

# Reviews



**AT THE SCENT OF WATER: THE GROUND OF HOPE IN THE BOOK OF JOB**, by J. Gerald Janzen. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009. Pp. 137. \$16.00 (paper).

*At the Scent of Water* is neither a commentary nor a topical overview of the book of Job. Rather, J. Gerald Janzen presents a framework for reading and understanding the book of Job, one that emphasizes hope in times of suffering.

Janzen spends ample time describing this proposed framework before directly addressing the book of Job itself. He suggests that two paradigms for interacting with God are at work in the Old Testament. The kinship paradigm, associated with Abraham and the patriarchs, is one in which the deity functions largely as a parental figure who is active both in human births and in the fruitfulness of the land. The relationship between the deity and the patriarchs is characterized by conversation and by situational instructions given to the people by the deity. The society, then, functions in a parallel manner. Abraham and his descendants are dependent upon the fruitfulness of land and flock, and their clan structure is based less on strict rules than on instruction passed on from one generation to the next and situational discernment.

Moses' experience at Sinai ushered in the covenantal paradigm. At work throughout the majority of the Old Testament, the covenantal paradigm is based on a contractual relationship; YHWH is the supreme king and lawgiver, and the people are servants whose obligation it is to remain faithful to these laws and thus to the deity. This change in paradigms, however, is not a simple case of one replacing the other. Utilizing metaphors from both the computer world and developmental psychology, Janzen

suggests that the kinship paradigm does not disappear but remains underneath the covenantal paradigm, acting as a support for the covenantal paradigm and as a safety net when the covenantal paradigm fails.

In cases in which the covenantal paradigm breaks down, or in which adherence to this paradigm would lead to the extinction of the people of Israel, the relationship between deity and people reverts back to the kinship paradigm. A supreme example of this is in Exod 32, when Moses intercedes for the people after the golden calf incident. Rather than fulfilling the contractual obligations of the covenant, YHWH, at Moses' beseeching, recalls the kinship paradigm and chooses to respond in a manner consistent with that paradigm, thus showing mercy and sparing the people. YHWH and the people then move forward together, once again adopting the covenantal paradigm as their primary context for interaction. Janzen argues that such interplay between the paradigms is evident in the book of Job as well.

Job and his friends all live within the covenantal paradigm. Thus, to rationalize Job's suffering, Job's friends contend that Job must have broken the covenant by sinning in some way. Job contends that it is the deity who has violated the covenant by administering to Job consequences that he does not deserve. However, when Job seeks an audience with the deity, Job, seemingly unknowingly, begins to invoke the kinship paradigm. Although his words are fit for a courtroom and fit squarely into the covenantal paradigm, Job's actions belie an almost unconscious reliance upon the kinship paradigm. In Janzen's words, "Job stands *within* the domain of the court and its laws but he stands *upon* the primal relation with God that goes deeper than those laws" (96).

The deity, in turn, responds within the context of the kinship paradigm, addressing Job directly and moving out of the courtroom context into the world of wild nature where birthing and fruitfulness are key images. Additionally, the deity berates the friends for their unwavering adherence to the contractual relationship of the covenant and insists that it will be the intercession of Job, rather than faithfulness to covenantal obligations, that will again bring the friends into right relationship with the deity. Janzen spends several chapters unpacking the role that each paradigm plays in the book of Job, and in so doing explicates the hope he finds in the book.

Janzen seamlessly weaves poetry and personal anecdote into this work. This effectually emphasizes the primacy of the kinship paradigm and enables the reader to see how the book of Job might be a source of hope in one's life. An epilogue, in which Janzen relates three personal experiences with the book of Job, exemplifies this move. Neither prescribing a limited reading of the book of Job nor relegating the meaning of the book solely to personal interpretation, Janzen gives voice to the hope he has found in the book of Job and offers that experience and that hope to the reader.

