

# Reviews



**PAUL AND JUDAISM REVISITED: A STUDY OF DIVINE AND HUMAN AGENCY IN SALVATION**, by Preston Sprinkle. Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2013. Pp. 256. \$26.00 (paper).

With his book *Paul and Judaism Revisited*, Preston Sprinkle puts forth a work that ought to make a mark within the world of Pauline scholarship, though the subject matter may lie beyond the horizons of most laypeople and pastors. That said, for clergy engaged in study of the New Testament, and especially for anyone looking for an introduction to the New/Old Perspective debate on Paul, Sprinkle's book approaches must-read status.

*Paul and Judaism Revisited* is not a survey or a history of the New/Old Perspective debate. Rather, Sprinkle investigates how two sets of documents (the epistles of Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls) address a specific topic (the relationship between human and divine agency in salvation). Despite the boundaries that he sets, his investigation leads him to cite and comment on the work of the major figures of the New/Old Perspective debate.

Consonant with the academic nature of his work, Sprinkle spends the first two chapters of *Paul and Judaism Revisited* on methodology. He begins chapter 1 by situating his study in the context of Pauline research, specifically in regard to the work of E. P. Sanders, James Dunn, and N. T. Wright. In tracing the work of the three scholars, Sprinkle gives both a brief history of the New Perspective and

highlights the central problematic of his study: Is there continuity between the soteriology of Paul and early Judaism? Or, to put it in another way, is the relationship between divine and human agency in justification functionally the same in both Judaism and Paul? After establishing his problematic, he uses the remainder of chapter 1 to introduce the reader to his objects of study, Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls. His section on the importance of genre to his comparison deserves reading by all students of biblical studies.

In chapter 2, Sprinkle moves beyond current Pauline scholarship in order to situate his study within the soteriological motifs of the Old Testament. He identifies two motifs, which he terms "Deuteronomic" and "Prophetic." Distinct emphases in agency divide the two motifs. On the one hand, the Deuteronomic, as exemplified by Deut 4:26–27, emphasizes human obedience preceding God's gracious acts. On the other hand, the prophetic, as exemplified by Ezek 36–37, emphasizes God's unilateral act of restoration.

Having established the methodology, the problematic, and the context of his study, Sprinkle uses the next five chapters to interrogate Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls on five different aspects of their soteriology. In chapter 3, he asks the question of how the respective Christian and Qumran communities understand their restoration from the curse of the law. He shows that while Paul understands restoration in light of the crucified Christ, the

Dead Sea Scrolls see their restoration coming about on account of their seeking God and separating from the rest of wicked Israel. In chapter 4, Sprinkle returns to Ezek 36–37 and inquires how Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls view the role of the promised Spirit in their respective communities. While Paul continues to emphasize the unilateral action of the Spirit as God’s agent of change, the Qumran community gives a mixed response. Some portions of the scrolls give an answer similar to Paul’s, while others leave out the work of the Spirit, and still others see the Spirit as a merited reward. Sprinkle contributes to the broader scholarly discussion by reminding us of the danger of speaking of early Judaism as a monolithic entity. Even within the strict set at Qumran, different strains of thought lived side by side.

In chapter 5, Sprinkle continues the interrogation by asking whether Paul and Qumran share the same level of anthropological pessimism. In regard to pessimistic anthropology, Sprinkle notes a clear discontinuity between Paul and Qumran. This chapter warrants careful reading, because (as in chapter 1) Sprinkle presents an example of comparing themes across genres that ought to be emulated by other scholars.

Sprinkle turns to the question of divine agency and justification in chapter 6. On the topic of justification, he comes head-to-head with the claims of the New Perspective regarding where Paul departs from Palestinian Judaism on the topic of justification. Sprinkle sorts the discussion into three subcategories: justification of the ungodly, justification and Abraham, justification and Habakkuk 2:4. In each subcategory, Sprinkle demonstrates systematically that “Paul’s emphasis on God’s initial act of justification of the ungodly through grace is unparalleled—even rebutted—in the [Dead Sea] scrolls” (170).

The last question that Sprinkle encoun-

ters in depth is the relationship between divine agency and works in terms of the last judgment. On this topic, especially in regard to the hymnic materials from Qumran, Sprinkle finds considerable continuity between Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Turning from his detailed analysis, chapter 8 contains a survey of seven other early Jewish documents that Sprinkle evaluates in regard to their relation to the motifs in Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls. This chapter serves to whet the appetite of those who wonder how Sprinkle’s specific project fits into the broader scope of early Judaism. In chapter 9, Sprinkle closes his book by summarizing his findings and reflecting on their contribution to our understanding of Paul.

