Book Reviews

Evangelical Theology: A Biblical and Systematic Introduction. By Michael F. Bird. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013, 912 pp., $49.99.

Writing a systematic theology has to be among the more difficult scholarly tasks. The breadth of disciplinary competence needed is staggering. Add to that, especially in the case of a single volume text, the need to condense, summarize, emphasize, and omit, and inevitably, the result is not only a text that is understandably not exhaustive, but one that reflects the strengths and weaknesses attending those authorial and editorial decisions. This is one of the reasons that I believe the writing of systematic theologies will and ought to continue. For my part, having the ability to consult multiple systematic theologies affords benefits on par with the ability to consult multiple commentaries.

There are some unique, though certainly lesser, challenges that attend the attempt to provide a succinct review of a systematic theology as substantial as Michael Bird's *Evangelical Theology*, which, lack of exhaustiveness aside, still weighs in at over 900 pages! Clearly, such a book is too lengthy to summarize in any detail. So, rather than trying to focus on everything in it, I want to: 1) give a brief bit of background on the author, 2) point out a few of his conclusions to give a flavor for where he comes down theologically, 3) and then interact with Bird's primary premise for the book.

Bird is a lecturer in theology at Ridley Melbourne College of Mission and Ministry in Melbourne, Australia. He writes with great wit, often in a conversational tone that is easy to follow. His principal scholarly training has been in biblical studies, where he has already published several volumes. His application of redemptive history to the study of systematic theology is one Bird's recurring strong suits. Additionally, in *Evangelical Theology*, Bird demonstrates a strong historical grasp that can at times be underemphasized in single-volume systematic texts. Bird opens the book with some comments concerning his theological and denominational pilgrimage, which has left him at the point of being a "Reformed type" attracted to the evangelical catholicity of the Anglican tradition (23-24). His self-proclaimed intent in

this volume is to position his theology opposite the extreme left and right wings of the theological spectrum (22-23).

Noting the following features of *Evangelical Theology* will help to sharpen the reader's grasp of Bird's theological description. For starters, it is always encouraging to hear a biblical studies scholar say he believes that, with a sufficient self-criticalness, it is possible to do systematic theology (60-61). Bird's treatment of doctrines like the Trinity (2.2) and the incarnation (4.7) are thoughtful, historically informed, and orthodox. In the case of the latter, I was particularly pleased with his analysis of the Son's preexistence in relation to the kenosis theory of the incarnation (465-68). In the case of the former, he maintains the functional subordination of the Son to the Father, while rejecting the notion, contra 1 Corinthians 11:3, that this relationship translates into any kind of pattern for husbands and wives (119-120).

In his chapter on creation (2.4), Bird upholds the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*. Soteriologically, Bird is Calvinistic (514-37, 595-605) with an Amyraldian view of the extent of the atonement (420-34). In one of his more rhetorically charged sections, Bird strongly objects to the imputation of Christ's active obedience (562-64). When it comes to his view on modes of the atonement, Bird believes that the penal substitutionary model of the atonement has solid biblical footing, but he prefers the Christus Victor model as the "crucial integrative hub of the atonement" (414). Ecclesiologically, Bird foregoes a discussion of the relevance of gender as it pertains to ministry roles like that of elder in local congregations. He additionally contends for the practice of "dual baptism" (768-71) and a Reformed view of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper with an advocacy for open communion (787-801). Bird is very good on inaugurated eschatology (3.2). He further self-describes as preterist (3.3), an historic premillennialist, and a posttribulationist (3.4).

Finally, two observations concerning Bird's doctrine of scripture warrant mention as well. First, while Bird seeks to maintain a high view of scripture, he is not a fan of the word "inerrant" outside of the North American context, noting that he prefers to state "the truthfulness of the Christian Bible in positive terms as 'veracity'" (644). Secondly, he does not believe that scripture warrants its own locus in systematic theology (196, 638). So, what Bird does have to say about scripture, pops up in a few places, but mainly in a subsection of his treatment of the work of the Holy Spirit.

Bird proposes that a unique anchoring of theology in the gospel will be the primary distinguishing feature of his systematic text. His self-stated intent is to make "the evangel the beginning, center, boundary, and interpre-

tive theme" of all "the various loci of Christian theology" (21). In principle, this overarching emphasis on keeping the gospel at the center of theology is both valuable and correct. There is much to commend here, and overall, Bird does a good job of keeping the gospel integrated into the explicit center of his work throughout the loci of systematic theology.

And yet, my main observation about *Evangelical Theology* is that what Bird proposes to do here may not be quite as revolutionary (in contrast to previous evangelical systematic texts) as he suggests. At the outset of *Evangelical Theology*, Bird remarks that he did not believe that such a gospel-driven systematic textbook yet exists (11). Following such a claim, I was curious to see how Bird would write his theology. Was he of the opinion that the loci in their traditional form were insufficiently anchored in the gospel? What would be the ripple effects throughout his theology?

As it turns out, Bird's attempt to write from a self-conscious gospel-centered perspective, did not really lead him to profoundly reconceive the traditional loci, or even the sub-topics therein, of systematic theology. He did rearrange the traditional sequence in some places (e.g. writing on eschatology in the first third of the book rather than at the end, not treating scripture as its own locus, treating anthropology after Christology and soteriology, etc.). But it seems that in keeping with most of the traditional loci, Bird himself recognizes the inherent gospel structure already underlying traditional presentations of systematic theology. The gospel begins with the identity and work of God. So the doctrine of the Trinity, for example, then is very naturally not just an outworking of the gospel, but the foundation of it. So also with Christology, soteriology, kingdom, and so on.

I take it then that Bird himself understands the loci as expressions of the gospel in and of themselves, and that they do not need to be fundamentally repurposed to accommodate the gospel, but only that what is implicit in them in some cases can at times be made more explicit and perhaps better arranged in some instances. Again, insofar as his agenda was to keep the gospel explicitly front-and-center (as opposed to assumed and implicit) throughout his work, I believe he was largely successful. But I do not think that *Evangelical Theology* is a radical reorientation of systematics in that it supplies something that was lacking heretofore since there has been a gospel logic underlying systematics.

In further point of that fact, I am of the opinion that the places where Bird chose to rearrange the major loci actually served to diminish rather than enhance their natural gospel logic. I think this is especially pronounced in the case of treating anthropology and sin after Christology, soteriology, and

pneumatology. There is a basic gospel logic to understanding what humans were made for, and what we lost as a result of sin, that is the precondition to understanding why the good news is good news in the first place. I was also dissatisfied with the apparent conclusion that a gospel-centered theology displaces a doctrine of scripture from full theological consideration. Scripture is, after all, the covenant document of the gospel that recounts and applies the mighty acts of God in creation and redemption to the people of God in every generation. So, I do not agree that the doctrine of scripture should be marginally incorporated into a gospel-centered theology.

Two final comments are needed in light of Bird's gospel-centric agenda. The first is that his commitment to being Gospel-centered sometimes leads him to truncate what he calls "secondary issues," such as baptism. The problem is that while these issues may be secondary in the sense of not being, in themselves, a basis for salvation, they are intimately connected to the gospel as expressions of and witnesses to it. So, while I understand and applaud Bird's desire for gospel unity, I do not believe that the practice of "dual baptism" according to preference is a valid way to pursue that goal. For that would serve to diminish the witness of the meaning of baptism to the gospel in the context of the new covenant. Finally, as much as there is to commend about the gospel-centeredness of *Evangelical Theology*, I do think that some of that gospel gain is undercut when Bird diminishes the category of Christ's active obedience, and even condemns it as Pelagian in orientation.