One must read this book with a bit of patience. As stated above, the book of Job is not directly addressed until a third of the way into the book, and even then Janzen returns several times to the world of psychology to refine his argument about the framework from which he reads Job. The chapters, while ordered in a helpful manner, may not flow in the direction one expects. The book is well worth reading for all interested in the book of Job and for those wondering how the book of Job might be a resource in pastoral care relationships or in one's own life.

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**WHERE IS GOD? DIVINE ABSENCE IN THE HEBREW BIBLE**, by Joel S. Burnett. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010. Pp. 287. \$32.00 (cloth).

"The Hebrew Bible captures the theme of divine absence most poignantly in the question 'Where is God?'" writes Joel S. Burnett in his book titled with the same question (4). Burnett's aim is to "balance...the attention that often goes to the exceptional occasions of divine presence in the Bible" by considering "the more frequent portrayal of God's absence" (175). Yet, as quickly becomes evident, the question "Where is God?" addresses not only divine absence but also divine presence, for if God is experienced as absent from one location, his presence elsewhere is implied.

In Part I—"Relational Worlds"—Burnett explores the nature of the divine-human relationship in ancient Israel and throughout the ancient Near East, and discovers that these "were modeled on human...patronage relationships" (15), whereby persons not linked by blood to a patriarch could be incorporated into his household. "Being based in kinship," Burnett continues, "these divine-human ties represent the strongest bonds of faithfulness and loyalty imaginable" (25). It is for this reason that the perception of divine absence represents a crisis; as patriarch of the nation, God's presence is expected. At the same time, the nature of the relationship serves as a reminder that, even in moments of apparent absence, God remains bound to his people.

Part II—"Boundaries of Divine Presence and Absence in the World"—begins with an inquiry into the possibility of a "structural divine absence" which is built into the creation. Burnett notes that, in contrast to other ancient Near Eastern deities, the God of the Hebrew Bible is usually depicted as remaining aloof from the realm of the dead. This aloofness demonstrates God's status as a God of life. At the same time, that God can be present in realms often associated with death, such as the wilderness,

is made clear in the “traditions of the exodus and the Sinai covenant” (70). Burnett points out that “Whether God *can* or *will* enter death’s realm is beside the point” (75), for the Hebrew Bible does not answer this question. In this, God maintains a degree of mystery in his relations with humans.

Moving on to an exploration of the wisdom literature, Burnett observes that “from wisdom’s perspective, divine presence often appears as divine absence. Wisdom is concerned with discerning the difference between the two” (86). In the book of Proverbs, such wisdom is presented as available to humans. In Job and Ecclesiastes, however, the search for God is more difficult. Yet, despite Job’s initial difficulty in discerning God, in the end God does appear, “thus answering the concern for divine absence...with a distinct theodicy of presence” (111). In Ecclesiastes, by contrast, God remains elusive, but even this does not signal absolute divine absence. For Qohelet, God is present as the giver of the good things in life. Moreover, divine absence is understood as “a necessary complement to divine presence in the cycle...of life’s experience” (114).

Burnett next turns his attention to the Bible’s worship texts, focusing on the Psalms. In these, he notices an alternation between a sense of God’s presence and absence. Just as God is present in life but (mostly) absent from the realm of death, so God is present in the sanctuary and absent from the grave. Worship at the sanctuary celebrates the experience of God’s presence, whereas rituals of mourning indicate distance from God. Paradoxically, rituals of mourning move the mourner from grief to joy beyond grief, that is, from the location of God’s absence to the place of God’s presence.

Part III—“The Center of Divine Presence and Absence on Earth”—focuses on the depiction of the Jerusalem temple as the place of divine presence in the historical and prophetic books. Burnett points out that “With the loss of Jerusalem in the Babylonian de-

struction...this major locus of divine presence becomes the center of divine absence” (153). Yet, in Chronicles and in Ezra-Nehemiah the rebuilding of the temple and its city are recorded, and these become, once again, “the center of divine presence on earth” (173).

