which have seen

a number of editions since their initial publication.

Henry Bettenson's *Documents of the Christian Church* was first published in 1943, when Bettenson was in his mid-thirties. Bettenson saw this valuable collection through a second edition in 1963, and since his death in 1979, it has gone through two further editions, in 1999 and now in 2011. This most recent edition by Chris Maunder, who teaches religious studies at York St. John University, contains a number of significant additions in such areas as the globalization of Christianity—including a passage from the excellent work of Philip Jenkins (439–440)—the challenges of world poverty and various economic issues (442–451), domestic violence and the sexual abuse of children (469–472), climate change (474–478), Islamic terrorism (478–482), genetic engineering (494–497), and the internet (498–500). What is missing, from the point of view of this reviewer, are more documents that illustrate the massive growth of evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity. There is a small section on Pentecostal theology on 440–442, where it is admitted that Pentecostalism is the "fastest growing [wing of the universal Church] in the twenty-first century" (440). But there is nothing about nineteenth- or twentieth-century evangelicalism—and precious little on that of the eighteenth century, for that matter (for a sole selection about Wesleyan Methodism, see 334–337)—and its successful propagation of the faith in the West and around the world. What is well illustrated is the troubled course of the Church of England. But can anyone familiar with the theological patterns of biblical orthodoxy in the first nineteen centuries of Christianity really deem most of modern occidental Anglicanism to be a faithful representation of those patterns? Thus, while the earlier sections of this work that deal with the church up until the seventeenth century are an extremely helpful selection of sources, there really is a need for a work that focuses on sources of evangelicalism in the last three hundred years.

James Stevenson (1901–1983), one-time Fellow of Downing College, Cambridge, intended his first edition of *Creeds, Councils and Controversies* (1966) to be a re-tooling of a work covering the same period of time by the Anglican minister Beresford James Kidd (1864–1948) that had been published in 1920. A second edition of Stevenson's work, revised by the Patristic scholar W. H. C. Frend (1916–2005), involved significant additions, especially with regard to the theology of the Cappadocians and the Christological controversies of the fifth century. Frend also reorganized the entire work so that the student of this era could more easily find all of the texts relating to the various Fathers. Thus, for example, all of the Augustine material was now grouped together in such a way as to provide an excellent documentary summary of the career and works of the North African theologian (239–281).

This third edition entails a re-typesetting of the entire work in an attractive format and font, as well as the correction of a few typographical errors of the second edition. It is probably inevitable that teachers of the era covered in this volume will feel that there are lacunae. This reviewer is no exception. I would definitely have included a longer section from Nyssen's life of his sister Macrina (for a small selection, see 112), which is quite a remarkable example of early monastic piety and, in the opinion of this writer, a much more attractive piece than Athanasius's life of Antony. Given the importance of Augustine's theological account of his conversion in his *Confessions*—to which a number of selections are devoted (see 239–248)—it would have been quite helpful to also have the account of Hilary's embrace of Christianity at the beginning of his important work on the Trinity. These quibbles aside, however, Stevenson's and Frend's selection is an excellent tool for the study of the Church's theology and experience in late antiquity.

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The Early Church on Killing: A Comprehensive Sourcebook on War, Abortion, and Capital Punishment. By Ronald J. Sider, ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012, 216 pp., $27.99 cloth.

War, like poverty, is a constant feature of human life. Often fed by the love of empire and desire for domination, or ethnic pride and hatred of other peoples, or even religious zeal, men go into battle to kill or be killed. Wives are widowed, young women lose their sweethearts, children their fathers, parents their sons, sisters their brothers. In fact, in this past century, when "wars and rumors of wars" have abounded, more civilians have been killed than combatants. And in the latter half of this century of bloody conflict, there has also been a war waged against the unborn. In the past forty years, literally millions of unborn children in the West, to name but one area of the world, have been "legally" slaughtered in the womb. And while capital punishment has been banned in many Western democracies, the twentieth century witnessed the state murder of literally millions. Beginning with the Ottoman Empire's slaughter of the Armenians, other regimes like Nazi Germany, Stalinist Russia, Maoist China, and the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia have killed massive numbers of their own citizens.