Sprinkle’s book stands as a formative contribution to Pauline studies. On the one hand, he shows that we can only understand Paul’s thoughts on justification within their first-century Jewish context. On the other hand, he shows that at least in regard to the Qumran community, the New Perspective has erred in its evaluation of the continuity between Paul and early Judaism.

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**THE BIBLE CAUSE: A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY,**  
by John Fea. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. Pp. viii + 356. \$29.95 (cloth).

A longtime venerable institution, the American Bible Society was founded in 1816, with the purpose of making a Bible available to every person and home in this country, “without doctrinal note or comment,” and at reasonable cost.

The founders chose to locate in New York City with eventually two-thirds of its



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board made up of influential New Yorkers from mainline Protestant churches. One year before its 200th anniversary, after several failed previous attempts at doing so on the part of its board, now essentially pared of New Yorkers and of mainline Protestant influence, it sold its building at prestigious Columbus Circle and moved to Philadelphia.

In the course of its history it had become involved (in cooperation with the Württembergische Bibelanstalt, Stuttgart) in the production of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin scholarly biblical texts with its name imprinted on the title pages. It developed programs to encourage the study of biblical languages, such as awarding current editions of biblical texts to students showing biblical language prowess at each seminary. Neither its imprint nor its awards are any longer in force.

It was instrumental in founding the Institute for New Testament Textual Research in Münster, Germany, and in bringing the eminent scholar Kurt Aland from East Germany to head the institute. The ABS sponsored the production of a new scholarly edition of the Greek New Testament, edited by Aland, Matthew Black, Bruce Metzger, and Allen Wikgren, and more recently had managed to merge its text with that of the traditional Nestle edition.

Originally committed to the distribution of the King James Version of the Bible, it became instrumental in modern translation work. It produced the Good News Bible (TEV) in 1976 and the Contemporary English Version (CEV) in 1995, the former a major success, the latter much less so. But now the ABS has abandoned English translation work, in favor of “Bible engagement,” a shift from a scholarly task to a missionary one. It must be said, however, that translation work does continue outside of English language editions, in favor of international translations targeting

multitudinous minority populations around the globe.

John Fea’s book charts this shift with all its implications for the future of the ABS in this well-written book. Fea is Professor of American History and chair of the History Department at Messiah College in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. The first hundred years of the ABS had been minutely covered in the 1916 book by H. O. Dwight, and Fea’s book is both a fascinating complement to it and a candid overview of the ABS’s second century.

After decades of financial and personnel support from the mainline Protestant church bodies, many of whom included the ABS in their annual budgets, by the 1990s the organization found itself in possession of some \$940 million in liquid assets. In the year 1982 alone ten such church bodies had donated \$952,000 to the ABS. But soon some of the supporting church bodies began to discontinue annual allotments because the ABS was now seen as “worthy but not needy.” With the cessation of mainline subsidies an opening was created, and there was a cadre all too ready to jump in. In Fea’s words, “the age of evangelicalism” began.

Board member Billy Melvin, executive director of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), noticed that evangelical bodies had donated only \$114,100 to the ABS in 1982. So he called together NAE leaders and former leaders to explore greater involvement in the ABS. In 1991 NAE board chairman Lamar Vest joined the ABS board and Eugene Habecker, an NAE member, was elected President and CEO, and these two natural allies were instrumental in changing both course and mission of the ABS.

Originally the ABS understood itself as a service organization, providing Bibles to the churches, i.e., auxiliary to the churches’ ministries. Now it began to use the term “ministry” of itself. The ABS Board of Trustees was

reduced from 72 members to 24 members, divided into three categories of eight members each: Evangelicals, Roman Catholic/Orthodox, and Protestants. In 2001 a new mission statement replaced the mission statement that had served ABS since its founding in 1816, a new statement that eliminated the “without doctrinal note or comment” clause and added “so that all may experience (the Bible’s) life-changing message.” No longer was the Bible sufficient in and of itself to impact the reader, but it was now the ABS’s “ministry” to bring about a “life-changing” result. Bible production, and especially translation, were overshadowed by the goal of Bible “engagement,” and the evangelical turn of the organization was now complete.

Fea makes the point that much of this was due to the failure of the ABS’s second major translation, the Contemporary English Version (CEV). The Good News Bible, or Today’s English Version (TEV), had been an astounding success. But the CEV flopped, even after two highly publicized “launches,” having captured only one percent of the Bible market. This also led to Habecker’s new vision for ABS and its evangelical turn toward Bible “engagement,” and, Fea says, “it became the most important legacy of his presidency.”

