

Reviews



A REDEMPTIVE THEOLOGY OF ART: RESTORING GODLY AESTHETICS TO DOCTRINE AND CULTURE, by David A. Covington. Grand Rapid, MI: Zondervan, 2018. Pp. 240. \$24.99 (paper).

The third floor of the Minneapolis Institute of Art houses a Tatra, a 1949 T87 four-door sedan. People on docent-led tours find it hard to ignore that car. Tour-goers invariably meander over to admire the shiny vehicle. Such an object and the behavior it provokes often prompt the question as to what a car like the Tatra is doing in an art museum.

Such a question about the aesthetics of a particular object in space lies behind David A. Covington's book. Covington cites Marcel Duchamp's urinal as a springboard for his discussion of aesthetics and art: "Identifying art by its aesthetic excellence assumes some incontrovertible aesthetic absolute, an objective aesthetic value" (41).

The question of the meaning and place for aesthetics extends beyond this starting point to include considerations of the aesthetic effect of sin (chapter 8) and the aesthetic effect of redemption (chapter 11). Covington examines these and other areas of endeavor by relating them to the Bible—especially in an extensive discussion of the creation accounts in the first two chapters of Genesis. The biblical roots of aesthetics

are the focus of his attention as he probes the Bible to see what it has to say about art and aesthetics. The Bible does not use these words explicitly, he acknowledges, but Scripture is shot through with artistic and aesthetic realities.

It is not always clear how Covington reaches these conclusions; but he does make his case in a breezy manner, mixing biblical insights with popular cultural examples, like *Gilligan's Island*, *Gaudy Night*, and even the MGM lion. Several times in this book, Covington says that he attended seminary in order to write better songs than he heard being sung in church. His studies led him to try to find way to restore godly aesthetics to doctrine and culture (the book's subtitle). His journey was prompted not as an academic exercise but rather as a personal commitment to write better songs and to think aesthetically.

Unfortunately, the book contains no examples of his songs; but it does reveal something of his hermeneutic. His redemptive theology of art rests on a series of triads, well over a half dozen of them. In addition to a discussion of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), Covington adduces Jesus's self-revelation in truth, beauty, and power. Sin is discussed in terms of Adam and Eve's loss of vision, something hijacked, fragmented, and darkened, while the aesthetic glory triad is perceived and discussed in terms of the good, the true,

and the beautiful. A nod is even made to the triad found in Plato's philosophical principles: truth, beauty, and the good.

These (and other) triadic dynamics are discussed in order to illustrate the reach of aesthetics. Covington defines aesthetics this way: "Aesthetics consists in forms and other formal properties of objects, sounds, and immaterial ideas, as perceived by the senses and by the mind, together with affectional responses to these forms" (60). Such an understanding of aesthetics encourages Covington to ask and discuss a wide range of concerns such as discipleship, pleasure, sin, and even *Gilligan's Island* (109).

Each of the fourteen chapters concludes with samples of further readings, discussion questions, and hymns to sing. These features presume that readers might be inclined to pursue matters by engaging in further discussion of Covington's ideas about aesthetics, doctrine, and theology. How successful and persuasive Covington is in this aesthetic exercise might well be part of those discussions. Some sections of the book can be quite dense; informed conversation might prove to be helpful and clarifying.

The book contains much rich material, yet it is strangely devoid of specific examples of aesthetic material. For example, if music and art are so essential and are at the root of the discussion, why is there no mention of such figures as Bach or Rembrandt? The final chapter is entitled "Taste and See . . ." yet no connection is made to the sacrament of Holy Communion. The reason that Covington attended seminary, as noted, was to figure out how to write new and better songs for the church. Why are there no examples for readers to sing?

The nature of the narrative makes it seem as if the readership of this book might primarily be evangelical

Christians. But anyone concerned about doctrine and culture should enjoy diving into this redemptive theology of art. Covington invites readers to a fresh investigation of what Adam and Eve encountered in the garden before and after their eyes were opened to see sin, redemption, and beyond the garden.