Now, how should Christians think about these devastating features of human existence? As with many other areas of human experience, it is helpful to reflect on the way our Christian forebears have thought about these issues. In this sourcebook Ron Sider provides a reader of early Christian literature that deals with these three areas of violent death. The sourcebook seeks to make available all of the literature on this subject of violent killing from the pre-Constantinian era (100–312). Sider also provides, in a lengthy "Afterword" (163–195) an evaluation of the evidence. It should occasion no surprise for those familiar with Sider's work that he concludes from the evidence that the pre-Constantinian Church was overwhelmingly opposed to the killing of any human being, whether in war, or by state execution, or through an abortionist's scalpel.

With regard to early Christian thinking about abortion, there has been little difference of opinion among scholars: "eight different authors in eleven different writings mention abortion" (165) and they all explicitly condemn it. Modern Christian opposition to abortion as unmitigated murder has a solid pedigree in the early church's witness. There is less material on the issue of capital punishment: four authors—Tertullian, Origen, Lactantius, and the *Apostolic Tradition*—all argue that a Christian must not participate in the execution of criminals, though there are two texts—from the pens of Adamantius and Methodius of Olympus—that would permit the execution of adulterers (166–168).

The greatest area of dispute has been in the whole realm of early Christian participation in war. A number of scholars, of whom John Helgeland, Robert Daly, and Peter Leithart are the most persuasive, have argued that early Christian problems with service in the military had much more to do with the idolatry of the Roman army than with a principled opposition to war. Drawing upon the evidence that he has assembled in this volume, Sider rejects this view and maintains that "up until the time of Constantine, there is not a single Christian writer known to us who says that it is legitimate for Christians to kill [in war] or join the military" (190). While Sider is quite prepared to admit that there were "certainly substantial numbers of Christians" in the army during the era covered by this book (185–190, quote from 190), he is adamant that the emergence of the just war tradition only came with the embrace of Christianity by the leaders of the Roman imperium. Yet, as Sider also admits, it is noteworthy that there is no evidence of any significant controversy about this change in attitude to war—as J. T. Johnson has noted in his *Quest for Peace*. And how does one account for the large presence of Christians in the Roman army if the pre-Constantinian church was overwhelmingly pacifist (193)? These queries need answering before Sider's thesis can be embraced. But he has given us a great place to begin answering these questions in this sourcebook of early Christian texts on violent death in late antiquity.

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Godly Ambition: John Stott and the Evangelical Movement. By Alister Chapman. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012, 160 pp., $55.00 cloth.

Published the year after John Stott's death, Alister Chapman's *Godly Ambition* attempts to make sense of the man who was arguably the most significant evangelical thinker and writer on both sides of the Atlantic from the 1950s until the early twentieth century. Chapman, who teaches history at Westmont College, had access to Stott's papers to write this interpretation of Stott's life (162, fn. 14).

Chapman did not intend to write a biography of Stott. Instead he paints a picture of Stott's ministry that seeks to understand how the changes in his local church, his denomination, and his society led to changing emphases in Stott's ministry roles and doctrinal stances. He does this under the rubric of "ambition," trying to let readers into the mind of Stott as he navigated the changing landscape of the West. Stott was gifted intellectually. He was also driven to impact others and lead them. As Britain became more and more post-Christian, Stott first saw that his local parish provided him little opportunity to use his gifts. So he sought a wider ministry in Anglicanism and in broader evangelicalism. When even this sphere of influence shrunk, Stott changed his arena of ministry to the less developed world. The picture that emerges is of a man with great desires for influence ("ambition"). But his desires are in a godly direction, so he is forced to adjust his focus as the culture changes in directions that are less receptive to his godly influence.

Chapman's introduction clarifies his argument, drawing attention to Stott's context. During the early years of his ministry, evangelicalism was prominent and one of the fastest growing religious movements in the world (4). Stott rode that wave of success until things began to crumble in the 1960s. Stott went from the experience of "revival" to that of "marginalization" (7). But Stott still wanted Christianity to influence his world. As Chapman summarizes: Stott "was both a Christian seeking to honor God and a very talented man who believed he had key roles to play in God's work in the world and wanted to play them. In short, he combined two things that might seem incongruous: godliness and ambition." These, however, were hard to combine at times in Stott's experience, for "godly ambition and selfish ambition were sometimes hard to tell apart. . . . Being ambitious for Christ's sake was a heady mix" (8). "Ambitious" and "godly," though filled with tension, describe Stott's complex ministry.

