

BOOK REVIEWS

The Law and Its Fulfillment: A Pauline Theology of Law. By Thomas R. Schreiner. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993, 294 pp., \$24.99.

Schreiner has provided a valuable service to anyone trying to get a “handle” on the various issues related to the complex theme of the Mosaic law and its fulfillment. Well suited for more advanced students/scholars, this book serves particularly well those who are beginning their frightful journey through this most thorny field.

As the subtitle implies, Schreiner’s focus is on the Pauline literature, but the range of topics covered is by no means narrow. In his introduction Schreiner states that his purpose is to provide a fresh analysis of the “new perspective” on Paul (p. 14). This he does well in chaps. 2 and 4 (and at other points), and his defense here of the historic Protestant view is both clear and convincing. Especially insightful is his demonstration of Jewish legalism in the first century and that this is, indeed (contra Sanders), precisely what Paul was opposing (pp. 93–121). And his evidencing of the same even in Sanders’ own data is fair and compelling.

But his work takes the reader beyond this objective and examines such perennial and controversial topics as the present relevance of Moses, the purpose of the law, and Paul’s theology of works. And although he never says so directly, Schreiner enters the current “lordship salvation” controversy in chap. 7 (“Did Paul Teach Justification by Works?”)

The introduction (“The Background to the Debate”) surveys the history of the various interpretations of Paul preceding the new perspective. The summary is brief but helpful (again, particularly for the newcomer), sets the reader well on his way, and provides a general frame of reference in which to approach the study.

Chapter 1 (“The Meaning of the Term Law in Paul”) yields little that is new, but it does sort out carefully the various nuances of *nomos* in its Pauline usage. Among the various meanings offered, Schreiner wisely avoids the confusions of “law of Christ” with “law of Moses” (p. 36). He also demonstrates that “law,” more often than not, has the narrower focus of “commandment” (pp. 38–39). And he notes the redemptive-historical use of the term (p. 39). These observations—and their implications—are in my judgment very significant and often overlooked. Further, this chapter provides some helpful definitions and establishes the parameters for the study.

Of particular interest in chap. 3 (“The Purpose of the Law”) is Schreiner’s treatment of *paidagōgos* (pp. 77–80). The salvation-historical reference he sees in it is critical to a right understanding of the passage, and the observation avoids the difficulties other commentators must face. It goes without saying with a subject such as his that no one will agree with him at every point, particularly on the more minor issues (e.g. *charin* in Gal 3:19, pp. 74–75). But Schreiner deals carefully with all of the primary passages involved, as well as some others, and his conclusions reflect a close attention to the details of the text.

On the dust cover of the book the publishers state that Schreiner defends the historic Protestant view of the law. This is certainly true in regards to the “new perspective.” It is also true in regards to his insistence that the Mosaic covenant was “wholly gracious” in nature (p. 249; cf. pp. 247–251 and 125–126)—a contention that finds amazingly little exegetical warrant. But his brief remarks concerning the Sabbath (i.e. that it is not a Christian obligation, e.g. p. 169) place him well outside of traditional Puritan Protestantism—although, as he briefly demonstrates, this is much safer ground exegetically. Thus in chap. 6 (“The Fulfillment of the Law by Christians”) his suggestion that it is the “moral” dimension of the Mosaic code that is still binding on new-covenant believers resembles the traditional Reformed theology of law only superficially, for he never equates the moral law of Moses with the Decalogue. This is an important distinction that he is careful not to miss.

Chapter 8 (“Soundings from the Rest of the New Testament”) provides a helpful summary of the corresponding ideas in the other NT writers. The agreement of these others (even Matthew) with Paul is concisely demonstrated at each point, and several of the key passages involved receive more lengthy treatment. This chapter is useful not only in that it supports Schreiner’s various contentions throughout his analysis of the Pauline passages but also in that it serves as a basic introduction for further pursuit of the study.

One weakness of the book lies in the relatively little attention given to the subject of Christ as the fulfiller of the law. Some good treatment is given to this in the section on Matthew in chap. 8 and in chap. 5 (“The Temporary Nature of the Mosaic Covenant”). But there could well be more consideration of such ideas as the relation of Christ’s teaching to the Mosaic law. Was it merely a rubber stamping of the moral demands of Moses? Or is there something about it that is new? If this theme seems a bit more Matthean than Pauline, then what about the “law of Christ”? Schreiner himself indicates on p. 36 that this should not be confused with the law of Moses, but he never really offers a clear distinction. His treatments of 1 Cor 9:21; Gal 6:2 here (pp. 158–159) are weak. In this same vein, is the “newness” associated with the new covenant to be explained only in terms of the Spirit’s enablement to obedience (p. 173), or is there something more? In my mind these are large issues with far-reaching implications that deserve considerably more attention, particularly in a book whose title emphasizes the law’s fulfillment.

All in all the book is well worth reading, and it is a useful service to students of the NT theology of law. The ideas are very well organized, and the arguments are well presented. Most of the major subjects are addressed, and sufficient analysis is given to most of the relevant passages. Schreiner shows himself well read on his subject (the bibliography is a full 20 pages, with nine entries by the author himself), and his work reflects his more than ten years of interest in the subject. His exegesis is consistently thorough and fair. And he is always direct and to the point. His treatments of the various issues are no more detailed or verbose than necessary. He writes clearly and well. The indices (Scripture, author, subject) are thorough and useful.

Fred G. Zaspel
Word of Life Baptist Church, Pottsville, PA

Romans. By Joseph A. Fitzmyer. AB 33. New York: Doubleday, 1993, xxxiv + 793 pp., \$40.00.

Fitzmyer has now added a third volume to the AB, following his earlier two-volume work on the gospel of Luke (1982, 1983). He states his goal at the outset: "My intention has been to write a detailed commentary of classic proportions on Romans for modern twentieth-century Christian readers" (p. xiv). Having just completed working through the commentary, I would judge Fitzmyer as having admirably accomplished his objective. In short, the commentary is judicious in both its argumentation and conclusions. All Greek and Hebrew is transliterated into Roman script, making it accessible to the nonspecialist.

Fitzmyer provides his own translation of the epistle and then launches into introductory matters. The church in Rome began in the Jewish quarter of the capital, but by the time of writing (mid- to late-50s from Corinth) the Christian community was predominantly Gentile with a minority of Jewish believers (p. 33). Romans is one of seven undisputed Pauline letters with the remaining books of the Pauline corpus being deuterio-Pauline (2 Thessalonians, Ephesians, Colossians, pastorals, p. 40). The original form of Romans contained 1:1–16:23 with the shorter edition (through chap. 14) due to Marcion. The arguments for an Ephesian provenance for chap. 16, though impressive, fail to establish that theory. As H. Gamble has shown, without chap. 16 Romans would lack the formal epistolary conclusion that his other letters uniformly possess (pp. 61–64). Here Fitzmyer abandons his earlier support of the Ephesian theory (*JBC* 53:10).

Romans is no abstract doctrinal treatise but an occasional letter addressed to concrete problems in the church at Rome. The three geographical foci of Rome, Jerusalem and Spain converge in Paul's mind as he writes and thus account for its dual expositional-occasional character (pp. 73–80). The apostle most likely dictated this "essay-letter" to Tertius in either shorthand or longhand (pp. 42, 92). The major structural break is at 5:1 (rather than 5:12 or 6:1). Romans 5:1–11 introduces the theme of chaps. 5–8—namely, the assurance of salvation to those justified by faith (pp. 96–98).