Clearly then, I disagree with some of Bird's conclusions, and sharply so in a few cases. But, on the whole, I am grateful for the way Bird has exerted himself to write a theology that keeps the gospel in explicit focus throughout. As a result, I find that *Evangelical Theology* does make a valuable contribution to the field of systematic texts. I remain of the opinion that systematic theologies (again like commentaries) are best read in the form of a conversation with multiple contributors. Of the contemporary evangelical theologies available, I find that I still primarily gravitate toward Grudem (accentuated nicely by Allison), Frame, and Erickson. *Evangelical Theology* will not displace these volumes as my preferred text to assign to students in my introductory courses in systematic theology, but it is definitely worth having on the shelf as one of several significant systematic theologies worthy of repeated consultation and conversation.

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Four Views on the Historical Adam. Edited by Matthew Barrett and Ardel B. Caneday. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013, 288 pp., $19.99 paper.

We live in an era of multiview books, and frequently they help to introduce debates surrounding important issues. This book does just that, though the details can bewilder readers getting their first look at this controversy. At times complex theological and scientific particulars might obscure the big picture, but in the end this *Four Views* book achieves the goal of presenting "the primary views on Adam held by evangelicals" (back cover).

First up is the "No Historical Adam: Evolutionary Creation View" by Denis O. Lamoureux, associate professor of Science and Religion at St. Joseph's College in the University of Alberta. He describes his position as "evolutionary creation" through an "intelligent-design reflecting natural process" (37). "Evolution" for Lamoureux usually seems to mean universal common descent. But he describes the process as intelligently designed, not a product of "blind chance," and thus rejects the atheistic interpretation of evolution (43).

Just what Lamoureux means by an intelligently designed evolution is not quite clear. But he clearly distances himself from the intelligent design movement. He charges intelligent design theorists such as Phillip Johnson and Michael Behe with having "distorted the biblical notion of design" by utilizing a god-of-the-gaps strategy (40, fn.5). Lamoureux alleges that the intelligent design strategy wrongly pits evolution against design, but nowhere details what the Bible teaches on design. The closest he comes is a reference to "beauty, complexity, and functionality" in nature (40). He even distances himself from theistic evolutionists who "attempt to pin Adam on the tail end of evolution" (64). For Lamoureux, believing that God used common descent to bring about the first man mistakenly continues the traditional special creation of the historical Adam.

Belief in a special divine creation of Adam is due to misunderstanding the true nature of the Bible according to Lamoureux. He argues the Bible contains as its message inerrant spiritual truths, but also includes incidental scientific errors. An example of such an error would include the ancient belief that God directly created the first man as the fount of the human race. "To use technical terminology, *Adam is the retrojective conclusion of an ancient taxonomy.* And since ancient science does not align with physical reality, it follows that *Adam never existed"* (58). Moreover, Lamoureux contends that genuine "history in the Bible begins roughly around Genesis 12 with Abraham" (44).

Therefore, Lamoureux rejects concordism, the idea that "the facts of science align with the Bible" (45). The Bible itself, he says, reveals concordism to be false when it teaches geocentrism, a three-tiered universe, a solid firmament, the immutability of animals, and the special creation of Adam. Lamoureux asks: "Do you see the problem? God's *very words* . . . in the Book of God's Words do not align with physical reality in the Book of God's Works. To state this problem more incisively, *holy scripture makes statements about how God created the heavens that in fact never happened"* (54, emphasis his). Now this does not mean God lied, instead he accommodated his revelation to the scientific ignorance of that ancient culture. Even Jesus, according to Lamoureux, accommodated his hearers by utilizing ancient (i.e., erroneous) science in his teachings. Thus, doctrines about the historical Adam specially created by God are simply based on scientific error, but the error is only incidental to the Bible's spiritual message.

Lamoureux writes clearly, leaves no doubt as to his views, and takes great pains to present them irenically. His personal history records that he is a born-again Christian who once zealously advocated for young earth creationism. And though his journey through seminary and graduate science training led him to his current view, his doctrinal commitments are grounded in pastoral concern. Lamoureux desires those convinced of the evolution of the human race not miss what is central to Christian faith: the sacrificial death and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In response to this first essay, John Collins notes that although Lamoureux rejects scientific concordism, he nonetheless accepts a kind of historical concordism aligning biblical events with historical facts. Why then does Lamoureux not believe Genesis 1-11 historical? Moreover, Lamoureux often fails to distinguish what the biblical author says from what Lamoureux understands the author to be saying. According to Collins, Lamoureux never seems to entertain the notion that his understanding of "ancient science" in the biblical texts is mistaken. William Barrick's response to the essay is blunt: "Perhaps a born-again believer could deny Adam's historical existence without losing his or her saving relationship to Christ and everlasting forgiveness of sins. However, although it might not be a salvation issue, the matter is still a gospel issue" (80). Lamoureux's rejoinder to Barrick is equally direct: "I am disappointed by Barrick's thinly veiled questioning of my salvation" (88).

I wish Lamoureux had clarified what he means by an intelligently designed world. He chides intelligent design theorists for holding to a god-of-the-gaps view, seemingly indicating agreement with methodological naturalists' rejection of *any and all* scientific design inferences. But what then

separates Lamoureux from the "atheistic interpretation"? Does he believe the creation objectively reflects intelligent design? If not, it seems he is left with a subjective fideism. Adding to the criticism of Collins, I would add that Lamoureux uncritically pits scientific "facts" against the Bible. But both "books" require interpretation. Not only may he be misinterpreting the Bible (does the Bible really teach the immutability of animals, geocentrism, etc.). But he also makes it appear to his readers that science never gets its theories wrong, or oversteps its boundaries by parading metaphysical assumptions as scientific fact.

Lamoureux accepts the real history of Jesus but rejects the "ancient science" of the Bible. But if modern science is embedded in methodological naturalism, its philosophical kin in mainstream historiography rejects the supernaturalism of the historical Jesus, not to mention all other biblical reports of miracles. Classic theological liberals have also culled spiritual truths out of the Bible while rejecting its ancient and errant worldview. But they, perhaps more consistently than Lamoureux, reject not only the ancient "science" but also the inextricable ancient "history." For example, they say that Jesus's exorcisms reflect not actual historical accounts of the supernatural but an antiquated pre-scientific understanding of mental illness. Lamoureux's goal of removing unnecessary intellectual stumbling blocks to faith in Jesus is laudable. But his method in rejecting the historical Adam unwittingly aids rejection of the historical Jesus.

John H. Walton, professor of Old Testament at Wheaton College Graduate School, provides the next essay, "A Historical Adam: Archetypal Creation View." Against Lamoureux, Walton believes Adam and Eve were historical persons, but the Bible is more interested in presenting them as archetypes for our instruction. Genesis 2, then, is not making claims about the material or biological origins of humanity. The Bible, therefore, is not competing with science on the issue and says nothing regarding Adam and Eve as the first humans or parents of the race.