The heart of the book consists of six chapters. In chapter one, "Conversion," Chapman gives readers insight into Stott's privileged family of birth and his distinguished education in English public (i.e., private) schools and at Cambridge. The most important event in his life happened while at boarding school, in Feb. 1938, where Stott converted to the evangelical faith and was born again (13) under the influence of Eric Nash, a conservative evangelical influenced by American fundamentalism (15-16). Nash targeted schools like Stott's because of the potential for leaders to come out of such privileged institutions (17). Stott embraced the fundamentalism of Nash. Against his father's wishes, partly because he was a pacifist, Stott pursued ministry in the Anglican church, being ordained in 1945 (30). Chapman highlights Stott's conflicted relationship with his father who wanted his gifted son to go into a lucrative career. Stott had two primary motivations as he entered a London pastorate in the mid 1940s. First, he wanted to prove to his father that he had not let him down by becoming a pastor: "Yes, he had decided to become a clergyman, but he was going to be a great one" (23). Second, Stott was optimistic about the future of Christianity in postwar Britain, especially a Christianity shorn of its fundamentalist accoutrements. Stott would lead the charge of a revived, heady evangelicalism in this optimistic era (29-30).

In chapter two, "Students," Chapman uses Stott's

ministry to students in London and on university campuses to distill "many of the opportunities and difficulties Stott faced in the changing culture of postwar Britain" (31). Two key features of Stott's ministry stand out. First of all, it was a time of great success in evangelism. Postwar Britain up until the turbulent 1960s was conservative. There was great moral and spiritual interest after the evil and devastation of the war, and the cold-war opponent was atheistic Communism. Stott saw tremendous spiritual fruit from evangelistic crusades, especially at the ancient universities of Oxford and Cambridge. In this period Stott "dreamed of renewed cultural influence, of an age where church and society might be united again in a Christian moral order" (40). Second, Stott strategically shaped his ministry to influence students whom he knew would become the country's future leaders (33). His Enlightenment notion that the gospel was primarily intellectual gained a wide hearing in these days (36-37). In an effort to reach the postwar generation, Stott also shed more of his fundamentalist background, especially its belligerence (42, 46). He also willingly associated himself with Billy Graham when the American came to Cambridge in 1955 (34, 40), because of the way Graham encouraged him "to keep moving away from the margins of society" (41). Stott's successes in the 1940s and 1950s encouraged him in the hope that in the future Britain might be transformed for Christ (51). He just needed to figure out how to do it after the rebellion of the 1960s.

In the third chapter, "Parishioners," Chapman charts the course of Stott's ministry at London's All Souls Church, Langham Place, where he began on staff in 1945 and of which he became rector in 1950. Stott's drive and determination to make an impact in London are central in Chapman's telling as is Stott's high estimate of his abilities. "What was striking was Stott's drive and confidence. . . . Stott was not afraid of leadership: he desired, expected, and sought it" (56). Stott, who remained single his whole life to be better able to minister the gospel (63-4), poured himself into reaching the parish, with many innovations including two services—one for the educated class and one designed for the working class (68)—but he was frustrated by the lack of response. Society was changing in the 1960s and fewer people were interested in religious issues (68-72). Increasingly he saw Britain as in need of revival. "By the late 1960s, he was lamenting the demise of Christian England" (72). In addition, the staff of All Souls grew discontented with Stott's frequent absences and his concern for issues bigger than his local parish, so he resigned from his position there as rector in 1970 (75). As Chapman tells the story, the issue was largely Stott's desire for greater influence than he could have among the middle-class parishioners who were coming to All Souls (76).