With them we, the readers, are encouraged to see how sin, pleasure, discipleship, and all the other triads effect our own aesthetic search. "This eye-opened way of seeing, we may call a redemptive hermeneutic. The Christian eye judges the work in view in all three aspects of God's glory (truth content, aesthetic form, and ethical purpose) and locates it in God's great story . . . creation, fall, redemption, and consummation" (180). The eye may cause us to see more clearly and the ear to hear afresh what God is up to in the world. It may even help us understand more fully why a urinal and a 1949 T87 four-door sedan are displayed in art museums.

Robert Brusic
Luther Seminary
Saint Paul, Minnesota

EXISTING BEFORE GOD: SØREN KIERKEGAARD AND THE HUMAN VENTURE, by Paul R. Sponheim. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017. Pp. 200. \$39.00 (paper).

The proliferation of research on the life, writings, and relevance of the nineteenth-century Danish Lutheran philosopher Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855) is, in a word, immense. Paul R. Sponheim adds his voice once again to this ongoing conversation in *Existing before God: Søren Kierkegaard and the*

Human Venture—a follow up, of sorts, to his earlier work *Kierkegaard on Christ and Christian Coherence* (1968). While the title of this particular book does not imply anything too specific about its angle on Kierkegaard's importance, theologically or philosophically, *Existing before God* endeavors to construe Kierkegaard as a theologian. This has certainly been attempted before: Louis Dupré, Murray Rae, and Sylvia Walsh are only a few of the influential authors who have sought to render Kierkegaard in a theological register. Sponheim likewise offers a reading of Kierkegaard's writings that situates him thoroughly within the Christian tradition as a religious author with an important theological contribution to make.

An illuminating biographical sketch of Kierkegaard's life is supplied at the beginning of the book. Important details about Kierkegaard's context in nineteenth-century Denmark, the melancholic tendencies of his father, his botched romance with Regine Olsen, as well as his *kirkekamp* (church struggle) with the established Danish church are all detailed there (xv–xxx). The remainder of the book, introductory biographical remarks having been made, is divided into two parts. Part 1 consists of an extended commentary on one of Kierkegaard's most consequential and theologically pregnant works, *The Sickness unto Death*. Though Kierkegaard writes under the pseudonym Anti-Climacus, Sponheim's presentation attempts to elucidate the major gestures in *The Sickness unto Death*, centering most vitally on the concept of despair—first as the sickness unto death itself, and second as the form of sin. This strategy, while interesting and informative on one level, is, on another, inadequately justified as part of the book's broader

argumentative trajectory. Readers may well find Sponheim's rather close reading to be a helpful take on *The Sickness unto Death*, but they could be left wondering about the primary features of its relevance for interpreting Kierkegaard theologically, especially when his work is considered as a whole. Realizing that such an effort with a figure like Kierkegaard would be challenging—given his preference for paradox, indirect communication, and the utilization of pseudonyms—Sponheim could have accentuated the main lines of Kierkegaard's theological contribution a bit more strongly for readers who are less acquainted with the subject matter.

In part 2, the book shifts quite noticeably to a sort of literature review, documenting the “productive reception” and “receptive production” ensuing in Kierkegaard's wake in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Initially, Sponheim highlights the fact that, in Kierkegaard's time, as now, Danish was a marginal European language, especially compared to the dominance of English, German, and French in philosophy and theology. Consequently, Kierkegaard's immediate reception in the nineteenth century occurred predominantly in Scandinavia, especially in Denmark and Norway. Among Norwegians, Sponheim detects an indirect influence on the playwright Henrik Ibsen, as well as a more direct impact on two pietist figures, Gustav Adolph Lammers and Gisle Christian Johnson. Sponheim also records Kierkegaard's presence in the Norwegian diaspora in North America, noting that Linka Preus—a pioneer and Lutheran pastor's wife—was reading Kierkegaard in the 1840s in her Wisconsin parsonage. He does not, however, note that Kierkegaard's name also appears in the writings of U. V. Koren, another early

and important figure of the Norwegian Synod. Episodes of Kierkegaard's initial reception elsewhere in Scandinavia, Germany, the British Isles, and North America are supplied here as well.