On the other hand, since Adam is included in biblical genealogies, Walton believes Adam was genuinely historical. But again, the emphasis is archetypal because Adam's name means "humankind." Being formed from the dust indicates Adam's mortality, not a description of his biochemical makeup. Walton argues that the Bible's message is "Adam is all of us" rather than "All of us came from Adam." Walton does not deny that the latter is *possible*, just that the Bible does not *explicitly teach it*. Walton believes he is in line with the doctrine of inerrancy because, unlike the view of Lamoureux, the Bible is not making specific scientific or historical claims about the material origins of Adam and Eve (117).

Walton presents the novel possibility that Genesis 2 is not an elaboration of the sixth day creation of Adam and Eve. Perhaps it refers to a sequel of events that occurred much later. In this case it is possible many other humans were already living, but God chose Adam and Eve to be the representatives of the human race. Walton stresses this is only a possibility which allows humans to have pre-existed Adam and Eve. If this is true, "then the Bible will not stand opposed to any views that science might offer (e.g., evolutionary models or population genetics), as long as God is not eliminated from the picture" (112-13). Christians need not uncritically accept the scientific consensus, but if this view is correct, no biblical interpreter is in a position to say that the Bible is in conflict with that consensus. Walton concludes, "Godless people are going to choose evolution as their origins model, but evolution is not inherently godless" (116).

Lamoureux responds that Walton's archetypal emphasis resembles his stress upon the message rather the incidentals. But Lamoureux finds it indefensible to claim the Bible has nothing to say about Adam's material origins, even if the Bible is wrong on the issue. Collins argues that Walton's Adam-as-archetype emphasis is misplaced because "the paradigmatic get its power from the historical" (132). Moreover, Jesus understood Genesis 2 to refer to the sixth day by his combining Genesis 1.27 and 2.24 in Matthew 19:3-9 and Mark 10:2-9.

In the end, Walton retains the historical Adam while leaving open the possibility that God used common descent to produce the material from which Adam sprang. Walton avoids pitting the Bible against evolutionary anthropology as does Lamoureux. But Walton's hermeneutic doesn't enjoy the simpler thesis of Lamoureux. Sorting out how Genesis teaches the historicity of Adam but nothing about his origins is no easy feat. Moreover as documented by Collins and Barrick, the Bible seems throughout not only to teach that Adam existed, but also that he was the first man from whom all of us came.

"A Historical Adam: Old-Earth Creation View" by C. John Collins, Professor of Old Testament at Covenant Theological Seminary, is next in line. He argues that Adam and Eve serve as the necessary assumption for the entire biblical story and "were both real persons at the headwaters of humankind" (143). But he distinguishes his view from both young earth and evolutionary creationists whose hermeneutic insists historicity demands a literal reading. Collins takes the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy to be the wise evangelical approach to these matters. Unless the text demands it, historical material need not be written in prose, complete

in detail, or arranged in exact chronological order.

Collins also utilizes the approach of Francis Schaeffer when apparent conflicts between science and theology arise. The strategy enjoys the freedom to recognize reasonable alternatives which harmonize apparent conflicts. At the same time, there are limits to the alternatives drawn by "basic biblical concepts and good human judgment" (168). Applied to the debate at hand, Collins believes the biblical texts invite a historical reading "without getting bogged down in details" (169).

Thus pertaining to the historicity of Adam, Collins employs the three ideas of Schaeffer, and one of his own. First, the origin of the human race must be conceived as supernatural. Second, Adam and Eve are the headwaters of the human race. Third, the fall was both historical and moral. The fourth, the proposal of Collins, particularly concerns itself with population genetics. If anyone believes the current human genetic makeup necessitates more than two humans at the outset, then Adam could be considered the "chieftain" of a closely related tribe. "This tribe 'fell' under the leadership of Adam and Eve" (172). Collins makes clear that, with Schaeffer, he rejects universal common descent as inadequate both scientifically and theologically.

In response Lamoureux takes Collins to task for employing a god-of-the-gaps strategy in asserting God specially and supernaturally created Adam and Eve. Collins's rejoins that a god-of-the-gaps strategy employs the supernatural when one cannot find natural explanations. But that is quite different from recognizing something in principle remains naturalistically inexplicable. Walton notes that Collins holds on to the material discontinuity of Adam and Eve (that is, they were specially and supernaturally created), and that as the headwaters of the human race they have passed on their genetics to the human race. But Walton chides Collins for lack of specifics about the "Adam as head of tribe" possibility, seeming to leave open the door to a view like Walton's with the questions its raises. I wish Collins would have answered whether that theory means God created an entire tribe *de novo* with the requisite gene pool with Adam chosen as its head? If so, how then do Adam and Eve function as the "headwaters" of the human race as Collins insists? Readers might be forgiven for suspecting the solution has too many moving parts. But though the view will strike many readers odd, Collins rejects universal common descent unlike Walton. Barrick stresses his primary difference with Collins pertains to the dating of creation. He regards old earth creationism as yielding to the opinions of evolutionary scientists, whereas his "young-earth view does not accept reinterpreting the scrip-

tures to force it into the evolutionary mold (191)." Since the editors' treat the age of the earth in some detail, I will address Barrick's oft repeated charge in reviewing their introduction later.

The last essay is "A Historical Adam: Young-Earth Creation View," by William D. Barrick, Professor of Old Testament at the Master's Seminary. Barrick contends that Adam's historicity is foundational to biblical inerrancy and authority. His argument can be summarized by several of his representative statements. Without "a historical first Adam there is no need for Jesus, the second Adam, to undo the first Adam's sin and its results" (197). "Arguments used to deny the historicity of the first Adam can be equally applied to the historicity of the second Adam" (204). "Denial of the historicity of Adam, like denial of the historicity of Christ's resurrection, destroys the foundations of the Christian faith" (223). Moreover, Barrick presents a case from the general sweep of the Bible that Adam must be construed as the historical head of the human race. And as he made clear in his responses to the other three contributors, Barrick rejects accommodation to evolutionary science. Barrick obviously has Lamoureux and Walton in mind here with their openness to universal common descent. But Collins also apparently accommodates "evolutionary science" with his old earth view. And just as Collins had primarily distinguished his view from Barrick by holding to an old earth, Barrick develops traditional arguments for understanding the days of Genesis as six, twenty-four hour consecutive days which then necessitates a recent creation.

In response, Lamoureux chides Barrick for including the historicity of Adam in the gospel. "The gospel is about Jesus Christ, not about Adam. The gospel is about the reality of sin, not how sin entered the world" (229). He goes on to accuse Barrick of discouraging respectful dialogue by utilizing emotional outburst instead of logical argument. Lamoureux complains Barrick is content with tradition rather than the Bible as sufficient for adopting a specific interpretation.

Walton criticizes Barrick's method and rhetoric, noting that often Barrick refutes authors not involved with this book. And when Barrick does interact with this book's contributors, Walton charges him with sometimes misrepresenting them and employing the slippery slope fallacy to reject views other than his own. At the same time Walton charges Barrick with inadequately presenting evidence for his own view. I think it fair to say that Barrick does provide far less detail than the others in discussing how his view intersects with the related science issues. Walton's upbraiding continues: "Academic debate should not resort to such scare tactics and defamation" (238). "This

is no way to construct an argument. . . . Pontification does not constitute successful argumentation" (240).