In Burnett’s exploration of the Hebrew Bible, divine absence and divine presence are tightly interwoven. Despite his occasional absence, God remains “a God who freely chooses relationships with humankind, a God whom human beings are free to seek, a God who responds” (178). This is good news, and yet I find this conclusion somewhat dissatisfying. In a way, Burnett answers the question “Where is God?” too thoroughly, demonstrating that it is a question which *can* be answered. But the moment it can be answered, it is no longer a question about absence, but a statement about presence.

Burnett approaches the Bible as a collection of completed narratives: the stories have been told in their entirety, and, in the end, God’s presence is assured, despite God’s absence at moments along the way. And yet, this completed story is not the whole story. The book of Job, for example, says more than what is said in God’s speeches. Moreover, although God’s eventual appearance may proclaim a “theodicy of presence” (111), whether this adequately answers Job’s experience of God’s absence is made unclear by the ambiguity of Job’s response to God in 42:6. God’s presence at the end does not negate Job’s experience of his absence in the middle. This is important, for, in this way, the book stands in solidarity with those who suffer, continuing to call God to task for his abandonment of those who need his presence, not eventually, but now.

Despite this privileging of the ends of stories, I recommend Burnett’s book for its thorough research into the Bible’s dealings with the question of divine absence, and its placement of the Bible in its ancient Near Eastern context. The book’s discussion of ancient ways of thinking about and relating to God (or gods) is

excellent; I found this interesting and highly informative. Burnett's book is a valuable conversation partner for those wishing to explore its title question, "Where is God?"

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**MARK'S JESUS: CHARACTERIZATION AS NARRATIVE CHRISTOLOGY**, by Elizabeth Struthers Malbon. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009. Pp. 286. \$39.95 (cloth).

Since the early years of the biblical narrative criticism, Elizabeth Struthers Malbon has played a key role in defining the practice. In *Mark's Jesus* she continues to challenge us with the radical difference narrative makes for interpretation. She plays close attention to the ways that the interplay of characters and the narrator construct a tensive Christology where no single voice can say everything that needs to be said.

Malbon moves through several narrative dynamics. "1. Enacted Christology: What Jesus Does" reminds us that many christological claims that Mark makes are grounded not in titles but in what Jesus does. The teaching, healing, exorcizing ministry of Jesus involves interaction with various other characters defining Jesus in their presence and *vis-à-vis* their activities. Jesus is unique in the gospel as the one character in relationship with all the others (52). The enactment of the in-breaking kingdom of God in their midst leads to his death.

"2. Projected Christologies: What Others Say" about Jesus notes that his identity for the hearer of the gospel is formed through a variety of voices speaking within the narrative arc. The characters project upon Jesus their sense of his identity. Jesus' own sense of self and the perspective of the narrator are privileged in sorting out who is naming Jesus faithfully. The

voices of John the Baptist, God, demons, supplicants, crowds, disciples, and detractors create a tapestry of claims about Jesus. For example, Malbon sees that Jesus is called by his name eighty times in the gospel, and seventy-five of those come from the narrator (61). The disciples and his opponents never say "Jesus." Also, the narrator never explicitly calls Jesus "Lord" (73). In fact, Malbon notes that attention to the two privileged voices reveals that the title "'King' does not have positive connotations in Mark's Gospel" (120). The Gospel does not redefine kingship in light of Jesus' suffering, but projects "antikingship" (121). Similarly, "Son of David" language for Jesus is rejected (161–169).