At this turn, Sponheim also documents the more well-known usage of Kierkegaard in twentieth-century theological and philosophical circles. This is where his reception explodes in prominence, and Sponheim does an admirable job of mapping the primary artifacts of the terrain. An intriguing dimension of this book is the difference between Sponheim's own views as someone associated with process thought and the other admirers of Kierkegaard he profiles in this section. For example, Kierkegaard's theological influence is felt most strongly amongst theologians of a neoorthodox variety (the weaknesses of the term notwithstanding), such as Karl Barth and Emil Brunner. An advantage of this book is Sponheim's appreciation of Kierkegaard's place in the work of the Yale philosopher Paul Holmer. It is this second part of the book where he traces the diffusion of Kierkegaard's ideas in twentieth-century theology and philosophy in which *Existing before God* really shines.

With the abundance of secondary material that surrounds the life and writings of Kierkegaard, *Existing before God* embodies a worthy and fitting addition to the field of research—especially on account of its effort to read Kierkegaard theologically. While a more comprehensive text would treat different themes and ideas in Kierkegaard's philosophy, this book circles his theological relevance as its central aim. Sponheim's rendering accomplishes as much, for the most part. However, those looking for a sketch of Kierkegaard's key ideas and his ongoing relevance in more philosophical terms

will likely need to search elsewhere. A more detailed appraisal of Kierkegaard's relationship to Martin Luther also would have benefitted such a study of Kierkegaard's witness as a distinctly theological writer as well. Even so, students of theology in particular will profit from reading this book.

John W. Hoyum
Luther Seminary
Saint Paul, Minnesota

BEING THE CHURCH: AN EASTERN ORTHODOX UNDERSTANDING OF CHURCH GROWTH, by Edward Rommen. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2017. Pp. 212. \$28.00 (paper).

Most of the books that I have read so far on church growth more or less uncritically accept that numerical growth is the mark of a healthy church. Those who criticize the connection between numerical growth and church health end up providing no alternative for measuring the health of a congregation. In *Being the Church: An Eastern Orthodox Understanding of Church Growth*, Edward Rommen presents a comprehensive picture of church growth from an Eastern Orthodox Church perspective.

Rommen, a graduate of the University of Munich and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, teaches missions and theology at Duke Divinity School. Rommen's additional experiences in church planting in Europe and in ministry as a rector of Holy Transfiguration Orthodox Church in the United States add significant depth to his well-researched argument in the book.

Being the Church looks at church growth through the lens of Orthodox



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ecclesiology. In other words, Rommen discusses Orthodox understandings of what it means to be a church and what that brings to the discussion about church growth. For Rommen, “It is the church’s unique nature that determines the nature of its growth and thus what standard we will use to measure that growth” (xiv).

The book is divided into five chapters. In the first chapter, Rommen discusses the whole idea of church growth, its measurement, and its relationship to what it means to be a church. He begins by describing how counting became natural in the church-growth discussion and lays out other standards for thinking about ecclesial success—unity, goodness, beauty, and integrity (attributes of the church he draws from the Nicene Creed). If the church adopts these attributes or characteristics, he argues, it shifts from “the bigger-is-better mentality” to asking ontological questions about such things as “ecclesial being, its source, and nature,” which will eventually lead to the church becoming “a radical alternative to the world around it, a light in the darkness, and a place where a personal relationship with Christ is proclaimed and enabled” (xvi).

In the second chapter, Rommen develops a theological framework based on one of the attributes of the church he identified in the first chapter. Beyond simple counting, Rommen argues, the health of congregations should be evaluated on how they work on keeping their unity or wholeness. “Ecclesial unity” refers to being in communion with the Triune God, with each other, and with the whole church body. This unity is manifested through the Eucharist and a “charismatic structure of ministry” (78).