In introductory matters, then, Fitzmyer builds on the consensus of NT scholarship. There are no surprises here. The final section is a carefully organized summary of Pauline teaching in Romans: theology proper, Christology, pneumatology, anthropology, Christian conduct. There follows, as with every section of the commentary, a bibliography of books and periodicals pertinent to the topic or passage just treated. Finally Fitzmyer provides what is to my knowledge the most extensive listing of commentaries on Romans in print (pp. 173–224): 22 from the patristic period, 56 from the medieval period, 184 from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, and 437 works for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries for a total of 699 commentaries. Throughout the commentary Fitzmyer demonstrates a mastery of the secondary literature, frequently citing both ancient (esp. Augustine, Chrysostom) and modern commentators. His expertise in the QL is also evident in its numerous citations. The bibliographical listings alone make this commentary a worthwhile purchase.

In the AB format there is a translation, then comments on the paragraph's teaching as a whole, followed by detailed notes on the text phrase by phrase. I now summarize Fitzmyer's exegetical conclusions regarding some of the crucial texts in Romans: (1) 1:4: Translate "established (or appointed) as the Son of God (though not in a Messianic sense) with power," so Jesus is by virtue of his resurrection now endowed with power to energize believers (pp. 234–236); (2) 1:17: *dikaiosynē Theou* is the quality or attribute of uprightness that God possesses (also in 3:5, 21–22; 10:3; *Theou* is possessive genitive); thus the gospel reveals primarily the uprightness of

God's being rather than his justifying activity (subjective genitive), or the gift or status of righteousness communicated to people (Luther's objective or relational genitive: *die Gerechtigkeit die vor Gott gilt*) (pp. 257–263); (3) chap. 2: vv. 7, 10, 13 refer to Christians whose good deeds are the fruit of their faith (pp. 297, 307); vv. 14–15 speak not of believers but Gentiles who obey the law, albeit imperfectly, from an innate sense of awareness and thus are rendered accountable to God for its demands (pp. 309–311); vv. 26–27 refer like vv. 14–15 to the relative, not absolute, obedience of the law by pagan Gentiles who rise up to judge the Jew whose culpability is intensified by his possession of the written law and circumcision (p. 322); (4) in the condensed summary of God's gospel of righteousness in 3:21–26, faith in Jesus Christ is the means of justification (objective, not subjective, genitive, pp. 345–346); redemption is emancipation but not the payment of a ransom (p. 348). Christ was graphically “set forth” in crucifixion (rather than “purposed”) as the new eschatological “mercy seat” (rather than “propitiatory sacrifice”), the means of expiating the sins of humanity (pp. 349–350); (5) *eph' hō* in 5:12d is best rendered “with the result that,” introducing the sequel to Adam's sin as its ratification in the sins of all individuals, who thus bear a secondary causality or personal responsibility for death (pp. 413–417); (6) the “I” in 7:7–25 is the unregenerate person under the binding authority of the Mosaic law but viewed by the apostle from his present Christian viewpoint (what could be termed the representative preconversion viewpoint, neither purely rhetorical nor autobiographical, pp. 464–466); (7) predestination in 8:29–30 is expressed from a corporate rather than individual point of view (pp. 522, 524; also true in 9:22b [p. 570]); (8) chaps. 9–11 are neither an addendum to nor a mere illustration of chaps. 5–8, but “the climax of the doctrinal section” as Paul vindicates God's faithfulness to his covenant promises to ethnic Israel, which sadly remains at present in a state of unbelief and rejection (pp. 539–543); (9) the most probable reading of the *bērākā* in 9:5b is “the Messiah . . . , who is God over all, blessed forever,” making this the only clear application of the term *Theos* to Christ in Paul's letters (Titus 2:13 is deuterio-Pauline) (pp. 548–549); (10) 9:6b distinguishes unbelieving ethnic Israel as a whole from believing Jews who have put their faith in Jesus and thus form the “true Israel” or the believing remnant (p. 560; Gal 6:16, on the other hand, refers to the church of Jew and Gentile as “the Israel of God”); (11) *telos* in 10:4 means goal or purpose rather than end/cessation/termination; thus Christ is the goal to which Gentiles in pursuit of a faith-based righteousness attained (pp. 584–585); (12) when Paul says in 11:26 that “all Israel will be saved” he clearly predicts the conversion of ethnic Israel (not necessarily every individual), not at the *parousia* but at some future time in response to the gospel (pp. 619–620, 623); (13) “governing authorities” in 13:1 refer to human civil magistrates, not (contra Cullmann *et al.*) angelic powers acting through the magistrates (p. 666); (14) the weak-strong division treated in 14:1–15:13 is largely an ethnic dispute that has arisen in the church at Rome, the “weak” being sensitive Jewish believers and the “strong” Gentile Christians who viewed food laws and calendrical distinctions as both unnecessary and a mark of spiritual immaturity (pp. 686–688).

While I cannot endorse a number of these exegetical conclusions, Fitzmyer is to be commended for providing in most cases a thorough treatment of the competing viewpoints, which are weighed carefully in the interpretive process. At times he surveys the options without throwing his own support behind any of them (e.g. at 12:20b, “heap coals of fire on his head”: five views are listed without a decision [pp. 657–658]). Fitzmyer's Catholic views, even obscure ones, sometimes intrude in the reasoning process (e.g. the ambivalent critique of Luther's defense of *sola fides* [pp. 360–362]; cf. pp. 410 [polygenism versus monogenism], 597 [the institution of ordained ministry])—confirming once again that there is no such thing as presupposi-

tionless exegesis. At other times, however, he is openly critical of the interpretation of the text in Catholic tradition (pp. 287 [female contraception], 348 [efficient versus formal causes of justification], 408 [dogma of original sin], 446 [*concupiscentia*], 647–648 [ecclesiastical norm of the analogy of faith], 712 [the office of Christian priest as a minister of sacraments]). There are a few rather bizarre statements that contrast with Fitzmyer's normally circumspect way of expressing himself: God's wrath is no more than Paul's "inherited way of expressing the inevitability of evil finding its own retribution" (p. 272); in Genesis, Adam is a symbolic figure denoting humanity, and thus Paul, believing as he does that Adam was an historical human being, "has historicized the symbolic Adam of Genesis" (p. 408); sanctification and justification are not distinct truths, for the former "is simply saying the same thing under a different image" as the latter (p. 445); the Holy Spirit, though personified in the OT sense, "is not yet conceived of as a person in (Paul's) theology" (p. 480); the phrase "to bring Christ down" in 10:6b is "the closest one comes in the Pauline letters" to the idea of the incarnation of Christ (p. 590).

In my judgement, Cranfield (ICC) remains the standard for comprehensive treatment and scholarly erudition of commentaries on Romans in English, with Moo (Wycliffe Exegetical Commentaries; only chaps. 1–8) the most helpful in tracing the flow of the argument. Behind these comes Fitzmyer, who will undoubtedly be consulted often by preachers and teachers of Paul's magnum opus.

Don N. Howell, Jr.
Columbia Biblical Seminary, Columbia, SC

Time and Eternity. By Brian Leftow. Ithaca: Cornell, 1991, 377 pp., \$44.50.

Leftow came on the philosophical scene in the late 1980s with a flurry of articles dealing with the various aspects of a defense of divine timelessness. Those were but a preview of this massive monograph, in which he lays out and defends his theory of divine eternity and contrasts it to the views of other thinkers, historical and contemporary. An evangelical Christian, Leftow is a well-trained, sophisticated young philosopher of whom we can expect a great deal in the future.

The book comprises fifteen chapters, including four historically-oriented chapters on Augustine, Boethius and Anselm. Other topics are Leftow's own theory of time and eternity, a case for divine timelessness, answers to objections to divine timelessness springing from the objectivity of tense and temporal becoming, a discussion of divine knowledge of future contingents, and a defense of timeless personhood.

Unfortunately I must confess that I found the book disappointing. One encounters on page after page a train of unconvincing if not fallacious arguments.