Collins notes how often Barrick cites agreement with him. But he regrets Barrick's failure to utilize the widely accepted *Chicago Statement* for his definition of inerrancy. Collins points out that the framers included old earth creationists, thus not tying inerrancy to the age of the earth. He urges Barrick to stop referring to all non-young-earth views as evolutionary, and notes that belief in inerrancy never circumvents interpretive issues. Finally, Collins finds Barrick's suggestion "astonishing" (250) that consulting ancient Near Eastern materials for help understanding biblical culture is tantamount to skepticism.

Early in his rejoinder Barrick asks forgiveness "for any unintentional misrepresentation of their viewpoints" (252). He next points out he will be equally forgiving for those who criticize his view with over-simplified caricature. Barrick draws a line in the sand between young and old earth views regarding the historicity of Adam. He contends the difference "appears in a variety of ways by which some biblical scholars choose to reduce or minimize the historical accuracy of the biblical text" (252). And he insists that even "if an old-earth proponent rejects evolutionary theory, he relies on human scientific authority to arrive at adherence to partial biblical inerrancy. That is our chief difference" (254).

In many ways, the "pastoral reflections" concluding the book traverse ground covered in the main essays. Greg Boyd, senior pastor at Woodland Hills Church in St. Paul, MN, relays his experience coming to grips with these issues. His narrative and views are broadly similar to those of Lamoureux. Boyd does not see the historicity of Adam as central to biblical orthodoxy. Regrettably Boyd alludes to "the history of the western church's battles with science" (261). This depiction is simply false and carries on the Draper-White "conflict" thesis of the late nineteenth century. Historians of science have discredited this view for decades, but the narrative is still popular in portraying Christians as anti-science.

Philip G. Ryken, president of Wheaton College, concludes the book with his pastoral reflection. He writes that denial of the historical Adam is not tantamount to denying the Christian faith. But his final word strikes me as wise. "Since at many points denying Adam's existence appears to be inconsistent with Christian orthodoxy, those who hold this view have the burden to prove how it strengthens rather than weakens an evangelical commitment to the universality of sin and guilt, the possibility of justification, the hope of resurrection, and other necessary doctrines of the Christian faith" (279).

I now turn to the editors' introduction because my remarks regarding it are best served here. Editors Matthew Barrett, Assistant Professor of Christian Studies at California Baptist University, and Ardel B. Caneday, Professor of New Testament in Greek at Northwestern University, St. Paul, are to be applauded for putting together a quality lineup to address a critically important issue. Their introduction contains much that helpfully sets the stage for what follows. Unfortunately, a significant portion of their contribution can unintentionally mislead readers.

They commence their historical reflections by discussing Christian responses to Darwinism. But their analysis begins with the age of the earth, then turns to "evolution" by which they apparently mean universal common descent, and then returns to the age of the earth (15). The early impression left on the uninformed reader is that old earth views first arrive with Darwin's *The Origin of Species* in 1859. The unaware might also justifiably conclude that old earth views are "evolutionary" in nature.

The confusing narrative continues. When discussing *The Fundamentals* (1910-1915), the editors allude to some of its contributors holding to "limited forms of evolution" (17). Their example of this is the old earth view of James Orr. But they note Orr strongly opposed an animals-to-Adam view, and that even his position on animal biological change was a "revolt against Darwinism" (18). Adding to the puzzlement, they point out that not only young earth proponents rejected "evolution," but that old earth creationism represented by the *Scofield Reference Bible,* William Jennings Bryan of Scopes Trial fame, and William B. Riley, the founder of the World Christian Fundamentals Association held strong anti-evolutionist views. They could have included the staunchly anti-Darwinian Charles Hodge, James P. Boyce, and Charles Spurgeon.

Indeed, the overwhelming majority of scholarly anti-Darwinist books written in the century following publication of *The Origin of Species* were written by old earth creationists. The reason was simple—most Christian leaders *were* old earth creationists because that view had largely been adopted *before* Darwinism. The editors seem to recognize this when writing that old earth creationism predated Darwin's book by fifty years, and "how revolutionary six-day-young-earth creationism was in the middle of the last century" among evangelicals and fundamentalists (19). Yet, the introduction continues discounting the similarities between old and young earth creationists while no doubt unintentionally depicting the young earth view as the solidly biblical alternative.

For example, the editors describe the old earth creationism of John

Collins as not precluding "some evolutionary processes or long intervals in the biblical days of creation," but at the same time he "remains critical of theistic evolution, at least in its strongest forms" (32). But the editors provide no examples of just what "evolutionary processes" Collins would endorse. They seem to suggest that holding an old earth view requires acceptance of some form of evolution. On the other hand, the editors portray William Barrick's young earth view as siding with scripture in its claim to contradict "theories of modern science (i.e., evolution)" (34). Again, how Barrick accomplishes all this is never spelled out, simply asserted. Further they declare that "how one understands the days of Genesis, evolutionary theory, and even the age of the earth to a certain extent will impact, in one way or another, what one believes about Adam and Eve" (25). Though clumping "evolutionary theory" with age of the earth issues, the editors never explain how the age of the earth affects beliefs about Adam. In fact, old earth creationists like those mentioned above have for more than a century and a half have held to both a recent special creation of Adam and firm rejection of universal common descent. Happily the editors do better in concluding their introduction by rightly noting that the central issue should be "human biological evolution" (36), seeming to mean what Darwin teaches in his 1871 book, *The Descent of Man*.

In closing this review, I have several recommendations for readers interested in the subject. Read this book, but recognize beforehand that the complex issues involved require more background knowledge than the book offers. The first priority should be to get the history of the relationship between theology and science right. Notice the distinction should be between science and theology as two *theory-laden* disciplines based upon the *facts* of creation and the Bible. Only God perfectly understands His creation and His written Word, and only God understands them perfectly in relation to one another.

Happily the history of their relationship has not been one of conflict but complexity. The church has endured only two major conflicts between theology and science, if by "major" we refer to length of time and breadth of influence. The first major conflict was, of course, the Copernican. Scientists and theologians alike believed in an earth-centered universe. *Theologians misinterpreted the Bible just as scientists misread the creation*. Several generations of scientific discovery from Copernicus to Kepler to Newton confirmed the truth of heliocentrism. Over time the church came to recognize its mistake in accepting the ancient geocentric interpretation of astronomy and the Bible. But this by no means entails that science always gets it right and theology wrong when they clash.

The second science versus theology battle, the Darwinian conflict, has not yet been resolved. Darwin brilliantly discovered how natural "selective" pressures played a role similar to that of trait selection in breeding domesticated species. But his extrapolation from natural selection to universal common descent including human beings continues to be largely rejected by conservative Christians more than a century and a half later. Moreover, when in the wake of Darwinism some contemporary scientists loudly proclaim that the natural world reveals no Creator, this says more about the philosophy of naturalism than the advance of scientific knowledge. *Naturalistic assumptions distort scientists' reading of creation.* Nonetheless, conservative Christians should not suspiciously pigeonhole every science/theology issue into Darwinian categories.