The third chapter describes the second characteristic of the church,

“ecclesial goodness,” which refers to the benefits that Jesus provides to the whole world through the church. God is good, and his goodness is manifested through the church to the whole creation. This goodness, according to Rommen, is the work of the Holy Spirit in sanctifying and keeping the church holy in such a way that the fruits of the Spirit are manifested in the lives of the believing community. Therefore, a healthy church focuses not “on the size, budget, educational program, or any other things that Church growth proponents count” (116) but on “the degree to which [the congregation is] becoming holy . . . or perceive that progress [of holiness] to be taking place” (120).

The fourth chapter describes beauty as another attribute of church health, which refers to the “glorification of divine presence” in the spaces, practices, and artifacts of church worship. The fifth chapter explores the integrity of a healthy church. With integrity, Rommen assumes clear correlation between the leadership structure, doctrine, and practice of the apostles of Jesus Christ reflected in today’s church.

My concern with the overriding argument of this book and with the principle that it seeks to support is related to the standards that Rommen proposes to measure church growth based on the unique attributes or characteristics of the church. For example, according to Rommen, one way to measure church growth is through having a standard to measure the unity of the church (an attribute that determines the health of a church) using “sacramental inventory,” an inventory used to check how often the sacraments are administered and the percentage of attendees during the communion (78–81). This kind of measurement, however, determines how much a given church

follows the Orthodox ecclesiology rather than a vision of growth connected to the community or discipleship.

Overall, this is a significant and a worthwhile book that thinks holistically about church growth. I recommend it to seminary students, pastors, teachers of the church, and anyone with a concern for the future shape of the church and its ministry. The book provides helpful bibliography and subject index.

Samuel Yonas Deressa
Concordia University,
Saint Paul, Minnesota

SHEPHERD OF SOULS: FAITH FORMATION THROUGH TRUSTED RELATIONSHIPS, by David W. Anderson. Minneapolis: Milestones Ministry, 2018. Pp. 244. \$18.95 (paper).

Once again, David Anderson has gifted the church with another dynamic book and paradigm for faith formation in the third millennium. Building on his earlier Milestones Ministry Frame of five principles, four key faith practices, and three characteristics of Christians, as well as his encouragement for ongoing use of the weekly “Taking Faith Home,” *Shepherd of Souls*—in 244 pages—provides significant practical advice while employing theological substance in the service of faith formation.

What is especially helpful—and attractive for busy church professionals—is that this book does not offer simply another program to implement or propose a restructuring that requires multiple days and increased dollars. *Shepherd of Souls* offers a dynamic paradigm that allows disciples of Christ, including

congregational leaders, to see what they might already be doing but from another perspective. Anderson has worked in congregations enough over four decades to know that clergy and lay staff do not need one more program to set-up or more meetings to attend. In a very creative way, the author invites everyone—yes, all the baptized—to understand, remember, and trust that each relationship and every conversation they have can be seen as places for “shepherding souls.” In fact, with such an intensified awareness that each of us has been called by name and commissioned by Christ to care for one another, faith is expressed and healing takes place. Reconciliation occurs when persons become (in Martin Luther’s terms) “little Christs, one to another.”

David Anderson has developed a panoramic view of Christ’s kingdom, a perspective that includes all people and leaves none out. In a world where faith formation has routinely been assigned to the congregation, with the pastor as chief tutor, Anderson’s proposal here broadens the list of occasions when persons of all ages—not just children—are shaped, nurtured, and commissioned. The congregation, with all its activities, remains a primary place for faith formation, but as every congregant gains a broader perspective, faith formation will be happening in town squares, places of learning, centers of commerce, and yes, perhaps more than within the walls of the church building, in every home. If anything, the activities *within* the congregation proper are the means to “equip shepherds” for nurturing faith *outside* the congregation, especially in the home.

Shepherd of Souls draws on numerous biblical examples, as well as Martin Luther’s legacy, to display the ministry of shepherding in Christianity’s long

history of faith formation. Especially, Luther's notion of the priesthood of all believers gets attention, as faith shaping and sharing moves from the church institution and hierarchy into homes and families. This approach takes seriously the ministry of all the baptized as constituting care of souls. Authors John McNeil, Thomas Oden, Nelson Thayer, Kenneth Leech, and Eugene Peterson are referenced as others focusing on this important topic. In an orderly way, the author moves from pastors to parents to lay leaders, all employing his Milestones Ministry Model to shepherd souls; further attention is given to confirmation ministry, congregational life, and finally shepherding in the lives of all Christians.