Take for example Leftow's case for God's timelessness. A good number of his arguments for construing divine eternity as timeless are based on the premise that God cannot be contingently timeless (or temporal). But this premise strikes me as highly dubious. Let us assume that God is in fact temporal. Because the act of creation is a freely willed act of God, there are possible worlds in which God exists alone, the sole concrete reality. Now if in some of these worlds God is changeless (as Leftow thinks he is), then is it not plausible that he exists timelessly in such worlds—indeed, that there is no time at all in these worlds? Any relational theory of time would entail this conclusion. So if it is broadly logically impossible that a God who is temporal should have been timeless, Leftow has to come up with a pretty persuasive argument to invalidate the intuition to the contrary. His argument is that "temporal and timeless

beings will have to have priorities so radically different as to make transworld identification of such beings implausible" (p. 44). Again, this seems very dubious. I can perfectly well conceive that God, who is in fact temporal, should have chosen to refrain from creation and so been timeless. He would have some different properties in such a case (e.g., he would lack the property of knowing what time it is), but these niggling differences would do nothing to preclude transworld identity. In his effort to prove identity-disruptive differences Leftow is led to another of his book's implausible theses: that whatever is temporal is spatial (pp. 36, 43). So a temporal God would be spatial whereas a timeless God would not, a difference so great as to preclude transworld identity. But Leftow's thesis is dubious not only on theological grounds (because it precludes the existence of temporal angels and demons, as well as the intermediate state of the soul after death). It also is philosophically and scientifically misconceived. Philosophically it presupposes a positivistic, reductionistic view of time to time as it plays a role in physics, which is metaphysically inept, as even a series of purely mental events is sufficient to generate time wholly apart from space. Scientifically the special theory of relativity can be formulated such that time is not a coordinate of a four-dimensional space-time manifold but a parameter independent of the spatial dimensions. Hence Leftow's thesis (which also plays a crucial role in his own theory of eternity) is without merit.

Or consider Leftow's personal theory of divine eternity (chap. 10). He holds that events that exist in time relative to us exist timelessly relative to God. He argues for this view on the basis of his "Zero Thesis" that God is zero distance from every spatial point and the thesis "M" that there is no change without change of place. Leftow argues that since the distance between anything and God is always the same (zero), there can be no motion relative to God, and since there is no change without motion in space, there is no change relative to God. Leftow then interprets this to mean that God and all spatial objects share a frame of reference in which nothing changes. Therefore relative to God all events occur at once, even though they occur sequentially in temporal reference frames. Appealing to the relativity of simultaneity in relativity theory, Leftow claims that there is no contradiction in asserting that events exist both in time and in eternity, since these modes of existing are relative to reference frames, whether creatures' temporal frames or God's eternal frame.

This theory is problematic from start to finish. The Zero Thesis involves a category mistake. God's transcending space does not mean that there is a distance between God and a spatial point and that that distance is zero, but rather that the category of distance does not even apply to God and creatures. The fact that Leftow has to accept that the color yellow, like God, is contiguous with all spatial points (because it is zero distance from them) is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the Zero Thesis. Thesis M depends on the dubious thesis above that all temporal things are spatial. Otherwise there would be change relative to God despite the truth of the Zero Thesis, and then God would not be timeless. Moreover, the reality of changes wrought by tense (e.g. growing older) is a counterexample to the truth of M, which entails that Leftow's theory must, despite his protestations, regard tense and temporal becoming as purely subjective and ultimately illusory. Finally, the relativity of simultaneity simply does not apply to God, since Einstein's theory concerns only physical reference frames. There is no such thing as God's eternal reference frame. Finally, Leftow's claim that events occur "at once" in eternity is very obscure if not incoherent, since he sometimes denies that events in God's eternal frame sustain any temporal relations *inter alia* (and so cannot be ordered by the relations earlier/later

than), but sometimes he claims that such events exist in tenseless series that are ordered by such relations.

These *faux pas* are illustrative of the argumentation throughout the book: very sophisticated, but highly implausible. Nonetheless it is to Leftow's credit that he has chosen to grapple rigorously and thoroughly with the issue of divine eternity, and in this his work contrasts with much of the writing of contemporary theologians on this topic, particularly those engaged in the dialogue between science and religion. Leftow's discussion of divine eternity and God's relation to time will be an inevitable part of informed debates of these issues in the future.

William Lane Craig
University of Louvain

The Humble Approach. By John Marks Templeton. Rev. ed.; New York: Continuum, 1996, 172 pp., \$14.95.

One will scarcely find a more impressive summary of the achievements of modern science than in the volume under review. Acclaimed internationally as a financial wizard, Templeton is devoting much of his fortune to promoting experimental knowledge of God and, among other projects, has established the prestigious Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion.

The humble approach, as he sees it, forgoes decisive appeal to any one religion or godly person. Indeed, it precludes also any final invocation of the past. It focuses instead on what is presently in process and on a dawning future accessible to scientific investigation and contributory to spiritual progress that will rival the discoveries of science.

Present-day scholars, we are told, comprise more than half the scientists who have ever lived. Rapid modern discovery of nature's secrets has waited until 97% of recorded history had transpired. Two centuries ago the swiftest transportation known was by sailing ships at sea and horses on land. There was neither electricity nor photography. Radar and radio astronomy, television and lasars, were unknown.

Two generations ago nobody had discovered galaxies beyond our Milky Way. Now astronomers suggest that the Milky Way may be populated by over 100 thousand quasars and that more than 100 billion galaxies exist beyond our own. Some 99% of the universe has become known only in the last half century. Presently unknown universes may exist; ours may be only a black hole in another universe. Science has no answer to the question whether the universe is infinite, and how it began or how it will end.

The humble approach to religion, we are told, is experimental. It has "much in common" with natural theology, process theology and empirical theology, but it is not the same. It affirms that "man can discover and comprehend only a few of the infinite aspects of God's nature, never enough to form a comprehensive theology."

The United States, Templeton comments, spends \$250 billion annually on scientific research but virtually nothing on spiritual research. He wishes Christian denominations would fund spiritual inquiry that might electrify our planet by a religious renaissance. "God may want to reveal Himself further than He has done to date in any major or minor religion" (p. 40). His plan may be "ever increasing revelation" (p. 43). By escalating revelation he clearly does not mean Christian eschatology.

To Templeton's credit he does not equate spiritual progress with a world union of churches or, what some churchmen cherished, sympathy for Marxist redistributionism. The kingdom of God is ideally internalized. Even heaven and hell are psychological states.

Templeton is impressed by the Unity School of Christianity's statement of a mutual divine-human indwelling: "God is all of me and I am a little part of him" (p. 22). God is one of the four "basic components" of the human person (p. 103). New Thought and the Church of Religious Science are commended for their research into new religious revelations.

Templeton expects that many traditional churchmen will be critical of experimental religious inquiry. But even if it proves 99% invalid, the measure of success would exceed that of natural scientists and yield extensive benefits. Research might explore the greater longevity of the clergy, the fact of divine healing, the swifter recovery and joy of spiritually-minded patients, and the life-changing evidences of spiritual rebirth (pp. 74 ff.). These concerns notably are more anthropological than theological.

The author declares it not yet apparent how laws of the spirit can be discovered, but he considers universal agreement neither necessary nor desirable: Each human should compile his own list and build his own heaven. What then happens to the Decalogue one can only imagine.

Templeton salutes love and thinks schools should teach courses in character-building. He exhorts us to kneel in humility and worship the "awesome, infinite, omniscient, eternal Creator" (p. 128). Yet he offers no warrants or criteria to transmute this into a universal imperative. When he observes that "almost everyone agrees that one of the greatest forces on earth is *love*" one is tempted to refer for experimental balance to Stalin, Hitler and Mao, to Yeltsin's Chechnya and to participants in the struggle in Bosnia.