The heart of the book comes in "3. Deflected Christology: What Jesus Says in Response" and "4. Refracted Christology: What Jesus Says Instead." While we are not surprised that Jesus challenges the understanding of scribes, Pharisees, and disciples, Malbon also maps out tensions between Jesus and the narrator. While classic creeds provide a unitary confession of Jesus' identity, narrative allows for complexities a single voice cannot contain. The distinctive claims made by the narrator and Jesus spar with each other. The narrator's first words make huge claims about Jesus as the "anointed one, the Son of God." From the narrator's perspective this gospel is centered on Jesus. Yet from the perspective of the character named Jesus, what matters is God's in-breaking kingdom. He does not speak the narrator's lofty titles nor the narrator's understanding of what matters most. "Jesus' responses...*deflect* away from himself the recognition, honor (sincere or sarcastic), or attention a character, group of characters, or the narrator give" (130). Jesus points consistently in word and deed toward God alone. He attributes miracles to God's activity even when the characters confess him as the source. He uses the "theological passive" construction of "Son, your sins are forgiven" to put the emphasis on God as the source of forgiveness

(134). He speaks of divine necessity that drives his mission, using the Greek word *dei* or “it is necessary” (177). When he turns apocalyptic, he draws on Amos’s traditions of God darkening the sun (188). “No matter who keeps pointing to Jesus, the Markan Jesus keeps pointing to God” (150). Over and against those voices that confess Jesus with lofty titles, Jesus prefers consistently to speak of himself as “Son of Humanity” (all of chap. 4).

The rich tensions that Malbon uncovers serve an important purpose. She argues, “It would be a disservice to the simple complexity of the Markan narrative to drown out one voice or the other, or to otherwise ‘resolve’ this tension” (190). This construction of the Gospel is designed to engage the audience and draw them into the tension that no singular voice can resolve. It “presents Jesus the parabler as a parable, as one who teases others into active thought” (217).

Malbon has provided us with multiple ob-

servations that her argument renders so obvious that I wonder how we missed them for so long. Her principal observation of the tension that exists between narrator and Jesus is extraordinary. Yes, at times, she overstates the case. The passive construction allows for much more ambiguity than is allowed once it is dubbed a “theological passive”; “*dei*” is more enigmatic than Malbon’s “divine imperative” suggests; Jesus’ use of the Amos material must maintain its distinctiveness, so we should not drown out Jesus’ specific articulation with Amos’s voice. Nonetheless, the reader cannot deny that Malbon is onto something of earth-shaking importance.

Malbon counts herself among the many scholars who believe Mark originally was experienced in performance. As one who continues that tradition by performing Mark in its entirety, her book offers me a close reading that will surely enhance my performance of Mark in its “simple complexity.” Audiences

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hearing the distinctive voices in performance will get the difference these tensions make even more quickly than the silent reader of Malbon's wonderful book. Malbon has once again set the tone for engagement with Mark for years to come.

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**SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, ARISE!  
GOD'S FUTURE FOR HUMANITY  
AND THE EARTH**, by Jürgen Moltmann; Margaret Kohl, translator. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010. Pp. 254. \$25.00 (paper).

But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings. —Malachi 4:2

Using imagery from the rarely cited book of Malachi, Jürgen Moltmann explores the relationship of righteousness to Christianity, the church, and the kingdom of God. The book is arranged logically around "three fundamental Christian insights: God is the God of Christ's resurrection. God is the righteousness which creates justice and puts things to rights. The traces and signs of God give the world meaning" (1). Moltmann arranges the chapters, which were originally lectures or essays presented over the past ten years, into four parts.

Part one addresses the future of Christianity, following the basic theses that "the future of Christianity is the church" and "the future of the church is the kingdom of God" (7). Part two explores the meanings of resurrection, related specifically to Christ's resurrection, the more general resurrection of the body, and the resurrection of nature. The third part is the longest and most complex, asserting through several different courses of logic that God is righteousness and justice. Part four considers God in nature and the importance of natural

science, the hermeneutics of nature, and the theory of evolution.

Before embarking on contemplation of the future of Christianity, Moltmann spends a chapter looking at the church's history. He begins the book by looking at both historical and theological trends within the church, and then delves into consideration of where the future mission of the church may lie. At this point he relates three paradigms of church to Trinitarian theology, stressing the importance of ecumenism and diversity within the church as reflective of the diversity inherent within the trinity. Trinitarian thought is prevalent throughout Moltmann's theology of righteousness as discussed in this book.