Part of that legacy, Fea reports, is Habecker’s disconnecting the ABS from its twentieth-century links to the Protestant ecumenical movement. Even while continuing to receive contributions to the ABS from mainline Protestant bodies, the ABS was making large donations to Campus Crusade for Christ, Faith Comes by Hearing (a mom-and-pop operation producing audio versions in Africa), and Scripture Union—all evangelism ministries. Habecker started a trend that his successor Paul Irwin (2005–2008) valiantly attempted to reverse, in order to return the ABS to its traditional role in the Bible cause. But under Irwin’s successor in office,

Lamar Vest, the direction was reversed again, and grants were made to Liberty University, Willow Creek Association, Child Evangelism Fellowship, Trans-World Radio, WorldServe Ministries, the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism, Scripture Union, the Seed Company, and Campus Crusade for Christ.

By 2006, the 1990 asset side of the ledger had descended from \$940 million to \$200 million, the mission of the Society had drastically changed, as had its patronage, and it had made the full circle from a mainline Protestant-oriented organization to that of a thoroughgoing evangelical one. Having drained the till, it now claimed financial exigency had made it necessary to abandon New York for Philadelphia, one year short of its 200th anniversary.

Thanks to John Fea, we can now put things in better perspective.

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**GIFT AND PROMISE: THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION AND THE HEART OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY**, by Edward H. Schroeder. Edited by Ronald Neustadt and Stephen Hitchcock. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016. Pp. xxii + 206. \$39.00 (cloth).

If it is anything, Lutheran theology in North America is in a conflicted state of affairs—one characterized by an especially unfortunate forgetfulness of Lutheranism’s original, evangelical critique. Against the all-too-common tendency to downplay, offset, or problematize the hermeneutical centrality of the law-promise distinction in Lutheran theology, Edward H. Schroeder and several of his students have assembled a rich and compelling case for just such an account of Lutheranism’s theological identity. In

continuity with the “promising tradition”—mapped out years ago by Schroeder and his associate, the late Robert Bertram, as well as several others associated with Concordia Seminary and Valparaiso University—*Gift and Promise* both faithfully embodies this legacy, and also boldly carries it forward in new ways fitted to our twenty-first-century context.

The first three essays in the book are by Schroeder himself, and constitute substantial theological contributions in their own right. Chapter one (1–16) on preaching and the cross highlights the critical connection between Luther’s *theologia crucis* (theology of the cross) and the proclamation of the crucified Christ to sinners with intractably bound wills. Perceptively, Schroeder suggests Luther’s proclamatory articulation of the *theologia crucis* as a needed supplement to well-intentioned, but fundamentally misguided, appropriations of the theology of the cross in the work of recent thinkers such as Jürgen Moltmann, Douglas John Hall, or Stanley Hauerwas. Schroeder’s second chapter on “Necessitating Christ” (17–35) again proposes Luther’s own theology as a relevant corrective for contemporary problems in the interpretation of Scripture.

For Schroeder, Luther’s distinction of law and promise provides the key by which to read Scripture aright, especially with regard to the law’s disclosure of our sinfulness, and the gospel’s word of promise that creates the new being. With this in mind, he also provides some very helpful suggestions for how Luther’s understanding of Scripture might be useful for a number of contemporary problems in biblical studies. Finally, Schroeder’s third essay (37–58) takes up the doctrine of justification, dealing especially with its central place in Lutheran theology, as well as the critical role that the law-gospel distinction

plays in the architecture of Luther’s atonement theology.

These first three chapters by Schroeder form an initial exposition of the *Augsburg Confession*’s evangelical hermeneutical center. Building on this foundation, the remainder of the book consists of several essays by a number of Schroeder’s students and associates, each of which attempts to articulate the gospel promise under the rubrics of the various traditional dogmatic *loci* (or topics). These essays, to varying degrees, show the clear mark of Schroeder’s influence, as well as the critical significance of Werner Elert and Robert Bertram. With this framework firmly in place, the authors are able to substantially and thoughtfully explore topics such as the Trinity (61–70), the doctrine of sin (71–83), ecclesiology and the ministry (85–96), baptism (97–110), the Lord’s Supper (111–124), the civil realm (125–141), ethics (143–154; 155–174), and mission (175–195). The end result is something of an abbreviated systematic theology assembled by way of group effort. Some of the essays stand out—especially Michael Hoy’s chapter on ethics (143–154) or Marcus Lohrmann’s reflections on the Lord’s Supper in light of Matthew’s Christology (111–124). Overall, the contributors have registered a significant array of proposals that actually take seriously the need to properly, carefully, and clearly distinguish the law (God’s demand) from the gospel (God’s pardoning, promissory word to sinners).