Templeton declares that we are co-creators with God of his continuing act of creation. We are "the first creatures on earth allowed to participate consciously in the evolving creative process" (p. 54). Templeton endows occasional quotations from the Bible with a quasi-authoritarian character, but passages from non-Biblical writings are similarly invoked. He thinks that any and all past wisdom is to be tested and superseded by a newer wisdom. We are told that what Jesus taught cannot be "frozen in words" (p. 62). The orthodox Christian doctrine that a self-revealing supernatural mind and will discloses enduring truth gets short shrift. The term "revelation" is channeled into empirical discovery. "Each discovery" is "a new revelation of a reality deriving from and grounded in God" (p. 21). "God is revealing Himself more and more to human inquiry, not always through prophetic visions or scriptures, but through the diligent research of modern scientists into observable phenomena and forces" (p. 24).

One is inclined to ask whether Templeton turns science into a religion or religion into experimental science, or perhaps both. Scientific methodology becomes the supreme way of knowing. The meaning of progress is consequently clouded. Since all empirically-based verdicts are subject to revision, one can hardly consider them final without forgoing the possibility of their improvement.

Templeton's references to logic are confusing. He criticizes philosophers and theologians who live in "Logicland" and who consider their understanding of God sound if grounded in logic (p. 18). "Human logic is much too inadequate to comprehend fully the infinite Creator." That scholars affirming transcendent divine revelation proudly profess to "know it all" misrepresents the facts, however. Even the apostle Paul could say, "Now we know in part." Templeton himself invokes logic on numerous—

although all too few—occasions. He thinks it would be tragic were all humans to believe alike.

In Templeton's own words, humanity "is only an infinitesimal aspect of all that has its being in and through God" (p. 36).

But if, as most scientists reportedly think, evolution will finally outmode *Homo sapiens*, and the spacious universe is a dynamic entity, might it not be prideful to presuppose that what science now tells us about man has permanent worth and that man can direct and redirect the evolutionary process? If planets are born only to die, what reason for human immortality? May not man be but a surd in the larger course of things?

Every worldview has controlling presuppositions. If it seeks public hearing, it must rely on logical consistency and appropriate verificatory evidence. The Templeton view begins with the natural world (the not-God) and aims by appeal to experiential evidence to provide a compelling case for the supernatural. That approach is not without speculative precedents, and its many weaknesses survive. It sponsors an exasperating variety of divinities. Worse yet, for none of them can it claim finality, since not all relevant data are presently available. Moreover progress in "scientific" religion necessarily calls for revision of any and all current affirmations, unless progress is precluded.

The Templeton contribution can indeed show that dogmatic atheism and agnosticism (and numerous varieties of experiential theism also) are logically unconvincing. But if one offers and evaluates a persuasive case for the God of the Bible one will not stifle the incomparable God who reveals himself or muffle his once-for-all disclosure in Jesus Christ. Here is humility theology that calls sinners what they are and invites them to bend their knees.

So-called "humility theology" presumptively rejects transcendent divine revelation, speculatively assimilates Christianity to the general history of religion, and denies that theology has its own method of knowing ultimate reality. Christianity does not seek to understand God solely through universal natural and historical phenomena. That all religions arise within a uniform field of development is a speculative premise that cannot be derived from experience, nor does human thought logically require it. The unjustifiable assumption is pridefully turned into an axiom.

One can pay tribute to Templeton for uncommon generosity, for concern lest a secular society eclipse the realities of religion and collapse in cultural ignominy, and for a readiness to honor some authentic Christians among non-Christians as contributory to spiritual progress on earth. But one need not, as if the real world requires it, affirm with Templeton that "at the heart of true religion is the willingness to see truths in other religions" (p. 45), or that God can be reached by multiple paths (p. 48), or that creeds are "a form of pride" (p. 49). One can only hope that so-called humility theology will not prejudicially and finally exclude the evaluation of Christianity on its own terms as a once-for-all revelation of the redemptive grace of God in Christ.

Carl F. H. Henry
Watertown, WI

From the Coup to the Commonwealth: An Inside Look at Life in Contemporary Russia. By Daniel B. Clendenin. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992, 208 pp., \$10.99 paper.

Clendenin, sponsored by the International Institute for Christian Studies, taught Christian studies at Moscow State University, generally considered to be the most prestigious university in Russia. The fruit of that adventure—in five chapters, three appendices and one bibliography—is engaging and highly readable, but more like an appetizer than a satisfying meal. Given the author (who is not expert in Russian affairs) and the temporary nature of his assignment, perhaps this is the best that could be hoped for.

Clendenin wears many hats throughout this book: tour guide, political scientist, economist, historian, dialogue partner, theologian. While none of these is an altogether perfect fit, Clendenin never looks foolish. His analyses of Russian political machinations are never going to be consulted by the State Department, but the lay reader is apt not to feel cheated by Clendenin's efforts to explain the chaotic puzzle that is Russia. Indeed, at times he is nearly prescient, as in quoting a local politician who feared the likes of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy gaining a following among the Russian masses. Russia's first national election in decades gave substance to this fear.

The strongest chapter of the five, which is no doubt a reflection of Clendenin's teaching and research interests, is the final one, on the religious question. Unlike the chapters on economics and politics, wherein Clendenin occasionally appears over-matched by the enormity of the material, the religion chapter makes good historical sense. Clendenin even offers pointed suggestions to his target audience, conservative North American Protestants, which he is most reluctant to do in economics and politics. Clendenin believes the west may benefit from turning east, learning to esteem tradition and, in good Orthodox fashion, pondering God's mystery.

A better subtitle than the one provided would be *Postcards from the Front*. Despite an impressive bibliography, whose footprints appear almost exclusively in the chapter about religion, Clendenin's research seems to have been confined to personal encounter (he appears to have endeared himself to several Russians, and gave of himself in speaking about Christianity whenever asked, including public classrooms) and whatever he could glean from available journals, magazines and newspapers. If Clendenin had written this book in the west there presumably would have been more resources ready to hand. As it now stands, one can almost picture Clendenin's typing this book into his personal computer as he rode trains to yet another Russian destination. Thus, to cite one example, the impressive array of consumer goods inflation percentages marshaled to show Russian misery is out of date before the ink dries. The whole effect is not slapdash but ephemeral, which along with "precarious" and "tenuous" may be an apt description of the current post-Soviet world most Russians inhabit.

Given the not inconsiderable limitations of his book—brevity, insufficient research, anecdotal evidence—Clendenin's effort, suggestive and preliminary as it is, may point the reader to more substantial works, for example K. R. Hill's *Soviet Union on the Brink* (1991, regrettably out of print). The political fallout created by the end of the Soviet Union insures that books like Clendenin's will continue to appear every few years. All such efforts will offer "an inside look," as both Hill and Clendenin promise in their respective subtitles. But until Russians start writing about Russian Christianity, regardless of whether for an eastern or western audience, any "inside look" will appear flawed, skewed, incomplete, and even provincial.

Roderick T. Leupp
Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, Manila, Philippines

The Creation Hypothesis: Scientific Evidence for an Intelligent Designer. Edited by J. P. Moreland. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1994, 335 pp., \$12.95 paper.

There is no doubt that behind the facade of the dominant scientific enterprise today is the philosophy of materialistic naturalism, which eliminates the possibility of theism's informing science. One does not have to look far to discover that there is more to the creation-evolution debate than meets the eye—namely, a clash of worldviews. In the foreword to the volume under review, P. Johnson asserts that naturalism “rules the secular academic world absolutely.” The book's editor and his well-qualified colleagues present rigorous, compelling essays not only to expose the prevalent ideology of reductionistic scientism but also to present philosophical and scientific evidence for the reasonableness of a Creator and Designer. While the writers consider themselves “special creationists,” they believe that if evolution were true it could be viewed as part of God's broader design and purpose.