From there, the second part of the book looks into the concept of the Christian "God of Resurrection" (35), with resurrection being the critical point distinguishing Christianity from other religions. Moltmann relates the idea of resurrection to daily life, particularly for the current day when we are at the end of "the age of progress" that wreaked havoc on entire populations of people in the twentieth century, and creating a new beginning through globalization of progress (38). He further explains that "the God of Jesus Christ is universal, because the raising of Jesus from the dead does away with the frontier dividing Jews from Gentiles...indeed even the living from the dead" (40–41). Moltmann reframes the traditional phrase "resurrection of the body" to be "resurrection of life," thereby including all creation in a bodily resurrection at the end of time (60ff.). The kingdom of God is then defined as the earthly kingdom of resurrection.

This earthly kingdom of resurrection is made possible by God's righteousness and justice, discussed in part three of *Sun of Righteousness, Arise!* The chapters in part three present the core of Moltmann's argument on righteousness. He begins by establishing a functional vocabulary, discarding the word "monotheism" and exploring instead the concept of indwelling (Shekinah or perichoresis)

that makes the Trinity possible. Moltmann claims that because God is love and God abides in Christ, Christ brings God's love to all who are persecuted as he was (114–115). This bringing of love is the righteousness of God.

At this point in his argument, Moltmann treads on thin ice. He compares YHWH to gods from other religions, claiming that this righteousness is what separates YHWH from other gods. His words could be taken to replace God with righteousness as the ultimate good. If YHWH is only needed to bring righteousness to the world, then righteousness would seem to be more important than the god who brings it. Righteousness, in effect, would become God.

Part three continues on more solid ground when Moltmann describes the final judgment as the establishment of justice throughout creation. He sees the result of judgment to be universal salvation, since what is destroyed by God's justice is death itself—therefore, no one can die any longer. Trinitarian theology is at play again here, when Moltmann defines the Trinity as “the inviting environment for the whole redeemed and renewed creation, which for its own part then becomes the environment for the divine indwelling” (157). Moltmann emphasizes the salvation of all creation at the final judgment, describing a renewed relationship with God comparable to the friendship between God and Moses.

The final section of Moltmann's book seems to be rather disjointed from his previous argument. Though these chapters are well written, their description of God's signs in nature bear little relation to the chapters that came before. Moltmann has effectively proven his point by the end of part three, and part four is an attempt to apply his theology more practically to the world as it tangibly exists. The interested reader would learn many things about the author's views on natural theology in part four of this book. That said, the final section is not necessary to the general theses being argued in the remainder of the book;

Moltmann's point is expressed clearly in earlier chapters.

The book is well written but could be intimidating for the novice theologian. As is typical with German theologians, Moltmann uses eloquent language to describe his ideas, which can sometimes leave the reader lost in the language rather than in the content of the argument. In general, the best audience for this book is a person with a particular interest in a theology of righteousness, or in Trinitarian theology as it is applied to this specific aspect of Christian theology. Of course, the Moltmann enthusiast will also want to add this book to his or her collection. *Sun of Righteousness, Arise!* is not a light read, but it is a good one that is sure to evoke deep theological insights from all readers.

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**DIVINE COMPLEXITY: THE RISE OF CREEDAL CHRISTIANITY**, by Paul R. Hinlicky. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011. Pp. 284. \$32.00 (paper).

Paul Hinlicky's new book is a historically based and theologically complex ecumenical treatment of the emergence and the implications of the doctrine of the Trinity in the life and faith of the church. The book's main goal is to instruct the “spiritually motivated and intellectually serious seekers” (ix) either within or outside the church in the area of basic, fundamental, or as Hinlicky puts it, “primary theology,” by which he means “the gospel narrative given in canonical Scripture and parsed by the creeds of the ecumenical church and the Reformation confession of justification by faith” (ix).