Consequently, *Gift and Promise* constitutes a timely entry in the ongoing project of Lutheran theological reflection in a global setting. The authors—with their thoroughgoing commitment to an irreducibly evangelical approach to theology, ministry, church life, and public engagement—have assembled a book that will prove deeply practical, especially for pastors or seminary students. Even so, *Gift and Promise* is not without its drawbacks. For



example, some of the essays would have been strengthened in their discussion of the Christian life and Christian public witness by integrating a broader, vocational horizon in discussing the shape of human life in this world. Appreciating the creaturely constraints and responsibilities that direct and delimit the exercise of Christian love and the unfolding of the believer's new obedience would have greatly strengthened this book's occasional reference to contentious moral debates, particularly about sexuality. Another item is that the essays are not as evenly focused on expositing the *Augsburg Confession* and its theology as the title might suggest. The book also would have benefitted from a bibliography cataloging all the interesting resources referred to by the various authors. Even so, these issues in and of themselves do not significantly detract from the quality of the book, and I gladly commend it to anyone with an interest in Lutheran theology, especially its

implications for proclamation, ministry, and public witness.

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**THE THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY OF DAVID KELSEY: RESPONSES TO *ECCENTRIC EXISTENCE***, ed. by Gene Outka. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016. Pp. 187. \$25.00 (paper).

Since its publication in 2009, David Kelsey's *Eccentric Existence: A Theological Anthropology* has captivated readers who have tackled his daunting 1000-page opus. Gene Outka brings together perspectives of ten scholars to explore the depth of Kelsey's work in this book. In eight essays, readers are presented diverse angles from which one may enter into the discourse of *Eccentric Existence*.

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Without a doubt, each contributor has noted the extreme length of Kelsey's work, and the occasionally pedantic nature of his writing. However, while these scholars have presented methodological explorations, ecclesial interpretations, understandings of narrative theology, etc., few dared to approach the topic of length, discourse, and material as giving the reader space in which to engage Kelsey's work.

The breadth of Kelsey's work is displayed in the myriad ways scholars have received his work. John E. Thiel explored the usage of narrative literature in the formation of Kelsey's theology, ultimately yielding a methodological review of Kelsey's choices. Worthy of notation—also explored by Shannon Craigo-Snell and David F. Ford, and receiving mention by Charles M. Wood—is Kelsey's placement of Wisdom literature as the locus of creation, seeking to move away from readings of Genesis, which only serve to illustrate a story of reconciliation. It is no surprise Kelsey has put this claim in his work, as his narrative theology and theocentric work firmly place the Trinity within the grand scheme of his paradigm, ascertaining the specific role of each biblical narrative into his paradigm of creation, consummation, and reconciliation.

While many have voiced their apprehension of this move, Joy Ann McDougall has found a space within Kelsey to ascertain his grammar of sin, an aspect also captured by Amy Platinga Pauw. This examination of Kelsey's work also embarks on the theocentric nature of Kelsey's theology. Kelsey has, for good reason, constructed a discipline that embeds the reader into a theocentric frame, for at the heart of Kelsey's theology is God. He seeks not to ascertain God through any means other than the ways in which God has already revealed Godself to us. Therefore, it is our task to ensure our speech is always directed to-

ward the divine as defining; however, it is precisely our inability to follow this theological framework that allows Pauw to develop her hamartiology within *Eccentric Existence*. Creation's sin comes from—borrowing the language of Kelsey—our inability to comprehend our nature as “living on borrowed breath,” “living on borrowed time,” and “living by another's death.”

Cyril O'Regan presents *Eccentric Existence* alongside the Catholic tradition. O'Regan rightly positions Kelsey within all the presuppositions alongside the Reformed theology, noting how Kelsey—along with other great theologians like Calvin and Barth—reassesses the current theological mores, gauging and determining theology for a new time, with a generation that harbors their own theological hang-ups. O'Regan succeeds in his task to show the ways in which *Eccentric Existence* can function within Catholic theology; however, he does note the ways in which *Eccentric Existence* deviates from Catholic tradition.

Barbara G. Wheeler and Edwin Chr. van Driel also explore a niche within *Eccentric Existence*. These writers explore the theological education debate and how Kelsey—before and after *Eccentric Existence*—has found himself within this debate of education. Wheeler and van Driel arrive at the locus of Kelsey's theology, what they label as: for God's own sake. This must be the heart of theological education from which all things flow. Kelsey is seeking a way to retreat from educational paradigms within the schools of *paideia* and *Wissenschaft*, “cultivation of the soul” and “orderly, disciplined, research,” respectively. However, Kelsey arrives at his model to “apprehend God for the sake of apprehending God.” This educational ethos is also one that pervades *Eccentric Existence*, inviting readers to apprehend God within its pages.