Second, let us strive for philosophical clarity. For instance, definitions determine whether debaters are even discussing the same issues. Terms such as "*evolutionary theory"* or "evolution" are oft used but rarely defined in this book. Darwin's *Origin* itself contains at least three major "evolutionary" notions. (a) Natural selection as the critical explanation for biological change; (b) common descent, the shared ancestry of virtually all living things including human beings; (c) metaphysical naturalism, the notion that Darwinian biology necessitates understanding life as bereft of God's design.

The book betrays no clear working definition of "evolution" for all contributors. On one extreme Lamoureux seems to view the concept as a straightforward scientific fact comprised of universal common descent ensconced in methodological naturalism, the dictate that scientific theories must never entertain supernatural explanations. On the opposite extreme, Barrick never defines "evolution," yet seems to include even those who reject common descent and methodological naturalism. In other words, "evolution" for Barrick seems as much about the age of the earth as anything else: "The old earth view yields to the opinions of evolutionary scientists about the age of the earth and about the process of evolution—just like the view of Lamoureux and Walton" (191). But Barrick's "young-earth view does not accept reinterpreting the scriptures to force it into the evolutionary mold (191)." Only Collins provides a clear multifaceted explanation of the ways the term is commonly used (172).

Another oft word used in the book that suffered from lack of definition is "inerrancy." Every contributor claims to be faithful not only to a high view of biblical inspiration, but to inerrancy. Lamoureux honestly admits that the Bible contains scientific errors but has as its message "inerrant, life-changing, spiritual truths" (41). Walton concludes that Genesis is not telling us

anything about the material origins of the historical Adam and Eve, and since inerrancy has to do only with what the Bible claims, then evolutionary anthropology in general provides no threat to biblical inerrancy (117). And, as we've seen, Collins and Barrick seem to disagree whether the *Chicago Statement* is adequate to define the concept. Unfortunately, the reader with little background knowledge of the historical inerrancy debate suffers a real disadvantage at this point. Even Jehovah's Witnesses claim ownership of the interpretation of the inerrant Bible. But doctrinal content is what matters, not claims of word ownership.

And on biblical interpretation, the reader also should approach this book with more than a little background in hermeneutics. The contributors argue for their respective interpretive principles, and the reader ultimately must discriminate between them with little help from the book. For example, claims to take the biblical text straightforwardly or literally may sound appealing. But apparently literal interpretation is not so straightforward when both Lamoureux and Barrick claim the same approach with such different results. And these strange bedfellows both criticize Collins for reading Genesis with the intent to appease science. Collins reproves them for assuming to know his private motives, when they are entitled to inspect only what he writes.

So, a book which helpfully puts the reader on track to understand a basic doctrinal issue is nonetheless surprisingly complex. Many readers will not realize their pathway to a theology of Adam wends through a frightening scientific, historical, and philosophical minefield. And though daunting issues lie beneath the surface, even much of the visible terrain will be unfamiliar to many. Talk of humans predating the "first" man, or Adam as tribal leader surely will appear odd to the uninitiated. And though the four contributors representatively cover a range of options, quite different versions of each could have been selected with a different set of intricacies and attitudes.

Notwithstanding the challenge, determining the borders of doctrinal orthodoxy on such a vital issue is necessary. This doctrine imbues and informs us regarding whence we came, what is wrong with us, and ultimately how we can be saved. I believe those borders need be clearly defined in the following way. Adam does represent "everyman" *because* he was the first man. His story illumines *because* it is history. Adam is unique *because* he was specially created *de novo*, not descended from animal forms. And most significantly, Adam's rebellion has brought to ruin the entire race which flows from him *because* he is the fountainhead creature made in God's image. And *because* of the first man, Adam, a fallen race unable to rescue itself finds deliverance

only in the last Adam, the second man from heaven.

In the end, the Lord is under no constraint to make every detail clear to us, but believers can and must stand firm on the matters he has revealed, including the nature of the race descended from Adam. Yet patience and humility regarding difficult particulars are perfectly consonant with resting in the assumption that his word and truth are in complete concord.

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Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures, vol. 1. Edited by Richard Bauckham, James R. Davila, and Alexander Panayotov. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013, 848 pp., $90 cloth.

In November 2013, Eerdmans officially released this new volume of supplementary Old Testament pseudepigraphical texts. The book contains thirty-nine English translations of ancient texts or collected fragments, with introductions and notes by specialists. This work is the first of a planned two-volume series that purports to finish the publishing in English of all significant Old Testament pseudepigrapha up to the beginning of the seventh century A.D.

Many persons reading this book review will hear in the title of this new volume an echo of James Charlesworth's standard two-volume *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Indeed, Charlesworth has written a very nice foreword for this new supplementary text. Let's remind ourselves that in the introduction to his own influential volumes, Charlesworth explained his criteria for including specific writings in the category of pseudepigrapha:

> The present description of the Pseudepigrapha is as follows: Those writings (1) that, with the exception of *Ahiqar*, are Jewish or Christian; (2) that are often attributed to ideal figures in Israel's past; (3) that customarily claim to contain God's word or message; (4) that frequently build upon ideas and narratives present in the OT; (5) and that almost always were composed either during the period 200 B.C. to A.D. 200 or, though late, apparently preserve, albeit in edited form, Jewish traditions that date from that period (*Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1: xxv).

This present Eerdmans volume of Old Testament pseudepigrapha is designed to supplement Charlesworth's set of pseudepigraphical texts. It also expands the definition of Old Testament pseudepigrapha to include not only Jewish-rooted documents, but also Christian and pagan works, some with only tenuous connections with Old Testament biblical figures (the pronouncements of the Tiburtine Sibyl, for example). Also, as mentioned earlier, the featured works extend to the early seventh century. An additional forty ancient texts or collections of fragments are slated for a second volume with the caveat that the actual contents may change by time of publication. (The current volume with thirty-nine texts does cause one to wonder if some fortieth truant scholar failed to submit his or her work on time and was thus summarily booted from the project!)

In the introduction to the *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, the editors fire a warning shot over the bow of foolhardy non-specialists like myself. They note, "Within New Testament Studies the Old Testament pseudepigrapha have sometimes been abused by scholars who have merely plundered them for parallels to the language and ideas of the New Testament writings." And a-plundering we shall go.

The New Testament faculty and New Testament doctoral students at Southern Seminary obtained a pre-publication copy of the new *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* and discussed it as a gathered colloquium weekly in the Spring of 2013. From these discussions emerged numerous insights to inform background studies, current trends in scholarship, and ongoing debates in biblical studies. Below, I will survey some of our observations.

Two preliminary observations are in order, however. First, I should note that students as a whole were a bit disappointed to discover how late many of the documents in the *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* were. Students had indeed hoped to plunder the documents for helpful parallels to the first century, but many of the works were too late for such roguish thievery. Second, in our weekly reading, it quickly became apparent that the various translators of the ancient texts were not uniform in their understanding and practice of translation theory. Some of the works were translated with a more functionally equivalent approach, and others with a more formally equivalent method. Likewise, in a few cases, the translations clearly lacked proper final editing by a competent native English speaker. (For example, in *The Syriac History of Joseph*, Potiphar's wife is referred to as Joseph's "mistress.") Our colloquium made extensive editorial suggestions for the portions that we read, but a quick check of the

published manuscript shows that not all of those changes made it into the final publication.