The “gospel narrative” with the message of the cross and resurrection of Jesus as its hermeneutical basis has the “epistemic primacy” (8) that plays the constitutive role in the process of the development of doctrine

whereby God gives himself to the hearer and where theology plays a secondary, responsive function to the prophetic and apostolic word proclaimed as the gospel narrative. Christology thus, according to Hinlicky, assumes priority over soteriology, helping us perceive salvation as the defeat of the powers of evil; reconciliation of the godless with God; and final fulfillment of the creation at the eschatological coming of God's kingdom when God will be "all in all" (1 Cor 15:28). Hinlicky maintains that the underlying theological proposition by which one can identify the one, authentic gospel narrative speaks about "God [who] is determined to redeem the world through Christ and bring it to fulfillment in His Spirit" (24). While this is a known and still quite common theological premise, the author surprises his readers with a specific approach to theology as critical dogmatics. One might call it a "selective ecumenical syncretism," as Hinlicky attempts to combine the best ideas

from four different, competing disciplinary traditions: patristic theological heritage, Reformation thought, liberal Protestant historical criticism, and the philosophy of religion. The fairly complex process of "selective ecumenical syncretism," informed, guided, and critically limited by the primary theology's gospel narrative, takes place in a postmodern cultural context within the historical circumstances of post-Christendom. That is Hinlicky's definition of the nature and the task of "critical dogmatics," which the Christian church is obliged to engage in faithfully and competently even though it realizes that this task will remain unfinished until the day of the Lord's return.

Following T. F. Torrance's emphasis on the evangelical theology of the ancient, Greek-speaking catholic church, Hinlicky wishes to advance his case with his three new theses. First of all, he argues for the major role of the Gospel of John as a theological interpretation of the Synoptic tradition in the subsequent de-



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velopment of Christian doctrine. Summarizing the core idea of Hinlicky's Trinitarian understanding, his second thesis is even bolder in its content and implications. The author spends most of his time explaining the discrepancy as well as possible complementarity between the philosophical (Platonist) notion of "divine simplicity," with its main implication of "divine impassibility," and the gospel-based, dynamic understanding of the Trinity as the rich and complex divine life, best characterized as an eternal relationship of self-giving love within its own divine time and space, yet with the capacity to give itself to the created beings. This "ontology of charity," best described by the formula *esse deum dare* (201), is the underlying idea behind Hinlicky's notion of "divine complexity," which, if rightly understood, serves to complement the notion of "divine simplicity" by honoring the singular Creator of everything other than God, the eternal Cause of all causes. In his third thesis, he argues for a direct correlation between the Reformation's understanding of the gospel as justification of the sinner by faith and the gospel-narrative-based Trinitarian doctrine as articulated in the aforementioned notion of divine complexity. This correlation, according to Hinlicky, has not only important theological implications but far-reaching ethical consequences as well.

The six thought-provoking chapters of this book, with a postscript about the "Impassible Passibility" at the very end, take the readers on a stimulating journey across the labyrinth of theological theses, philosophical ideas, and their implications, all based on a penetrating historical analysis. After establishing the epistemic primacy of the gospel (chap. 1) as a narrative based on the Easter event proclaimed in the form of the resurrection kerygma (chap. 2), Hinlicky moves on to describe the emergence of the Scriptures as the church's canon (chap. 3). The origin of the Trinitarian rule of faith (*regula fidei*) with its roots in the apostolic writings and its early articulations in Justin

Martyr, Irenaeus, and others is dealt with (chap. 4) before the readers are acquainted with the historical confrontation of biblical and philosophical monotheism (chap. 5). Hinlicky deals with the most common Trinitarian errors here, exposing their philosophical (Platonic) roots and showing how the notion of "divine simplicity," wrongly understood and applied, penetrated much of the ancient and medieval Christian thought. He argues that the underlying metaphysical presupposition of Platonism (divine simplicity)—that God is the uncompounded, indivisible, pure act of being, without any possibility to enter into history and/or experience suffering—remained woven into much of the ancient, medieval, and modern fabric of theology. This is in stark contrast to the gospel narrative's account of the Trinity as a complex, dynamic, eternal life defined as the freedom and desire to give oneself to the other, both within and without the divine Godhead (chap. 6).