Chapter four, "Anglicans," charts Stott's involvement in the politics of the Church of England, in light of his growing alienation with his own parish. The shift to denominational emphases, Chapman avers, demonstrates both "cultural changes in British society and Stott's evolving ambitions" (79). Stott's ministry within the Anglican church at first focused on getting as many evangelicals into parish ministry as possible. Again, though, he had greater ambitions, "a desire for greater responsibility within the Church of England" (89), specifically hoping to become a bishop (90), especially as his parish ministry was not as fruitful as he hoped. In this context, Chapman analyzes the strained relationship between Stott and Martin Lloyd-Jones, focused in 1966, seeing it primarily as indicative of two different approaches to a changing culture. "Lloyd-Jones and Stott made different responses to the unnerving reality of a post-Protestant Britain. The culture was changing, and Stott wanted to move with it" (95). As it became apparent that Stott would not be able to influence the church as a staunch evangelical, he was willing to be "much more open to other points of view" (99), alienating the more conservative wing of the church but never being a liberal theologically. Effectively, he became a man without a country and so backed out of Anglican politics by 1984 (101-7). Like J. I. Packer, Stott's most fruitful ministry would become outside the United Kingdom. "Abroad, he saw new places, preached to adoring crowds, and

enjoyed bird-watching" (110).

First, though, Stott tried one last-ditch effort to reach Britain for Christ, not abandoning the gospel but adding another emphasis to it. "Stott had become convinced that Christian engagement with wider social issues was crucial to the success of the gospel in England and beyond" (113). Chapman recounts this episode of Stott's career in chapter five, "Society." Whereas Stott preached in 1966 that "the commission of the Church . . . is not to reform society, but to preach the Gospel," the next year he emphasized that "social action was an integral part of the Great Commission" (117-18). Stott made a tactical decision that he had to distance himself from "his instinctual conservatism." Therefore, he "started to drift left" (121). Capitalism, evangelicals' pietistic bent, opposition to all abortions, and abuse of the environment—all these came under Stott's attack. Writing on Christian social action and seeking to get others involved in this new direction encompassed Stott's efforts in this area, which were, he said, his ambition or "the desire to succeed" (130).

The final chapter, "World," crystallizes the story Chapman tells us. Stott abandoned the dry fields of Britain for the fertile fields elsewhere, first western Europe and North America and then the two-thirds world. In the process, Stott was both quintessentially a British evangelical (with an emphasis on the understated presentation of truth and its reception in a person's intellect) and also more and more open to diverse theologies. He especially began to teach that Christians needed to engage in poverty reduction as well as gospel preaching. This led to his growing estrangement from established evangelical stalwarts like Billy Graham and J. I. Packer. Surprisingly, though, it also led to his prominence in the Lausanne movement and to greater prestige around the world. In fact, Stott became "the key figure in contemporary world evangelicalism. . . . He had become an evangelical icon" (141). In Chapman's telling of the story, these events happened because of Stott's ambition to be renowned and used. When he "did not receive the recognition in England that he desired," Stott intentionally sought for other areas of usefulness (133). Chapman discounts Dudley-Smith's contention that Stott had no desire for leadership of worldwide evangelicalism, charging instead that Stott knew what he was doing when, for instance, he challenged Graham to include social action in the Lausanne covenant (143). Stott knew he had a "role he wanted to play and believed he should play, for the sake of Christ's kingdom. But the line between godly and selfish ambition was sometimes hard to tell," and Stott thus had an uneasy conscience about it (143-44). The battle between "ambitious" and "godly" seemed to be won by the former.

Readers seeking biographical details about John Stott will be better served by Timothy Dudley-Smith's two volumes. Those who want to understand how Stott's changing theological emphases (a component of Stott's life sorely lacking in Chapman's book) mirrored changes in other evangelical leaders of the time will benefit from Iain Murray's *Evangelicalism Divided*. If, however, one desires to trace the way in which changes in the twentieth century culture were combated and also mirrored by one evangelical leader, and if one desires an attempt at understanding "why Stott did what he did and thought as he did" (6)—sometimes, I fear, without substantial support of the evaluations offered—then Chapman's book will be helpful. It is an interpretive book, especially helpful for American readers who are experiencing in our day some of the cultural shifts Stott lived through decades ago. As we seek to live faithfully in tumultuous times, learning from the good and the ill of John Stott's godly ambitions may help us to chart a God-honoring course.

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