One comes away from this book with a plethora of touching examples where

shepherding of souls has taken place and where lives were transformed by Christ's love. Yet, perhaps the most significant transformation occurs when any of us begins to see things differently and then acts on that new vision. Changed lives come from altered vision and broader perspective. *Shepherd of Souls* offers a new way understanding how we see how and where faith is formed in our day, using very tried and true insights and models from the past. Not a program but a perspective, not a narrow focus but a panoramic view is here offered and recommended.

John W. Matthews
Grace Lutheran Church
Apple Valley, Minnesota

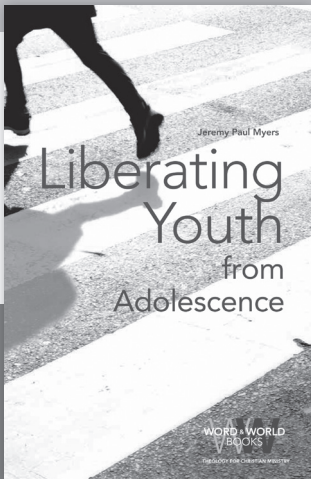
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MISSIONAL ECONOMICS: JUSTICE AND CHRISTIAN FORMATION, by Michael Barram. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018. Pp. 265. \$26.00 (paper).

I share the same interests as those conveyed in Michael Barram's book *Missional Economics*. What is the relationship between the numerous biblical texts on economic topics and today's economy and our economic behavior? I, like the author, had similar questions about both capitalism and my experiences in Central America during the 1980s. However, there was one major difference in our experiences. The specialist's lens I used was economics and not theology.

I am sympathetic to Barram's concern that many wealthy Christians ignore or are unaware of biblical texts related to economics. I appreciate his missional hermeneutics approach for reading the Bible. His first chapters on transformation and missional hermeneutics followed by detailed exegesis of biblical texts on economic matters could serve as a useful resource for a Bible study on economic justice and economic behavior.

However, the economist in me detects a serious shortcoming. The economic purpose of the book seems unclear and limited. It appears the goal is simply to whet the appetite and serve as a starting point for group discussions on missional theology as it relates to economics. If so, there is a weakness. The book has very little economic analysis and few references to economic resources needed to get a constructive conversation started. The economics offered amounts to fairly vague references to the economy.

In general, Christian theological books written about economics raise other concerns. First, many theologians misunderstand the connection between

the Bible and capitalism. Second, much of the moral criticism of the economy today is really a misunderstanding of how the economy works. There may be greater ignorance in our society about how the economy works than about biblical economic texts. Individuals are ill-equipped to discuss economics.

All these concerns would make it difficult for readers to begin a conversation let alone carry on a meaningful discussion of Barram's book. Given this, I offer a couple of suggestions that possibly could help, based in great part on the economic texts and writings of Paul Heyne. Heyne had two divinity degrees and studied both ethics and economics at the doctoral level at the University of Chicago. His writings are filled with valuable insights on this topic.

Many of Michael Barram's references to the economy (capitalism) and his emphasis on the radical transformation of our minds seem to imply capitalism has failed and requires radical changes if our economic *system* is to be more pleasing to God. My first suggestion is to discourage this approach.

There are several reasons. First, the economic system is complex and requires a solid grasp of economic theory for informed discussion. Second, the Bible says nothing about how the capitalist system should work. It was never contemplated in biblical times. Third, the Bible describes a close-knit, face-to-face personal society where people knew each other well. Capitalism is an impersonal global economic system with over seven billion participants. We cannot apply rules and laws designed to organize small close-knit communities to construct a large impersonal economic system like capitalism.