Although the book spans a wide array of topics, ranging from philosophical assumptions in science to discoveries in astrophysics and studies of the origin of human life and human language, which evidence intelligent design, I shall limit my focus to summarizing a few of the essays. The book is divided into two parts: “Creation, Design and Philosophy of Science” and “Creation, Design and Scientific Evidence.” In the first section, Moreland's and S. Meyer's articles are especially instructive in that they counter the popular notion among nontheists and even theists that the scientific enterprise must be methodologically naturalistic—or, as B. Willey put it, “provisionally atheistic.” Moreland disagrees, claiming that theology can inform and enrich science—though not with a God-of-the-gaps strategy—in many ways: furnishing an ontology of human beings or the cause of the big bang and of first life; serving as a guide for new research (by postulating, e.g., that “a purpose will be found for vestigial organs”); or yielding predictions that certain theories (such as a beginningless universe) will be falsified or that certain discoveries will be made (e.g. gaps in the fossil record and the fixity of created “kinds”). Meyer contributes to this emphasis by exposing the failure of “demarcation arguments,” emerging from scientism, which have been launched in attempts to distinguish science from pseudoscience. Betraying their positivistic origins, the “demarcation arguments,” which arbitrarily exclude theism's contribution to science, are actually self-limiting and render scientism hoist to its own philosophical petard. To allow philosophical naturalism to shape all scientific discussion is irrational and clearly not the result of empirical study. (It is a matter of “pure prejudice,” according to B. Dembski, that naturalistic explanations are intrinsically better than nonnaturalistic ones.)

For those who fear that this approach of theistic science might result in a superstitious pseudoscience, Moreland sets forth the common distinction between “historical” science (which refers to certain nonrepeatable events like the big bang, the origin of life, miracles), and “empirical science” (which refers to the nonhistorical, empirical and repeatable study of the world). While the contribution of theistic science is not to be thought of primarily in terms of empirical fruitfulness, it may well prove more fruitful conceptually. So a scientist's belief in God is hardly impetus for irrationality in his methodology.

In the second section astrophysicist H. Ross effectively shows how findings in modern physics point to an intelligent Creator. The universe's beginning with the big bang, the second law of thermodynamics, the extremely delicate balance of cosmic constants that allow for a life-permitting universe are best explained by a personal Designer. While theists have been accused, often appropriately, of appealing to the “God of the gaps,” Ross maintains that nontheistic scientists must be called to account for their opposite and equally problematic reaction—the “chance of the gaps,”

in which they appeal to chance when gaps exist in their knowledge in order to avoid some of the obvious theistic implications of science.

W. Bradley and C. Thaxton, who coauthored *The Mystery of Life's Origin*, examine Oparinesque theories of how life began and how the origin and function of DNA information could emerge in a strictly materialistic environment. Contemporary efforts to find the ideal conditions for naturalistic spontaneous generation—conditions, by the way, that themselves exhibit intelligence and thought—have failed miserably. All the evidence points to intelligent design by a personal Creator. And even if natural causes can somehow account for the origin of life, Thaxton and Bradley argue, this does not necessarily imply naturalism. But such a possibility is presently unforeseeable. With L. Orgel they conclude: “You have to get an awful lot of things right and nothing wrong,” which points in the direction of a Designer.

The book is worthwhile reading for thinking theists and nontheists alike, for it convincingly demonstrates that more than ample evidence for “God’s eternal power and divine nature” is available to the thoughtful seeker.

Paul Copan

First Presbyterian Church, Schenectady, NY

Universalism and the Doctrine of Hell. Edited by Nigel M. de S. Cameron. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992, 317 pp., \$15.99 paper.

This book consists of papers presented at the Fourth Edinburgh Conference on Christian Dogmatics. It is the best of the recent collections of essays on hell.

According to T. Hart, evangelicals often fail to distinguish the different species of universalism. As a remedy Hart contrasts the “pluralistic universalism” of J. Hick with the “Christian universalism” of J. A. T. Robinson. Hick’s view compromises “most of the central doctrines of Christianity” (p. 13). By contrast, Robinson’s universalism maintains all of these doctrines and more. Nevertheless Hart cannot embrace Robinson’s view: “The fundamental flaw in Robinson’s argument arises from the fusion of love with a notion of omnipotence as that which always and inevitably achieves its purpose” (p. 30).

F. W. Norris questions the common view that Origen clearly and consistently taught the *apokatastasis*. In fact, certainty concerning Origen’s eschatological views is elusive because “so much is lost and so much is filtered through translators and controversy” (p. 57). Nevertheless Norris offers his own educated guess. Origen did not attempt systematic consistency but left his readers to choose between two views: “universal salvation and a limited hell as well as salvation only for those who live the gospel, and eternal damnation, perhaps even annihilation, for those like the devil who continuously refuse” (p. 62). Norris, however, is certain that Origen did not teach the ultimate salvation of the devil.

The nineteenth century saw numerous appeals to the *descensus ad inferos* in support of universalism. In the light of these appeals D. A. DuToit seeks to determine if the *descensus* supplied a foothold for universalism in the early Church. He concludes: “There seems to be no connection between *descensus* and universalism in the early church, with the possible exception of Origen, despite the fact that it almost begged to be used in that way” (p. 91).

D. J. Powys offers a taxonomy of twelve positions of recent Christian theologians on the fate of the unrighteous, ranging from endless physical punishment to resur-

rection unto eternal life. The roots of this diversity are found in nineteenth-century challenges to the traditional view of hell. Some questioned, and others denied, the endless duration of hell. Many substituted spiritual punishment for physical. Even the purpose of hell was questioned; remedial justice replaced retributive. The finality of hell was also controverted, as some held that God's mercy extended beyond the grave. Powys attributes these various opinions to divergent presuppositions. In fact, he contends, "the great majority of modern positions on the fate of the unrighteous may be classified and largely explicated in terms of presuppositionally-determined reactions against 'traditional orthodoxy'" (p. 131).

J. Colwell defends K. Barth's claim that although he held to the possibility that all would be saved, he was not a universalist. Barth's critics miss the point that he "can avoid the charge of universalism without logical contradiction because he understands the decision of election in dynamic rather than static terms" (p. 159). This in turn depends upon Barth's understanding of God's eternity as "pure simultaneity." As a result, Barth conceives of God's eternal election in Christ in a way "which does not preclude the reality of human history and decisions" (p. 152).

J. W. Wenham makes "The Case for Conditional Immortality." After summarizing his own pilgrimage he examines the 264 references to the fate of the lost in the NT and concludes that only one verse seems to refer to the everlasting damnation of human beings (Rev 14:11). In fact, neither this verse nor the 13 others that purportedly teach endless punishment clearly do so. Instead, "both Old and New Testaments taken in their natural sense seem to be almost entirely, if not entirely, on the conditionalist side" (p. 181). He then answers five common objections to annihilationism and concludes with an appeal to his hearers to abandon the "hideous and unscriptural doctrine" of endless torment (p. 190).

By contrast, K. S. Harmon criticizes E. Fudge's arguments for conditionalism. First, Fudge errs methodologically "since, when interpreting the NT passages, he overemphasizes the OT background at the expense of the intertestamental literature" (p. 206). Second, Fudge commits an exegetical fallacy by introducing "a chronological lapse [between penal suffering and final destruction] in NT passages which is not there in the texts themselves" (p. 210). Third, Fudge makes a hermeneutical mistake when he fails to understand that the images used for hell "have a single referent, and instead claims that different images refer to differing aspects of the wicked's final fate" (p. 213). Harmon concludes by emphasizing the neglected theme of personal exclusion from God.

T. Torrance addresses "The Singularity of Christ and the Finality of the Cross: The Atonement and the Moral Order." The absolute uniqueness of the incarnation gives finality to the cross, so that it "is the intersection of the divine and the human, the eternal and the temporal" (p. 234). Although there are three aspects of the atonement—the dramatic, the priestly, and the ontological—it is the third that unites all the features of God's atoning work (p. 242). As a result, Jesus died for everyone without exception, for to limit the atonement would be to limit Christ's eternal being as love and to tear apart his two natures. Indeed, God through Christ's blood effected an ontological change in the moral order that had been distorted due to the mystery of evil.