Kelsey's writing creates a cavernous space in which readers may lose themselves.



Some have viewed Kelsey's scope and exhaustive writing as presenting an arduous endeavor. However, Kelsey has provided the space to continually explore his theocentric work. Outka has compiled a handful of discussions and examinations that provide the reader a glimpse into this cavern. Furthermore, by exploring this expansive work we are inevitably dwelling within the theocentricity to which Kelsey seeks to return theology. Kelsey has invited us into the dialogue with the possibility of interpretation, playfully challenging the reader to let go of their tightly held beliefs—if only for the duration of *Eccentric Existence's* pages—and explore the depths of God through this paradigm. Outka was successful in gathering the diverse understandings and discoveries this task of dwelling in Kelsey's work yielded. *The Theological Anthropology of David Kelsey: Responses to "Eccentric Existence"* would be a valuable addition to any scholar seeking to delve into Kelsey's work, and a great aid to give shape and meaning to such a formidable text. Outka has given us a resource that allows us to reread Kelsey's opus anew, each time discovering more depth to what will be an enduring work.

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**CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDINGS OF THE FUTURE: THE HISTORICAL TRAJECTORY**, by Amy Frykholm. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016. Pp. 366. \$24.00 (paper).

In 1984 William Gibson published *Neuromancer*, the futuristic novel that established cyberpunk as a legit subgenre of science fiction. It won the Nebula Award, the Philip K. Dick Award, and the Hugo Award. In

it, he coined the term cyberspace, and a few years after its publication, uttered that most felicitous of lines: "The future is already here, it is just not evenly distributed" (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1067220>).

Published in the year George Orwell had described in his dystopian satire (itself published in 1949), Gibson left precise dating on the fictional future context of the novels out of the series. Most readers thus speculated the novel took place in the late 21st century. But then Gibson himself weighed in, claiming when he wrote the book he was imagining some time around 2035. The book's legions of attentive readers (and of the wider series in which it is set—*The Sprawl*) speculate that Gibson has in fact "accelerated the timeline, perhaps subconsciously, because he feels our present moment being pulled inexorably toward *Neuromancer's* by Fancy Bear, Oculus Rift, and Trump's Twitter feed...he's trying to warn us that we too are close to summoning demons" ([https://motherboard.vice.com/en\\_us/article/when-did-neuromancer-actually-take-place](https://motherboard.vice.com/en_us/article/when-did-neuromancer-actually-take-place)).

Intriguingly, Gibson's later novels have drawn ever closer to the near future—that is, to the present. He has found the more the present is changing, the more difficult it is to imagine the future. Here we see the resonance with Amy Frykholm's work on the historical trajectory of Christian eschatology, for in order to speak of our present understandings of the future, she must by necessity excavate the history of its articulation.

Frykholm's book is simple in construction if fathoms deep in execution. She simply describes the origins of apocalyptic in Part I, outlines its historical development in Part II, and then describes the contemporary challenges in Part III. Part II takes up the bulk of the text, as the history of Christian thinking about the future is the history of Christian

thinking, full stop. Every generation of Christians has had to ask themselves the question: "Is the end now or not yet?" (5).

Late in her book, in a chapter on contemporary eschatological theories from Schweitzer to Rahner, she summarizes Karl Rahner's view, "The apocalyptic can really only unveil a deeper reality of the present. It cannot, as has so many times been attempted in the Christian tradition, tell us the future" (304–305). Rahner took much criticism for such a view, wrestling as he was at attempting to reconcile ancient forms of apocalyptic with contemporary visions of the created world and its working (305).

Frykholm works a basic thesis throughout the book. She argues for two essential forms of eschatology, *apocalyptic* and *prophetic*. *Apocalyptic* eschatology happens because of God, largely out of human control—angels, beasts, trials, signs, wonders. *Prophetic* eschatology, on the other hand, "describes things that will happen on earth with a mixture of divine and human action" (13). This form of eschatology is focused on the earthly, and is found more in the judgments and prophecies of folks like Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Ezekiel. This kind of eschatology focuses on the healing of the world, *tikkun olam*.

We see *prophetic* eschatology at work in many figures, perhaps preeminently in Martin Luther King Jr. For him, "Christ comes in our words and deeds, in our actions toward our fellow human beings. This was the relevant coming, not an abstract future one. Likewise, judgment was not a later event but something that was happening at this moment. This perhaps explains King's frequent impatience with white theology, which was always delaying the moment of justice until some later time, just as whites were always telling African-Americans to be patient in their struggle for justice, that now was not the right time" (311).