Each week, all colloquium participants read the same ancient text, along with any introductory or explanatory material provided in the *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*. We then went section by section through the text discussing ways that the document informed or intersected current debates in biblical scholarship or raised questions with biblical parallels. From my perspective (a biased perspective as I organized the colloquium), it was a very fruitful exercise—gathering as a community, seeing new texts, and seeing new things in new texts. We have some very established and knowledgeable New Testament scholars at our seminary. One week I asked if *anyone* had ever read the text we were discussing that day. No one had. In fact, I don't think anyone had even heard of the text, or maybe only one person had. This is one of the benefits of the present volume. Drawing from an obscure body of ancient texts of this sort levels the playing field between faculty and students, so that the joy and serendipity of new discovery does not always fall to the most experienced.

I will now discuss two reasons why I think it is worthwhile for a non-Old Testament pseudepigrapha specialist to acquire, read, and possibly include in class reading, texts from this new supplementary volume—especially in an upper level class.

1. The *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* is an example of the current flourishing interest in ancient literature produced alongside of and in reflection upon our canonical scriptures

This new Eerdmans volume illustrates the ongoing trend toward appreciating and re-appropriating ancient reflections. Every major publisher now seems to have their own ancient commentary or ancient text series. Historical-grammatical exegesis has been declared dead, and the superiority of precritical exegesis is asserted.

Nevertheless, historical-grammatical exegesis, personified, might borrow the words of Mark Twain: "The reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated."

Without giving up the good emphasis on the historical-grammatical, author-intended meaning of a text, we can hopefully shed the chronological snobbery of modern biblical scholarship. Eerdmans's new Old Testament pseudepigrapha volume is another step in the right direction of the democracy of the dead—not allowing current biblical discussion to be ruled simply by the majority of living voices.

It should be noted that overlapping closely with Eerdmans's *Old Testa-*

ment Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures is a three-volume joint publication of the University of Nebraska Press and the Jewish Publication Society entitled *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture*. The work (published December, 2013) purports to bring together portions of the Septuagint, Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Josephus, Dead Sea Scrolls, and Philo. The volumes are unique in emphasizing the common Jewish and scriptural roots of these diverse texts dating from the Babylonian exile to the completion of the Mishnah.

Rather than simply reading summaries of what people thought in ancient times, how wonderful it is for students to discover such information for themselves through the reading of actual ancient texts! I was recently reminded how important it is to know other ancient texts in responding to distortions of biblical Christianity. I was asked by a church member about a book by self-proclaimed biblical scholar Joseph Atwill, who asserts in his book *Caesar's Messiah* that Christianity is a fanciful story dreamed up by the Romans as part of a political machination. Knowing a few ancient Roman writers' treatments of Christianity (Tacitus, Pliny, and Suetonius, for example) exposes Atwill's thesis as complete nonsense.

2. This Old Testament pseudepigrapha supplement illustrates several issues that are very popular and sometimes debated in biblical studies.

We will now look at a few of these issues in a bit more detail.

(a) *Inerrancy*. A generation ago, Jack Rogers and Donald McKim argued that inerrancy was the creation of scholastic Protestantism. Though John Woodbridge answered this erroneous theory effectively, yet it persists. A reading of early Christian and Jewish reflection in the *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, however, shows that early Jews and Christians viewed the patriarchs and early historical narratives in the Bible as *both* theologically instructive *and* historically accurate. We see this, for example, in the treatment of Melchizedek in *The Story of Melchizedek*—one of the works in this volume. Ancient Christian authors did *not* believe the canonical scriptures contained error.

(b) *Questions of Genre and Hermeneutics*. It seems that the issue of genre and the rules for interpreting genres should be able to be discussed dispassionately. But, in fact, this area of scholarship can be quite controversial.

The issue of labeling particular portions of the gospels as apocalyptic in genre, for example, has recently stirred quite a bit of controversy. When the same issues are illustrated with noncanonical literature, however, it is easi-

er for scholars with diverse views to hear objectively the other side's arguments. Considering apocalyptic imagery in various pseudepigraphical texts for example, is neutral ground on which to build a taxonomy for evaluating the genre of debated canonical text.

(c) *Rewritten Bible*. "Rewritten scripture" or "Rewritten Bible" is a term apparently coined by Geza Vermes more than fifty years ago to describe an ancient writing which expansively retells stories from the Bible. In looking at noncanonical rewritten scripture, it does raise the question: How much of this phenomenon (if any) do we see in the New Testament, in Hebrews 11, for example? And, what interpretive freedom did the re-teller of the story have in his craft?

One text in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, the *Midrash Vayissa'u*, describes in expansive detail the wars fought by Jacob and his sons against the Ninevites, the Amorites, and Esau and his sons. Southern Seminary doctoral students Dan Maketansky and Michael Graham traced the rising prominence of Judah in these "rewritten" scriptures as the tribe of the Messiah's ancestry was exalted by later Jewish interpreters.

This trend is also seen in the *Syriac History of Joseph* (another text in the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures), in which Joseph warns his servant, "Watch out and be careful of the hairy man Judah, because if he is provoked to anger and the separate hairs of his chest stand on end, all Egypt will be accounted as nothing in his eyes" (39:3).

About the rising prominence of Judah in ancient Jewish and Christian writings, Maketansky and Graham conclude:

> The theme of the prominence of Judah through specific statements and subtle allusions to key OT figures and narratives in the Pseudepigrapha is paralleled in the New Testament, specifically in the Gospels. Within the Gospels, the authors demonstrate this interpretive trend in order to elevate Jesus of Nazareth. This understanding of an interpretive trend, both in the Pseudepigrapha and the Gospels, comes alongside of recent scholarly discussion. That is, scholars are beginning to see that authors of scripture are not simply using specific citations from the OT to develop their arguments. Rather, they are using these references to draw upon a body of knowledge with which the community is familiar.

(d) *Reception History*. Tracing the way a text has been "received" or understood throughout church history has come to be known as "reception history." One of the doctoral students in our colloquium (Adam Smith) traced the interpretation of John 19:34 (the flow of blood and water from

Jesus' side) from early church fathers up through the sixteenth century. On this journey through reception history, a significant contribution was made by the sixth-century text, *Cave of Treasures* from the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures.

(e) *Intertextuality*. Studying how later sacred text pick up and employ earlier sacred text is all the rage, if one can judge the movement by the appearance of the word "intertextuality" in the titles of articles, chapters, books, and professional society papers. The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures provides some fresh, largely unplowed ground in which to explore the rich field of intertextuality. One of our doctoral students, Matthew McMains produced a nice study of intertextuality in 5 Ezra, showing how the author of the work was dependent linguistically and thematically on the canonical book of Revelation.

(f) *Background Issues*. Background issues get a bad rap these days, and there are dangers here. We can all point to resources that use the New Testament text as springboard to talk about ancient matters that do not materially affect our understanding of the biblical text. Many scholars now completely ignore important background issues, focusing entirely on literary and canonical readings. But, the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha supplement reminds us that the Bible did not come to us a *New York Times* bestseller (a modern book by one author), but as a series of ancient works in a variety of cultural, political, and linguistic contexts.