P. Helm addresses the question, "Are They Few That Be Saved?" He rejects Hick's universalistic syncretism because the NT rejects the idea that there are many valid religions "in ways which almost precisely anticipate the distinctive manner in which Hick attempts to draw a new map of the universe of faiths" (p. 264). In fact, the NT teaches an exclusiveness of grace, of Christ, of salvation. Helm cites B. B. Warfield

and W. G. T. Shedd as exclusivists who held that the majority of humans will be saved. In closing, Helm develops "Shedd's view that the Holy Spirit may use means other than Scripture in converting adults who remain ignorant of Jesus Christ" (p. 275).

H. Blocher explores "Everlasting Punishment and the Problem of Evil." He accepts traditionalism but finds orthodox apologies for hell inadequate (in view of theodicy): minimizing the number of the damned, stressing God's respect for human freedom, and holding that sinners persist forever in hatred against God. Blocher affirms retributive justice as the cornerstone of hell but feels its advocates often do injustice to God's love. As a remedy he posits a universal reconciliation understood not as universalism but as the total restoration of moral order and the elimination of sin. The unquenchable fire and the undying worm signify "the self-condemning conscience" that sinners will endure forever (p. 306).

An index of names enhances the book while, unfortunately, the pagination does not match that announced in the table of contents for chaps. 7–10.

Robert A. Peterson
Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO

Speaking from the Depths: Alfred North Whitehead's Hermeneutical Metaphysics of Propositions, Experience, Symbolism, Language and Religion. By Stephen T. Franklin. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990, 410 pp., \$29.95.

Franklin has written a massive examination, explanation, interpretation and application of the difficult and profound metaphysical vision of Whitehead. The real impetus behind this formidable work is Franklin's own concern to explain how human language can speak of God. Against the positivists and the later Wittgenstein, Franklin has found in Whitehead "a profound metaphysical vision which allowed for the possibility of God-language conveying genuine claims about what is the case . . . set in a nuanced description of human language in general." From this conclusion Franklin examines Whitehead's insights, through which he constructs what he hopes will be a solid basis for evangelical and orthodox use in order to express faith and doctrine. Such use of Whitehead is surely a breaking of new ground.

The book develops in four major parts and twenty chapters. The word "develops" is crucial here. Every chapter, every subdivision, in a sense every page, is critical to the argumentation that follows. Part 1 sets forth the Whiteheadian or "processive" view of reality and then within that background the place of proposition. This is the most difficult part of the entire book for two reasons: (1) because of Franklin's discussion of Whitehead's very abstract metaphysical perspective with its specialized vocabulary, and (2) because, having read through part 1, the reader is "educated" or ready for what is Franklin's central concern and contribution to the theological task. Propositions, for Whitehead's scheme, are more basic within the larger processive view and to the "prehension" by actual entities of the past than are symbolism, language or the application of such in religion. As Franklin focuses on the "process" understanding of the nature and stages of "conrescence" ("concrete-izing" in a sense) to "satisfaction" and the relation between this development in actual entities (especially human beings) and the way the past is "prehended" (incorporated) into the present, it is connected particularly to truth, consciousness, objectification and actuality in opposition to the modern tendency in western thinking whereby nature or reality is

bifurcated (cf. Kant). Still the question of adequacy of such for Christian theology is evident. Monism is not a legitimate choice for Christians.

Parts 2–3 work together to advance and narrow Franklin's analysis and interpretation of Whitehead. Truth, consciousness and objectification must be reckoned in relation to human experience, sense perceptions and language, all of which are forms of "symbolism." In a nontechnical sense the discussion of symbolism forms more acutely the "present," both relationally to the prehended past, to the future entities, and in relation to the "extensive continuum" within which all is perceived as occurring and wherein an actual entity concretes to later stages and "satisfaction." For humans, consciousness and intellectual feelings develop as are required for coherence, symbolic reference and the critical emergence of language.

In part 3 many seemingly disparate parts begin to be drawn together by Franklin. Here he establishes the crucial Whiteheadian conclusions upon which the subsequent discussion of "religion" and religious language (part 4) are based. As part of symbolism, language is that by which a person experiences and understands the world. This is just as true for metaphysical language as for ordinary discourse. The "initial subjective aim" that God gives to all actual entities can only be made explicit in the advanced stages of concrecence (in humans) by means of language. Franklin, through Whitehead, is seeking to show that a real connection exists between experience and the linguistic structures arising from it. For Whitehead experience is always first, but how we experience and the content of our experience are in large measure formed by language, which is itself a culturally received way of seeing the world. Whitehead's comparison of ordinary and metaphysical language is of great importance for Franklin's argument. In contrast to positivistic perceptions of language, Whitehead shows how ordinary language and metaphysical language are similar in some ways and different in others.

Upon Whitehead's explanation of the act of understanding, Franklin finalizes his discussion with chapters on "Religious Experience," "God and Religion" and "The Language of Religion," each of which seems to conclude a different aspect of Franklin's purpose. For Whitehead "religion" has to do not so much with one's relation and response to God as with patterns of coordinated values of which God is the basis or explanation. This seems reminiscent of Schleiermacher's method (i.e. God as the "whence" or source). Whitehead understands religious experience to be the datum to be studied whereby God is introduced in order to aid in the understanding of this experience of the concrecing human being of the "patterns of coordinated value" in the world. Here Franklin rightly points out that Whitehead clearly lacks any sense of what R. Otto termed the "numinous" experience of the *mysterium tremendum*, the attractive and fearful "wholly other."

While discussing many topics related to God and religion, Franklin seems to consider it of utmost importance to show how, despite some statements and formulations, "God" is not simply or only an explanation for the intuitions of religion and for coordinated values but rather is absolutely necessary for the whole of Whitehead's metaphysics. Among points of interest for me were Franklin's discussions of how the union between Whitehead's understanding of "God" and "creativity" would do much to bring the process view of God into basic alignment with orthodoxy, and Whitehead's implicit and explicit arguments for God's existence.

This work is so densely packed in its argument and content that it is difficult to grasp fully, let alone review. No review could begin to relate to the massive effort Franklin has invested in this ground-breaking project. This book is in no way an introduction to either Whitehead or process thought. It is (as it claims) a "scholar's

monograph," which assumes (rather, requires) that the reader has some knowledge of "process" thought already—the more the better. The book must therefore be assessed from that intention. Franklin's courage and philosophical-theological purpose must be commended because he has not only faced squarely a critical issue, a major concern in modern theology, but he has also sought to bring an answer for orthodoxy by making skillful and discerning use of a difficult thinker who has had and is having much influence in the twentieth century. Franklin's use of Whitehead's metaphysical description of reality to deal with the dilemma of God-language for the current theological task falls, it would seem, within the tradition of making use of a prominent philosophical perspective to bring about effective contemporary expression to the faith once for all given (cf. Augustine, Aquinas). The problem has always been, of course, the question of the maintenance or loss of the gospel in the process. Franklin's desire here is surely to follow Augustine's example. One will have to wait for the fruit.

Finally, the possibilities Franklin opens for the evangelical use of Whiteheadian thought are, at crucial junctures in the discussion, expressed in overly brief terms. After all that work in preparatory, dense discussion (and reading) the conclusions were little more than pointers—brief pointers at that. In addition, many will find Franklin's careful synthesis of certain Whiteheadian insights with Christian orthodoxy and its results questionable. Clearly Franklin must bring what he believes to be the fruits of his labor to the fuller light of day, to fuller theological expression whereby the results may be assessed.

John D. Morrison
Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

A Prophet With Honor: The Billy Graham Story. By William Martin. New York: William Morrow, 1991, 735 pp., \$24.95.

Billy Graham has had a significant and extended impact on American culture. For almost fifty years he has enjoyed not only worldwide fame but also worldwide respect. He has consistently ranked high in opinion polls and enjoys (endures?) celebrity-like status not only here in North America but all over the world. Even his harshest critics concede his respectability. This book traces his life and ministry.