Frykholm is especially sympathetic to this prophetic strand of eschatology. It appears, in fact, that strengthening the reader's attention to such a strand stands as the energizing core of the work. She remarks, "To whatever degree Christian eschatology leads us to neglect our neighbors and our communities and the care of our fragile planet, it is a failed eschatology" (334). She concludes the book with an emphasis on attention to the forms of eschatology that attend to the world we make combined with the creative work of God, the very definition of prophetic eschatology she lifts early in the book (347).

Frykholm also raises our awareness of the increasingly complex situation we find ourselves in vis-à-vis the scientific worldview. First, there is the problem of time, for all the previous eschatologies (prior to Einstein) were predicated on an understanding of time as separate from space. But in our quantum physical reality, we must deal as theologians with the concept of space-time. So Frykholm reminds us, "Time is an inherently bendable reality tied up with space" (339).

But inasmuch as some theologians have done the work of engaging quantum descriptions of reality, the task of eschatology in the twenty-first century is much like that of Gibson's. Although we can no longer cast our vision as far forward, perhaps, as we could have in more stable eras, nevertheless we can weave our theological work into the scientific conversation in ways that mutually inform everyone. Frykholm writes, "Because theology has an emphasis on the particular, the strange and the unexpected, it can introduce a concept like Isaiah's 'new heavens and new earth' (Isa 65:17). This, Polkinghorne says, 'is what distinguishes theological eschatology from a secular futurology.' Theology may have a new vocation: to disturb the certainties of science and scientists, as it was once and continues to be thoroughly disturbed by science.... Maybe

the eschatology of the twenty-first century is best understood not as a comprehensive form of knowledge but as a comprehensive form of questioning” (342).

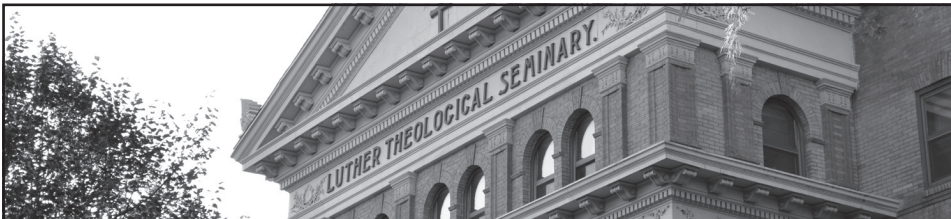
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**ATLAS OF THE EUROPEAN REFORMATIONS**, by Tim Dowley. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015. Pp. 160. \$24.00 (paper).

I will admit that I am a sucker for a good atlas, and this is a great atlas. My grandfather worked at Rand McNally publishers, so we always had big, bound world atlases in my home growing up, and I would stare at their pages for hours. Anytime I get to spend time with a good atlas, I jump at it. This atlas covers the European Reformations, with detailed maps and accompanying text to describe the

subjects involved. Really, much more than just a collection of maps, this book is in itself a textual and pictorial history of European religious history from the late medieval period through about 1650. And because this period saw the European expansion and mission to the Americas, Africa, and Asia, there are also maps that illustrate these movements. There are altogether sixty maps in this collection, as well as a timeline, bibliography, and indexes.

The first section of this atlas explores the religious world of Europe from the Middle Ages up to the eve of the Protestant Reformation. Several maps cover the intellectual world of the late medieval period, including the development of printing, the *Devotio Moderna*, and the Renaissance. Of course a major factor during this time was the conflicts within the Western Church, so there are also maps showing the Great Schism, as well as dissenting groups—the Waldensians, Lollards, and



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Hussites. This section concludes with maps of the European voyages of exploration.

The second and longest section of the atlas focuses on the Protestant Reformation. The first nine maps here are, not surprisingly, about Martin Luther and the beginnings of Lutheranism in Germany, but also with sections about the Radical Reformation and the Peasants' War, as well as the oppression of European Jews. The next six maps illustrate the rise of Reformed Protestantism, with maps on Zwingli, Bucer, Calvin, and the spread of Calvinism in Switzerland and France. This section ends with several maps about the early English Reformation, as well as Protestantism in Scotland, Scandinavia, and Poland.

The third section concerns the Catholic Counter-Reformation, and the spread of Roman Catholicism by means of the European expansion to Latin America and Asia. Several maps here look at the initial papal responses to Protestantism, as well as the new movements, such as Loyola and the Jesuits. Three maps show the mission expansion of Roman Catholicism, including the travels of Xavier and the Jesuits' *Reductions* in the Americas. The last four maps show European religious conflict, especially in France and the Netherlands, as well as the Spanish Armada.