Knowing the cultural and historical background can, at the very least, bring the distinctive aspects of biblical teaching into sharper relief. One such example of this use of historical backgrounds is doctoral student Chris Byerly's comparison of the noncanonical *Exorcistic Psalms of David and Solomon* with the exorcism accounts in the New Testament. Byerly concludes:

> The picture of Jesus painted by the gospels, however, tells a much different story [from the Exorcistic Psalms]. Jesus's commands—devoid of any incantation or other common exorcistic technique—are powerful enough to cast out even a great host of demons (Mark 5), and his mere presence strikes fear into the hearts of the evil spirits. Not only does Jesus not require the typical exorcistic strategies, but his authority over the evil spirits is so great that they frequently attempt to utilize these strategies against Jesus. Just as early exorcists had to employ at times complicated formulae and techniques to gain control over a foe that clearly outmatched them, so the demons (and Satan himself!) in the gospels must resort to similar strategies, as they recognize they are no match for the one who stands before them. Therefore, it

> is not surprising that Mark tells us that the fame of Jesus spread throughout the region, as witnesses cried out in wonder, "What is this? . . . He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." (Mark 1:27-28)

We make one final note on these noncanonical exorcistic pslams: It is commonly observed that in Jesus's temptation narrative (Matt 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13), both Jesus and the devil quote Old Testament texts. What is not widely recognized is that the only text which the devil employs (Ps. 91) was frequently used in early Jewish exorcistic circles. The irony of the devil seeking to control Jesus with a common exorcistic formula would likely not have escaped Matthew's original Jewish audience.

Conclusion

Martin Luther recognized that many ancient writings outside of scripture had disappeared in his day. Of course, Luther was not thinking of the Old Testament pseudepigrapha, but the church fathers. In the preface to the Wittenberg edition of his German writings (1539), Luther says, "We need not regret that the books of many fathers and councils have, by God's grace, disappeared. If they had all remained in existence, no room would be left for anything but books; and yet all of them together would not have improved on what one finds in the holy scriptures." I agree with Luther that no improvement can be made on the holy scriptures, but I am grateful that the texts in the *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* have survived and are now available to us in this fine new volume.

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Preaching: A Biblical Theology. By Jason C. Meyer. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013. 368pp., $22.99 paper.

Before becoming the Pastor for Preaching and Vision at Bethlehem Baptist Church, Jason Meyer served as associate professor of New Testament at Bethlehem College and Seminary in Minneapolis, MN. His research arenas include homiletics, New Testament interpretation, and New Testament language. He earned his Ph.D. in New Testament from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Meyer's work, *Preaching: A Biblical Theology*, advocates a

Christ-centered homiletic informed by a biblical theology of the ministry of the word throughout redemptive history.

Concerned that many pastors "no longer tremble at the task of preaching" (11), Meyer calls readers of his work, *Preaching: A Biblical Theology*, "back to the Bible" as they labor to be faithful in their homiletical endeavors (13). He attempts, therefore, to employ a biblical theology of the ministry of the word with the hope that it will allow the entire Bible itself to provide a "*holistic answer to what is preaching*" (14, emphasis original). His aim, then, in making manifest this biblical theology of the ministry of the word throughout scripture is for the purpose of "making much of Christ in his word" (305). Thus, he centers his discussion of biblical theology in relation to preaching around three "big-picture categories that best sum up the ministry of the word in scripture: stewarding, heralding, and encountering" (21). He characterizes the ministry of the word in his book as "stewarding and heralding God's word in such a way that people encounter God through his word" (21).

Meyer's work is a complex analysis of homiletical methods and hermeneutical paradigms as they relate to this biblical theology for the faithful stewardship of the word that it may be heralded with compelling accuracy. Thus, his work seeks to ascertain from systematic theology which approach to preaching (i.e., expository or topical) best explicates truths affirmed by evangelicals and then seeks to offer reflections on the place of topical homiletical methods (283-297). To explain the thesis of his work, Meyer subdivides his work into five sections: 1) "The Big Picture: Biblical Theology of the Ministry of the Word," 2) "A Survey of Paradigm Shifts in the Ministry of the Word" 3) "Expository Preaching Today," 4) "Soundings from Systematic Theology," and 5) "Conclusions and Applications." This review will highlight salient points from each of the various sections the reviewer found to be particularly insightful or helpful throughout Meyer's work.

In part one (19-72) Meyer is concerned with what the Bible affirms about the ministry of the word throughout scripture. This section, according to Meyer, is vital to making sense of his work as a whole (14). Interestingly, in this section Meyer does not merely place the burden of homiletical stewardship on the preacher. Rather, he contends that faithful wielding of the sword of the Spirit shifts the burden from the preacher to the hearer (27, 258-259). For this to take place, though, the preacher must unleash the power of the word "in such a way that people encounter God through his word" by his faithfulness to the scripture (31). Faithfulness, for Meyer, includes both "fidelity" to the message revealed in the Bible by the man preaching as well as a man who is full of "faith" (32).

Further, in this section of his work, Meyer seeks to establish the fact that the Bible is not simply a textbook utilized for preaching; it is a story (36). As a story, the "main aim of preaching is not the transfer of information, but an encounter with the living God" (11). To establish that the Bible is one unified story, Meyer offers a "seven-step summary" of the scriptural narrative from Genesis to Revelation using biblical-theological categories (39-42). His summary of the biblical narrative utilizes the Hebrew ordering of the canon instead of the English ordering because he is convinced that "one can better follow the interplay between narrative and commentary sections" (38). Further, his summary of the biblical narrative seeks to make manifest the connection between "the structure of scripture and the story of scripture" (43). Using two vantage points—the view from above (44) and the view from below (45)—Meyer seeks to show that the view from above enables preachers to interpret the view from below as they look backward and forward in the biblical narrative while employing biblical theology in relation to the ministry of the word (53, 59). For Meyer, employing these interpretive vantages enables the preacher to emphasize that "God will bring resolution to the strained song of creation by bringing about a new creation through the coming of the promised King and seed of the woman" (68). God employs faithful heraldic-stewards in bringing about the work of redemption and new creation (68-70).

In part two (73-234) Meyer zooms in on the details of what he calls "steward paradigms" in relation to this biblical theology for interpreters and heralds (72). These paradigms manifest the various types of persons God raised up in particular epochs as heraldic-stewards for the ministry of the word (75). His paradigms cover ten eras in relation to the ministry of the word—creation, covenant, law, Joshua and the Judges and Samuel, kingship, prophets, psalmists and scribes, the Son, the Apostles, and the pastor. For Meyer, the homiletical shifts of "who" is delivering the message are kinetic (69), whereas the "what" of their content—the revelation of the Messiah—is static. Though, he acknowledges progressive revelation throughout redemptive history, the central message has always been the messiah's coming and the messianic crushing of the serpent.

Part three (235-279) is intimately connected with part 1 and focuses on today's context in which we preach from scripture. He notes that the scripture never explicitly defines "expository preaching" nor explicitly advocates it as a homiletical method (237, 272). He contends, however, that expository preaching expresses the homiletical connection between stewarding and heralding biblical convictions (239). Therefore, he argues that preaching to-

day has three "r's": "(1) re-present the word of God in such a way that the preacher (2) represents the God of the word (3) so that people respond to God" (240). The aim of "re-presenting" the scripture accurately so that God is "represented" is textually informed application that demands a response from those who hear the Word proclaimed (250). Expository preaching, then, is a concept that is thoroughly biblical for Meyer (272, 297).