Martin's interest in Billy Graham is understandable. Although other biographies on Graham have been published, this one is the "official" biography, for the Graham organization solicited Martin and made no stipulations whatever on the book. He received no funding and in fact paid all of his own travel and other expenses. In return Graham made himself available for extensive interviews and gave letters of introduction encouraging others to do the same.

Martin likes Billy Graham. He presents Graham in a largely positive manner as one who is smart but not brilliant, trusting but not naive, godly but not perfect. Martin correctly places Graham in the evangelistic tradition begun by C. Finney, in which evangelism was a matter of methods—organize the facilities, the advertising, the program and the follow-up—and conversions will occur. This book gives the reader a peek behind the scenes of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and the precise planning and execution that takes place in crusades.

As one who has been a student of revivalism in America and an interested observer of Billy Graham, I found three surprises in the biography. First, I was surprised at the honesty and candor of Graham. Looking back on a half century of

ministry, Martin presents Graham as one who not only easily acknowledges mistakes of the past but also confesses earlier sins of pride and presumption. Not every crusade went perfectly, and sins of early arrogance were many. But Martin presents Graham as one able to look candidly at himself and even laugh at some of the mistakes he made.

A second surprise was the degree to which Graham was intimate with former presidents, particularly Eisenhower, Johnson and Nixon. In later years Graham concedes he was naive, but according to Martin his familiarity with presidents and presidential politics went well beyond occasional photo-ops. On a similar note, Graham's access into Eastern Bloc countries and the communist powers of the Soviet Union and China in the 1970s and 1980s received mostly support from the highest levels within the State Department. And while Graham recognized the delicate role he was assuming as an unofficial ambassador, it appears he largely avoided being inappropriately used by either the United States government or host governments. To the diplomatic historian, Graham's contribution to our nation's foreign policy would perhaps be an intriguing study. There was more there than I anticipated.

On a negative note, a third surprise concerned the absence of serious inquiry into the effectiveness of crusade evangelism. As Martin reviews various crusades, only passing mention is offered concerning the conversion response. To what extent has Graham really been effective in evangelism? Or to what level has he simply been "preaching to the choir"? As a sociologist of American religion, Martin was well positioned to address this question. A harder look at it would have enhanced the biography.

In conclusion, this is a good book. Whether one is a fan of Billy Graham or not, one is challenged to reach the end and not agree with the title that Graham really is a prophet "with honor."

Stan Giles

Clinton Evangelical Free Church, Clinton, IA

Arianism after Arius: Essays on the Development of the Fourth Century Trinitarian Conflicts. Michael R. Barnes and Daniel H. Williams, eds. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1993, xvii, 257 pp., n.p.

In 1934 W. Bauer published the first edition of *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*. Scholars have since followed his lead in reexamining the doctrinal conflicts of the early Christian centuries. Many of these critiques have sought to undermine any notion of orthodoxy. By contrast, treatments such as the book under review provide genuinely helpful corrections of traditional interpretations.

The eleven essays in this volume build upon recent studies, such as R. Williams' *Arius: Heresy and Tradition* (1987), that place Arius in context and redefine "Arianism" as a label that generalizes "differing theological, political and ecclesiastical groups" (p. xv). M. Slusser states: "The confusion is made more durable by the hundreds of years of virtually unquestioned usage; . . . The whole unsystematic complex needs to be overhauled" (p. 3).

This overhaul begins in four chapters entitled "Historical and Theological Definition," "Political and Ecclesiastical Divisions," "Liturgy and Asceticism" and "Theological Language." In the first M. Wiles argues that Athanasius invented the label "Arian" for use against the allies of Arius and later applied the term to "non-Nicenes" who themselves often denied affinity with the relatively insignificant Arius (pp. 38-

40). R. Lyman maintains that the labels used against “non-Nicenes” were varied among “pro-Nicenes.” The monk Athanasius grounded heresies in the demonic while the more philosophical Cyril of Jerusalem and Gregory of Nyssa sought theological mediation, attributing heresy to illness or poor education (p. 58). These are overdue correctives to the often portrayed monolithic unity of terminology among the “pro-Nicenes.” To better illustrate the point, Lyman might have provided a deeper treatment of background and circumstance to describe individual labeling techniques.

Of particular merit is this collection’s approach to the inconsistencies in theological (K. Spoerl) and imperial (D. Williams) politics. J. Lienhard portrays the tenuous alliances of Athanasius and Marcellus, the general ecclesiastical leadership and the often circumstantial nature of evidence in doctrinal attacks. That Athanasius loses some of his modern reputation as a “gangster and a thug” is a refreshing aspect of this article (pp. 74, 77).

Of note is W. Löhr, on “labels” and “church parties,” who affirms that “the historical reality is . . . more varied and fluid than these labels allow. On the other hand, the existence of definite theological alignments . . . cannot and need not be doubted” (p. 81). For illustration Löhr describes the life of the moderate “*homoiousian* church party” that declined after its failure to accept the more vague, imperial supported “*homoian* compromise” of AD 359 (p. 86). Löhr’s discussion includes the evolution of “church parties” as well as fourth-century concern over non-Biblical “*ousia*” (materialistic) terminology and the use of pre-Nicene (Antiochene) creeds. He is correct when he states that “doctrinal debates were by no means academic affairs in which a given theological problem was followed through to its logical conclusions. They were rather subjected to sudden reversals and forceful interventions by emperors” (p. 100).

Further understanding of context is provided by R. Williams, who discusses the baptismal, liturgical interpretations of Matt 28:19 and whether the “Father, Son and Holy Spirit” suggested equality or hierarchy. R. Vaggione’s study is also helpful in establishing context through the rhetorical battles fought by ascetics. Surveying commentaries on Job he finds that the monk Julian described Job as an ascetic living successfully within the city (“world”) (p. 192), while Chrysostom saw Job set apart from the city (p. 195). These works illustrate the differences in asceticism that underlay rhetoric used in theological argument. Vaggione humorously employs the term “lounge lizards” in reference to the “pro-Nicene” generalization of the “virgin heretics” or “non-Nicene” monks typified as lax in their asceticism. Ultimately both Church and state worked to control the “swarms of monks” who tended to be overzealous (p. 206).

M. Barnes and F. Norris complete the work with a concentration on theological language. Barnes analyzes the background of “Eunomius’ Causal Language” based in Galen’s understanding of activity and causal sequence (power—activity—product). Eunomius described a hierarchy of causality of Father (power) over Son (product). Barnes points out that Origen used similar logic to show that the Father was eternally productive, making the Son equally eternal, the opposite conclusion of Eunomius (p. 230).

Finally, Norris provides an insightful discussion of the limits of language in doctrinal debates by comparing the thoughts of Gregory Nazianzen and L. Wittgenstein. He finds that both agree on limitations of communication outside a community context. Gregory, however, is able to express his theological views not only in the language of his own Bible-based community but in the language of the culture as well.

These essays are fine examples of the profit in reexamining historical evidence. They convey the complex social, political, ecclesiastical and theological elements that are lost in many traditional descriptions of the fourth-century Trinitarian controversies. This approach, of course, makes the period more difficult to grasp (and teach).

Yet in being more thorough we have a better understanding of the providential success of orthodoxy.

Kenneth R. Calvert
Miami University, Oxford, OH

Affirming the Soul. By Jeffrey H. Boyd. Cheshire: Soul Research Institute, 1994, 248 pp., \$14.95 paper.

This book consists of interviews between the author and various mental-health professionals regarding the soul. The author is an ordained minister and psychiatrist. His main goal is to reclaim the soul so that it again means more than just the Platonic psyche; it means the whole person. "The soul includes our relationship to God whereas the mental health concept of the self does not." Boyd emphasizes the unity of the person (body, mind, spirit) and consequently the congruity between psychiatry and religion. "One of the shared goals of mental health and the Judeo-Christian tradition is that both seek to help people who feel lost and directionless. The difference is simply one of emphasis. Psychotherapy focuses on the potholes in the road while religion focuses on the direction of the road."