The fourth and final section examines the first half of the seventeenth century. Several maps show the hardening of religious positions in Europe during this time, including the Thirty-Years' War and its aftermath. Several maps show the beginnings of Protestant immigration and settlement in North America, and along with this, several other maps show the developments in the British isles, including the English Civil War. A final map looks at Christianity in Japan.

This is a great book, and would be very valuable in personal and congregational libraries. The format is very easy to use, and in this age where many people are accustomed

to learning by means of graphics and illustrations, this could be a great learning tool.

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**LEADING CONGREGATIONS AND NONPROFITS IN A CONNECTED WORLD: PLATFORMS, PEOPLE, AND PURPOSE**, by Hayim Herring and Terri Martinson Elton. Harrisburg, PA: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016. Pp. 272. \$25.00 (paper).

Leadership structures have changed dramatically in the last half-century, moving from top-down hierarchies to flattened networks. How are congregations and faith-based nonprofit organizations managing these changes? This book chronicles the compelling story of an exploratory research project that probes that question. The process of the project, and the interaction between the two authors, is as important as the practical results they offer to leaders of congregations and nonprofit organizations.

Hayim Herring, a rabbi and executive leader, and Terri Elton, a professor of leadership at Luther Seminary, were strangers when the project began. Herring was interested in exploring how the organizational structure of congregations and nonprofit organizations hinders or accelerates the accomplishment of their impact. He wanted to expand the research beyond the Jewish community, so he invited Elton to join the project and include Lutheran congregations and nonprofits in the study.

They selected twenty-three congregations and nonprofits, from Jewish and Lutheran traditions, that fall into one of two categories. The first category—*established and adapting*—are those organizations that were born within a hierarchical framework

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and seek to adapt to the flattened network. The second category—*emerging and maturing*—are those organizations that were born in a networked framework with all the agility of an entrepreneurial start-up, but now need to find more sustainable structures to move them into the future.

The first chapter clarifies key terms regarding networks, social networks, and social media. It also provides a brief history of how organizational structures have evolved from hierarchies to flattened networks. The authors name this shift in three movements: 1.0 is predominantly hierarchical; 2.0 is hierarchical, but has a strong digital presence; 3.0 is predominantly flattened, with social networks predominant.

Chapter 2 digs deeper into organizational theory and offers a balanced compare-and-contrast analysis of hierarchies and social network systems. The authors offer an appreciative analysis of both systems and “encourage leaders of congregations and faith-based organizations to recalibrate the balance between necessary hierarchy and evolving social networks that can drive engagement, learning, and innovation.”

Chapter 3 addresses the issue of leadership. Leadership strategies from established hierarchical systems are familiar, and still necessary in many cases. Yet, the leader who wants to adapt and move into the increasingly flattened and networked world will need to focus on being a learner, giving attention to relationships, exploring the future, and revisiting mission and identity.

The authors identify a defining challenge for leaders in chapter 4: “We can be just another set of activities in this sea of disorder or we can offer an alternative way of living with meaning and purpose.” The chapter looks comprehensively at engagement, meaning, and openness. Congregations and organizations must become platforms that allow

members to create meaning through openness and sharing stories.

Chapter 5 identifies two key capacities for organizations that can adapt and mature in the flattened world of disruptive change: *innovation* and *entrepreneurship*. Innovation is an act, the authors claim, while entrepreneurship is an organizational state of being that results from looking at faith-based organizations through an entirely new lens. The chapter offers ten helpful attributes of an innovative organization.

Another necessary capacity for leadership is the ability to look to the future. Chapter 6 compares and contrasts the typical *strategic planning* process with a more dynamic process of *strategic exploration*. The chapter offers practical tips, drawing from Joel Barker, to help leadership organize, focus, and explore the future of the organization.

The final chapter brings all the research together and offers three rubrics for assessing your organization in a 3.0 world. The first rubric is to reinvent community as a platform for connecting people inside and outside the formal membership structure. The second is to reclaim faithful leadership that does not allow organizational structure to impede mission and vision. The third is to reimagine the organization’s posture toward the world. The organization must remain open and lean into the risky future.

Herring and Elton offer two appendices to further enhance the benefit of their research. The first appendix shares the wisdom of additional scholars on the increasingly flattened and networked world. The second appendix offers a detailed description of their research methodology. This appendix is especially helpful for the scholar who might want to expand this research into his or her own context.

I am a pastor in the local church and an academic, so I can say that this book offers



very helpful tools for both sides of this equation. On the one side it speaks the language of leadership. Each chapter ends with sacred texts upon which to meditate and reflective questions to spark action. The language is practical and speaks to the rubber-hits-the-road reality of leaders in congregations and nonprofit organizations. Yet, the research methodology is transparent and the wisdom offered comes from an obvious attention to thorough, faithful, and thoughtful research that will feed academic curiosity.