Fourth, to function efficiently, the economy relies daily on billions of pieces

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of information. We are not God-like. We are not omniscient and omnipotent. It is impossible to know all the necessary detailed personal economic information in this large, impersonal society. If our goal is to seek economic justice, the best we can do is support just rules for the market and their impartial enforcement. Then, encourage individuals to participate in the markets by responding to money prices (supply and demand). Prices communicate valuable information, coordinate economic activities, and provide incentives (economics 101). The market is an amazing system of *social cooperation* where we *serve* others. It works so well that we take for granted all the mutual benefits experienced in the billions of market exchanges.

Just because we may not like the inevitable impersonal nature of the economy is not a sufficient reason to criticize capitalism, even if some biblical texts seem unfriendly toward it. To reject capitalism is to reject the benefits of specialization (division of labor) and trade (exchange). We would move backward toward subsistence living. Until we transcend the human condition, we should learn to *cherish* the economy (capitalism) and *nourish* the conditions and prerequisites needed for its successful functioning.

Many biblical texts selected by Michael Barram refer to economic behavior and discipleship. My second suggestion would be to focus on them. No economic system is perfect. Capitalism is subject to original sin. Capitalism requires, as prerequisites, checks and constraints to curb evil behavior and address market failures. It is here that missional theology could be applied. Our personal mission, vocations, and economic behavior within capitalism

are more concrete, specific, and easier to understand.

Few countries have been able to develop these prerequisite checks and constraints, the United States has. Three vital checks are: (1) *cultural*—a moral foundation to direct economic behavior; (2) *political*—good government at all levels to pass just laws and enforce them impartially, promote the common good, address market failures, and assist those unable to participate in the economy; and (3) *economic*—guarantee competition, defined as many buyers and sellers, in order to protect participants with options and subtly force ethical behavior.

Surprisingly, it is the success of capitalism that creates serious problems. Capitalism has made many rich by historical and global comparisons. This affluence tends to cause the deterioration of the three checks so vital to capitalism. *Culturally*, individual riches can easily lead to selfishness, hedonism, and moral decay. Love of money becomes an idol. *Politically*, wealth increases an individual's desire to pressure government officials to support their special interests. Just rules and impartial enforcement are ignored. The common good and concern for the poor gradually dwindle away. *Economically*, competition is tough work, and individuals ask government leaders for favors and regulations that protect them from competition, thus reducing options. While it may be impossible to clearly define economic justice, we easily recognize the economic injustices listed above. Biblical texts have valuable lessons to teach us.

We need to find ways to battle and reverse the deterioration of these three checks. We can seek God's will and mission through our vocations as market

participants (consumers and workers), citizens (voters and voluntary organizations), and church members (moral development, adult education, and advocacy).

Mark Lund
Luther College
Decorah, Iowa

BEYOND THE OFFERING PLATE: A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO STEWARDSHIP, edited by Adam J. Copeland. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2017. Pp. 200. \$20.00 (paper).

In a complex world where many pastors are reluctant to bring up the topic of money in their churches, and may even begin a stewardship sermon with an apology, Adam J. Copeland, director of Stewardship Leadership at Luther Seminary in Saint Paul, Minnesota, has collected articles from a group of distinguished authors to address and broaden the approach to stewardship from a holistic point of view. In *Beyond the Offering Plate*, Copeland has presented a broader view of stewardship that includes stewardship of time, technology, spiritual gifts, body, community, work, and, of course, treasure. In ten articles, these writers present a depth of understanding about God's abundant gifts to humankind that is relevant, thought provoking, scriptural, and scholarly.

As pastors work to develop stewardship appeals or drives with their congregations, this book can provide clear paths to necessary conversations and educational components. Most people have a good understanding of stewarding their treasures or their money. What Copeland does through bringing these

articles together in one book is provide a wide-angle lens with which to view stewardship, a practical handbook to help pastors broaden the viewpoint of their parishioners, and a great resource of biblical texts and preaching themes. Each of the ten chapters ends with questions for reflection and applications for life together.