Finally, part four is concerned with substantiating whether "expository preaching" or "topical preaching" best fits with the truths affirmed by evangelicals (283). For, it is by means of the scripture that we interact with God (284). He concludes that topical preaching does not manifest a close reading of the relevant text(s) to substantiate one's claims, nor does it model for auditors how to read well through their homiletical intake of God's word (295-296).

Meyer's work, *Preaching: A Biblical Theology*, is text-centered and biblically saturated. Each chapter is rich not only with homiletical theories, but also with textual examples in order to demonstrate his claims. Additionally, Meyer is both lucid and provocative throughout, even when laboring to articulate his argument. Readers unfamiliar with the development of the ministry of the word throughout the history of biblical revelation will profit from Meyer's thought-provoking work. Meyer's concern throughout his book is encountering God through faithful heraldic-stewardship (21, 238, 284, 310). The preached word has always been intended to elicit positive responses in either first time repentance and faith or deeper repentance and faith toward God. His emphasis on encountering God through his proclaimed word refreshingly accentuates that the preaching enterprise is not primarily about the conveyance of information from the herald to the hearer. Rather, it is about making the Bible come alive through the medium of application so that transformation can take place. Thus, this work will be helpful to disciplined pastors wanting to study more intensely how to make concrete applications.

I have reservations concerning two aspects of Meyer's work. First, in the course of substantiating both the usefulness and power of expositional preaching, he seems to compartmentalize preaching as either expositional or topical. Meyer acknowledges that topical preaching is not inherently anti-textual—it can be done in a way that models faithful heraldic-stewardship (292). It seems, then, that well rounded preachers might develop a variety of sermon styles so that they are able more competently and compellingly to deliver the whole counsel of God to their auditors. Exposition, though anchored to the text of scripture, will look different for the homiletician preaching a doctrinal

sermon versus a narrative sermon versus a biblical-theological thematic sermon versus the rigid logic of some epistolary literature. The foe is not topical preaching per se. Rather, it is preaching unanchored to the Bible, whether it has the form of expositional preaching or the form of topical preaching.

Second, related to this compartmentalization, Meyer contends that the apostles were allowed to preach "non-expositional" sermons because of their epochal context (278). Their preaching, according to Meyer, was primarily evangelistic since they were not pastors heralding to a congregation; since they were not in the era of "pastoral shepherds" in which contemporary preachers currently find themselves (278). This contention, then, leads to a rebuke of preaching which incorporates multiple passages, like the apostles (279). This bifurcation (i.e. evangelistic preaching is non-expositional preaching) communicates that the preaching event is either evangelistically driven for the salvation of auditors or expositionally driven for the building of auditors. Tim Keller, in his lecture "Preaching to Believers and Unbelievers," suggests helpfully that the homiletical event must simultaneously build the congregation and evangelistically address outsiders so that the former are equipped to fulfill the work of the Great Commission and the latter are urged to respond to the proclaimed gospel invitation. Moreover, it was the Good Shepherd, Jesus, who modeled homiletically for the disciples how to herald the message of repentance and forgiveness of sins since the Kingdom had dawned in his person (Matt 4:10; Luke 24:27, 44-47; John 10:11, 14). Jesus himself preached to both believers and unbelievers, though only those with "ears to hear" responded (Matt 12:46-13:58). Meyer rightly notes that preaching, then, must be moored to the scripture. Evangelistic or thematic or doctrinal or narratival sermons are not, it seems to me, inherently non-expositional.

Preachers will find Meyer's book extremely valuable. It's main contention is critical to faithful and effective preaching. It is thought-provoking and saturated with the biblical text. Indeed, his work not only has implications for understanding the biblical and theological revelation of the ministry of the word, but also for powerful expositional preaching as heraldic-stewards. Preachers will be challenged to proclaim the Bible more faithfully by studying this seminal work.

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Seeking the City: Wealth, Poverty, and Political Economy in Christian Perspective. By Tom Pratt Jr. and Chad Brand. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2013, 912 pp., $54.99 cloth.

As one reads Chad Brand's and Tom Pratt's *Seeking the City*, he finds a mix of history, philosophy, theology, ethics, economics, and public policy. They write: "What we are engaging in here is a dialogue that has in recent years taken on the name of 'theo-politics' and 'theo-economics.' We are entering the field of dialogue known as "political economy," and we are dealing with it from the standpoint of the Christian Bible, the Christian theological heritage, and biblical Christian ethics" (14).

It appears that they wanted to cover everything in one book. This is a large book with over 800 pages of text. Their reason for writing this massive tome is as follows; "There is so much misinformation in our churches about the way the market works and about the nature of 'just generosity' (to use a phrase that is being bantered around a lot these days) that we believe there is a needed corrective" (14).

As they go about making their corrective, they pull no punches and make it crystal clear that the free market system is compatible with the Christian worldview. At the same time, they also make it crystal clear that Marxism in all of it forms (socialism, fascism, and communism) is not compatible with a Christian worldview. They explain that only neo-orthodox theologians like the Niebuhrs held to a view that Marxism is consistent with a Christian worldview. At the time of these theologians, there were many who believed that the communist system was the model that would succeed in the long run. History proved the Niebuhrs and Karl Marx wrong. Still their understanding of scripture, history, and economics was deficient.

This book is divided into three main parts. The first part, "The way to the city: a biblical journey," provides an analysis of the scriptures as they relate to political economy. This section is very helpful for those who might have honest questions about the legitimacy of the free market. The next part is "The struggle for the city: Rome, Geneva, and the City on the Hill." This part provides a history of the development of economic thought. It shows that the free market economic system has a firm foundation in Christian thought. The last part of the book, "How Should We Live Then," provides some ethical analysis of the free market economic system.

This book has many strengths and only a few weaknesses. The strengths include the fact that the writing is clear. Brand and Pratt do an excellent job of communicating their ideas to their readers. In addition, they do a

fantastic job of explaining the ideas so that the average seminary student can understand them. It cannot be missed that this book is well researched. The extensive use of footnotes throughout the work shows the great care and detail that Brand and Pratt employ in their attempt to be as accurate as possible. They are always careful to not imply too much from the facts and it is obvious that they took great pains to carefully nuance their assessments .

The first weakness of the book is also one of its strengths. In the attempt to be comprehensive, the length of this book is its greatest weakness. Because it is so large, they authors have ensured that only a few people will read this book. The writers were aware that this is a weakness and so they wrote the following: "We do not apologize for this apparent failure to recognize the short attention span of the generation now enamored with 'flash gatherings' generated by short tweets on the internet" (31-32). It is not entirely clear who their target audience is for this book, although one might assume that it is seminary students.

Finally, I also thought that the extensive use of the term "capitalist" was problematic. "Capitalist" is problematic because it is a communist term for free markets. While many people use this term, I do not think that it is appropriate to cede ground to Marxists by using their terms.

All in all, the weaknesses of *Seeking the City* are small when compared to the strengths of the book. Consequently, I would strongly recommend this book to anyone who has questions about a Christian view of political economy. This is especially true for seminary Ph.D. students. Hopefully, more works of this type and quality will be published so that the church can both understand and advocate the right positions as they relate to public policy.

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