The journey of this project is inspirational. Two strangers, from very different theological and cultural contexts, came together and put into practice what they hoped to discover. They risked, they reached beyond their own safe boundaries, and listened deeply. The result is a book that will become a valued resource for religious leaders of all types who seek to understand and adapt in an ever-changing climate of organizational structures.

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**THE FAITHFUL ARTIST: A VISION FOR EVANGELICALISM AND THE ARTS**, by Cameron J. Anderson. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2016. Pp. 280. \$26.00 (paper)

Christian Evangelicalism is a worldwide movement of Protestants who believe in the saving grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Numbering about 285,480,000 worldwide (but mainly in the United States), Evangelicals regard the Bible as the objective and authoritative word of God. Historically they have evinced suspicion of things of the world, tending to keep popular culture at arm's length. Among those suspicious things is art, something which generally has not found favor or a

place among believers. Writing from within the tradition but attempting to address it critically, Cameron Anderson has written this book which offers "A Vision for Evangelicalism and the Arts."

While the audience for this book is primarily Evangelicals, it is an illuminating discussion of Christian art in the wider scheme of things, for art in recent times has often disregarded Christian themes and consideration of the divine. Anderson takes on the task of explaining how Western culture, once sparsely steeped in religious values, has vacated that space in favor of secular and commercial convictions. "I write fully persuaded that art, in its most exalted form, can be used by God to transform women and men, to extend his common grace to the world and to lead the church to worship" (5).

Anderson proceeds to walk a tightrope. Without falling to one side or the other, he praises and critiques the Evangelical tradition, all the time advancing his point of view about the place and necessity of art in the church. For example, he summarizes the ideas and works of such artists as Willem de Kooning and Sol LeWitt, while making a place to consider Warner Sallman's *Head of Christ*, whose painting has often been regarded as actually depicting the Son of God. Further, in his narrative he sprinkles in more than a half a dozen gospel songs (like "The B-I-B-L-E, Yes, that's the book for me") and blends in erudite discussion about *sola scriptura* and Deconstruction.

The eight chapters in this book cover a wide range of issues that pertain to art. Anderson is not averse to spending more than two chapters on the "sexed body" and "the sensate life." Some of that discussion is bound to make his Evangelical audience feel somewhat squeamish. But it is all in a good cause, for he is sweeping the room of gnostic clutter and theologically making space for a healthy

view of the body. He speaks of his experience in which he “had been granted permission to study an embodied spirit, the beauty and the poetry of the human form coupled with its unwanted blemishes, awkwardness and even pain” (51). He reminds his readers that the Christ, the embodied spirit of God, experienced unclothed blemishes and pain.

The chapter on beauty is especially evocative. Anderson acknowledges that much art is sentimental or prurient. By way of example he cites the art of Thomas Kinkade and refers to *Glamor* magazines; here, down deep, the beauty is pretty shallow. More seriously, he notes how some postmodern critics inveigh against those who employ beauty to enhance life and spirit. Because beauty is such an enduring virtue, Anderson wonders why there aren’t more defenses of it and why there are so few sermons or systematic theologies among evangelical preachers and teachers. His view might have been strengthened if he had chosen to quote Keats’s poetically incisive words: “Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—That is all / Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.”

While the book makes a persuasive case for beauty and art in the church, one might suggest some things that might have made the case stronger. For instance, in the chapter on beauty, Anderson makes no mention of American landscape painting. Painters like Thomas Cole, Frederick Church, and Albert Bierstadt have left a rich and spiritual leg-

acy of beauty, mention of which would have strengthened Anderson’s case.

Throughout Anderson expresses admiration for the way Catholics and Orthodox have regarded art. At the same time he is decidedly cool toward the lack of Protestant appreciation for art. By lumping all Protestants together, he gives little account of Martin Luther’s acceptance of art and the significant output of his friend Lucas Cranach. In assessing the contemporary art scene and finding it wanting, Anderson underplays (and barely mentions) Christians in the Visual Arts (CIVA), of which, ironically, he is the publisher. Moreover, while it is easy to agree that the contemporary scene in the arts is not so robust as in earlier times, there are many examples of churches and seminaries that display, commission, and develop programs in the arts.

These demurs aside, Anderson’s book is worth reading and discussing. He dives deeply into art history and theology. He does a nice job of critiquing the Evangelical imagination while respecting its tradition and faith stance. Much of his sympathy is reserved for Christian artists, who often have little place at the table. The final chapter is an aesthetic pilgrimage in which he discusses what it means to be called by God and the artist’s vision.

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