In one article, "Stewardship of Money and Finances: Practicing Generosity as a Way of Life," David P. King addresses the idea that the pervasive talk about money in the church has become taboo, or at the very least, "impolite public conversation" (32). He points out that Jesus "has more to say on money than anything else in scripture aside from the kingdom of God" (34). In his work with the Lake Institute on Faith and Giving at the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, King stated that they focus more on relationships, vision, and faith formation, rather than fund raising and budget fixing.

In "Stewardship of Body, On Flesh," Ellie Roscher addresses what it means to be stewards of our bodies and how as pastors, we can equip and support our members in their search for balance. Being good stewards of our bodies, eating properly, unplugging from technology, and acknowledging our body's own wisdom affects the health of humans but also has an effect on all of God's creatures and creation. Roscher reminds the reader that our bodies matter to God and invites us to consider how we treat this precious gift from God. Pastors could use this chapter to promote health and wholeness of bodies and invite members to enter into an education series on biblical practices of caring for bodies and growing spirituality in worship. This chapter caused me to rethink how we use our bodies in worship: when we

stand and for how long, how spiritual kneeling can be when experiencing the full meal of Christ's body and blood, how the smell of the wine and the bread affect our minds, and how movement is used during worship.

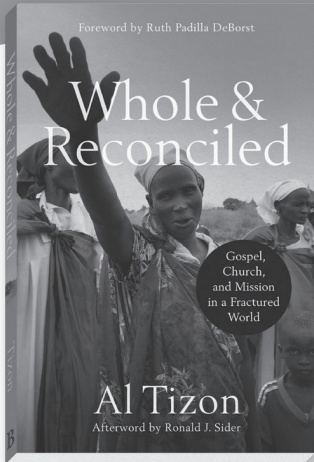
I highly recommend this book as a very useful tool for either a onetime use or an ongoing study on stewardship. The reflection questions, the scriptural references, the ideas for engaging members in a deeper look at how they steward every aspect of their life and how it relates to their faith formation are powerful, valuable, and engaging. With its holistic approach, much can be learned "beyond the offering plate" and much can be applied to living a life as a Christ follower. Each chapter is a stand-alone lesson on discipleship as it addresses different aspects of stewardship. Throughout the book, readers are invited to consider how stewardship is put into practice in our complex society of the twenty-first century. It is a valuable tool for pastors, stewardship and finance teams, council

members, and other church leaders. It is an exceptional resource for seminary students who are only offered stewardship courses as electives.

After reading Copeland's book, I invited my stewardship team to embrace a more holistic approach to stewardship. When we began our appeal, we used more of our senses; talked about more than money, budgets, and finances; and used music, art, and physical elements to illustrate stewardship as a whole life experience as a follower of Jesus Christ. This book's strength in addressing stewardship as more than just money led us to a multidimensional approach in our annual appeal. It led us to talk about stewardship year around, not just during an annual fall appeal. We will continue to refer to this book as the year progresses.

Susan Olson
Luther Seminary
Saint Paul, Minnesota

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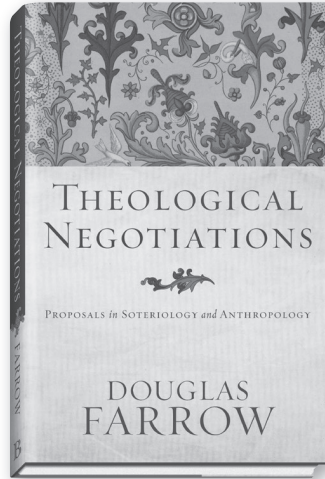
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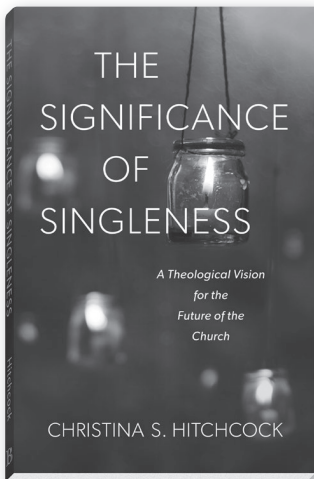
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