Though some will undoubtedly consider Hinlicky's book an uncritical ecumenical syncretism, we should rather appreciate the truly holistic, catholic approach to theological discourse of this "church" theologian!

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**REFLECTIONS ON MY CALL TO PREACH: CONNECTING THE DOTS**, by Fred Brenning Craddock. St. Louis: Chalice, 2009. Pp. 117. \$15.99 (paper).

Fred Craddock is generally considered one of the great preachers of his generation and a leader (along with Eugene Lowry) in the inductive preaching movement, or what most refer to as narrative preaching. As the title suggests, Craddock's latest book is an attempt to reflect on his childhood experiences and how

they shaped his calling to preach. Modest in size, Craddock's book is engaging, humorous, and accessible for an assortment of audiences. Craddock's book—like his preaching—has moments of awe, heartbreak, and even a little bit of trivia thrown in that most will find worthwhile.

Certainly the most memorable moment for this writer was the story of Fred's mother asking the Lord to save her eight-month-old son from diphtheria. As the doctor did all he could to save little Fred's life, his faithful mother repeatedly promised God she would pray every day for her son to become a minister if he survived. Years later, the now healthy teenager sat at the kitchen table and told his mother he was thinking of becoming a minister. Instead of turning around, embracing her son, and recounting the promise she had made years before, his mother simply responded, "That's wonderful, son," before returning to her chores in the kitchen sink. A year later, Fred, sitting at the same kitchen table, told his mother he now felt certain he was called to become a preacher. Only then did she retell the story of his ailment and her promise to God. When asked why she had not told him this story before, his wise mother responded, "Because I wanted you to say 'Yes' to God, and not me."

In spite of his faithful mother's best attempts, Fred's childhood was not without challenges and heartbreaks. His memories of growing up poor and the picture he paints of his father, a good man overtaken by his addiction to alcohol, are recounted in such a way that we sympathize with Fred without pitying him. And when readers—at least preachers anyway—discover Fred's favorite Sunday School teacher is Archie Manning's mother and Peyton and Eli Manning's grandmother, we secretly hope to be the ones to introduce this little nugget of information at our next text study.

While some preachers will no doubt find the opportunity to get to know the person be-

hind *As One Without Authority* enticing enough, the real strength in this little book is Craddock's ability to use his stories to invite readers to consider the people and events that have shaped us. Personally, as I read Fred's well-told stories of siblings, neighbors, and Bible Camps, I found myself recalling forgotten faces and memorable moments that pointed me to the pulpit. I am confident others will experience the same revelations as they read *Reflections on My Call to Preach*. In doing so, readers may even gain a newfound appreciation for the faithfulness of God in their lives, which is just one more reason why so many of us are indebted to Fred Craddock.

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**BUILDING CULTURES OF TRUST**, by  
Martin E. Marty. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,  
2010. Pp. xiii + 192. \$22.99 (paper).

The title of this book, in combination with the picture on the flyleaf of a hand holding four small birds, could suggest that in our bitterly divided world this book is a fairy tale about the little engine that could. It would be a mistake to make that assumption—as anyone who knows about this author would also assume.

Marty begins with a conversation between him and his readers. The topic is why he is writing a book on trust. He concludes the book with a continuation of that conversation and a least-evil-option question to the skeptic: "What is the alternative?" for a citizen, a believer, or all of us who share a common humanity. In the midst of that conversation a deeper and increasingly nuanced conversation develops. Stimulated by his time as a seminar leader and speaker in 2008 at the Trust Institute of the State University of New York at Stony Brook, Marty runs the thread of science and religion through a who's who of thinkers. In eight chapters that take barely two hundred

pages, he makes a case for working on trust with a vast summary of its pitfalls and the cases that can be made against it.

After giving examples of broken trust (like conspiratorial thinking, the economic crisis, banks and lenders, mistrust of government and religious institutions), Marty begins with definitions: of “trust,” which has to do with constructing an edifice by gradual means, and of “culture,” for which he turns to Philip Bagby’s definition—“regularities of behavior,” “class elements,” “a distinct assemblage...of complexes regularly found together.” He then addresses risk and seven levels where risk and trust meet, from the self itself to community. In the process we encounter Arthur Frank, Northrop Frye, Glenn Tinder, Robert Nisbet, Immanuel Kant, Arthur Schopenhauer, Gary Wills, Frank S. Carney, Edmund Burke, and Gerda Lerner.

Jewish and Christian themes come into play with scripted resources, along with Jaroslav Pelikan, Martin Luther, Paul Pribbenow, and the Bible; humanistic reflections include Plato, Thomas Hobbes, David Hume, and Onora O’Neill, with considerations of rationality, psychological factors, deontology, and “ethical issues when trust commitments collide.” A perceptive chapter on category mistakes includes Michael Oakeshott’s telling quip that “what is arithmetically true is morally neither true nor false, but merely irrelevant.” Paul Valéry, William James, and Alfred Schutz figure in this discussion, which leads to what it means to be human. Here a scientist, priest, historian, and poet have a constructive conversation that in turn leads to provinces of meaning and “worlds,” “modes,” and “voices,” with “conversation as the means of access.” David Tracy and Bernard Lonergan enter the dialogue. It leads to the public and political; politics and trust; democracy and trust; trust, interest, self-interest; and Russell Hardin, Augustine, and Karl Rahner as part of the discussion.

In a section called “The Props That Surround Trust,” Marty makes a counterintuitive move. He cites Ralph Waldo Emerson’s poem about “Grace” to illustrate his approach. Here we do not get the Emerson of “Self-Reliance,” but the Emerson who puts “faith in...relationships with others and...little trust in his own inner resources.” Working with John D. Lyon, Júlían Marías, Claus Offe, Carl Weintraub, and José Ortega y Gasset, Marty comes back to conversation as key to developing cultures of trust and undergirding the argument that political life and trust entail. The final chapter runs out the aspects and importance of conversation. Following Oakeshott, Marty suggests that good conversation is unrehearsed, adventurous, informed; avoids category mistakes; and offers a “manifold” or place of meeting.

One could use this book to find reasons for *not* building cultures of trust, because problems are made clear through the careful reflections of many serious thinkers. Marty stakes out the problems, however, to provide a compelling case for just the opposite conclusion. This is not a fairy tale, therefore, about the little engine that could. It does not live in the world of make-believe, but in the world we inhabit.

Marty engages us in a conversation that does what he says. It is not a hard sell that bangs us into more solidly divided compartments than the ones our surroundings so often construct and teach us to construct against our neighbors. Instead we encounter the patiently happy discipline of a highly informed conversation, a porous place of meeting, the invitation to an unrehearsed adventure, and the delightful possibilities that may emerge from our variegated experience in the spheres of our local lives.

Marty faces cosmic levels of mistrust and does not presume that any simple silver bullet or grand utopian scheme will fix them. He suggests instead that cultures of trust in families, partnerships, organizations, schools, congregations, and workplaces make a difference and

are worth building piece by piece and place by place. The endeavor holds a promise beyond its seemingly modest scope. We owe Marty a debt of gratitude for implicitly but skillfully reminding us of the truth into which building cultures of trust fits: that war chests for the fomenting of attack ads are the true delusion and

that constructive lives on behalf of the common good are not only possibilities, but the goal of lives worth living.

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