One of the strong points in the book is that the author asks some of the same questions of several of the interview participants. In this way the reader can read different perspectives on a single issue. After an interview concludes there is also a comment on that interview by NT scholar K. Stendahl. One of the interview participants comments on the shortcomings of evangelical Christians.

If for no other reason, this book is worth reading because it contains the first English translation of O. Pfister's essay entitled "Illusion of a Future." Pfister was an ordained minister and close friend of S. Freud. He underwent psychoanalysis with Freud and was very much impressed with the validity of this technique. Psychoanalysis strengthened rather than weakened Pfister's faith in spite of Freud's warning to the contrary. In Freud's small book, *The Future of an Illusion*, Freud argued that religion is an illusion, an act of childish wish-fulfillment. Freud invited Pfister to respond to this allegation, which he did in this essay. His reply is a testimony to the reality, power and love in Christianity.

Chuck Ransford
Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, MI

Against Nature: Types of Moral Argumentation Regarding Homosexuality. By Pim Pronk. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 350 pp., 1993, n.p. paper.

This book originated as a doctoral dissertation at the Free University of Amsterdam by a scholar who already had a doctorate in biology. The focus of the study is the moral evaluation of homosexuality, primarily as it developed in the churches in the Netherlands. But along the way Pronk summarizes and criticizes the views of prominent theologians and philosophers including Aquinas, Kant, Thielicke, Barth, Boswell and Hays as well as the positions taken on homosexuality by churches in England, Germany and the United States.

Pronk thinks that "many uncertainties and opposing opinions on homosexual behavior within the Christian orbit are due to the vagueness and polyvalence of the concept of nature" (p. 5). The book is an attempt to clear up the confusion around this

term. In the first chapter Pronk presents an analysis of the traditional condemnation of homosexuality in terms of its being "against nature." In the second, Pronk explains the various sociological, biological and psychological explanations for homosexuality and argues that none of the views of nature in these sciences is purely descriptive or explanatory but is normatively "loaded." The third chapter is devoted to an analysis of the term "nature" in recent moral philosophy and theology, while the fourth is (finally) concerned with "Homosexuality and the Will of God." While the first and fourth chapters are likely to be of general interest to American evangelicals as they reflect on the question of homosexuality, the middle two chapters tend to be more technical in nature and probably would be of more interest to other scholars.

Actually the title of the first chapter, "The Traditional Appraisal," is somewhat misleading. By "traditional" Pronk is not merely referring to the orthodox Biblical position that understands all homosexual eroticism to be illicit and immoral but also to a more liberal position that holds that it is moral "for a minority to conduct itself in accordance with its own nature." Pronk radically rejects this "ethics of exoneration" and opposes any view of homosexuality that remotely suggests heterosexuality is normative. Even the notorious "Report on Human Sexuality of the Presbyterian Church (USA)," which endorsed homosexual behavior in the context of "justice-love," is rejected as too conservative.

In the final chapter, "Homosexuality and the Will of God," Pronk addresses the Biblical teachings on homosexuality and concludes that "wherever homosexual intercourse is mentioned in the Bible it is condemned." He even concedes that "disapproval is indirectly evident from Genesis 1:26-27, which tells of the creation of man in the image of God, and from Genesis 2:18-24, which presents an aetiology of the normal sexual behavior of man and women." And he adds: "In the appeal to Scripture and, therefore, in their application to the contemporary situation, these texts consistently play a role but also already in the Bible itself, e.g., in Romans I and, therefore, in New Testament Judaism. . . . The view of man in Genesis 1 and 2 is exclusively and virtually self-evidently heterosexual" (p. 271). (Incidentally this is an example of the rather awful writing that plagues the entire book.)

Pronk also concedes that the reference to *arsenokoitai* ("those who lie with males," "sodomites" [NRSV]) in 1 Cor 6:9-10; 1 Tim 8:10 probably condemns "homosexual behavior both in and apart from the cult" (p. 272). And he is intellectually honest enough to reject recent attempts by other gay-liberation theologians, such as J. Boswell, who try to show that condemnation of homosexual behavior in Romans 1 refers only to those with heterosexual orientation. "However well intended, a distinction in judging the sexual behavior of 'real homosexuals' and other homosexual behavior is condescending and, therefore, morally objectionable. On top of this, the text does not permit a distinction between the 'act' and the 'condition.' . . . The issue is not whether the people Paul had in mind earlier followed a different lifestyle but that, in his view, they had drifted away from God's intent. That is the context: idolatry irrevocably leads to moral decay" (p. 273).

Pronk explicitly agrees with the interpretation of R. Hays on this point: "Paul's condemnation is based, not on the assumption that the homosexual behavior was voluntary, but on the assumption of the universality of sin, which drives humans into disobedient actions, which, though involuntary, still render them culpable" (p. 274). Pronk concedes that Paul "illustrates the wrath of God upon the Gentile world with the example of homosexuality." For his clarification of the Biblical data we should be thankful.

The remainder of the book, however, is dedicated to explaining why the Biblical teaching should not matter. "The fact that the Bible forbids homosexuality," he says,

"is not the whole story." "It is true that the prohibition of homosexuality has always been viewed as part of the knowledge of faith; it was a part of the *fides quae creditur* (the faith that is believed). And Christians regarded it as the fruit of revelation. That is a confessional statement. But those who view the appeal to Scripture as the test of moral propositions take a further step. They view faith-inspired positions as the knowledge of a set of revealed truths. Therefore they adopt the epistemologically untenable revelation model of knowledge. Knowledge, however, is never revealed but always consists in the form of fallible assertions that have stood up under the test of the best knowledge available" (p. 310).

This passage provides the clue to Pronk's understanding of Scripture. Orthodox Christianity (in its evangelical Protestant, Catholic and Eastern Orthodox manifestations) has always believed that the Word of God makes cognitively accessible truth-claims on matters of faith and practice (i.e. ethics). The Christian community submits itself to the authority of God's Word in humble obedience. Pronk rejects that position and inverts it. Revelation is not only fallible; it is also noncognitive or merely "confessional" and should be tested by another standard: "by human experience of the world of nature and history."

Not surprisingly, Pronk argues that the orthodox Christian position on homosexuality is logically incoherent. He challenges the position by constructing and attacking the following argument: Christians are obligated to do the will of God; the Bible prohibits action *x*; therefore *x* is contrary to the will of God and hence wrong. This seems logically correct, says Pronk, since it has a normative premise, a factual premise, and a normative conclusion. So it would seem, he says, that if even non-Christians can understand that if the Bible forbids homosexual intercourse it could never be permissible for Christians.

But Pronk thinks he finds a flaw in the argument. The second premise, he claims, "looks purely descriptive, meaning: the Bible says it; but it is intended as a normative statement, meaning: it is binding for us." This, to Pronk's mind, renders the argument invalid because "normative conclusions can only be derived from a normative premise and one or more factual premises (descriptions)."

But the orthodox argument is not so easily dispatched. For one thing, it is not at all clear that this is a "normative" assertion. It could plausibly be read as descriptive. It just so happens to "describe" the binding nature of Scripture on a given community—namely, the Christian Church.

But even aside from Pronk's radical acceptance of a fact-value distinction, if the orthodox Christian wants to preserve the "factual" claim in his second premise he does not have to say anything like "it is binding for us." All he needs to do is add another factual or descriptive premise, such as "the Bible expresses the will of God." More accurately stated the argument would then be: Christians are obligated to do the will of God; the Bible expresses the will of God; the Bible prohibits action *x*; therefore *x* is contrary to the will of God and hence wrong. Neither the first nor the second statement is "normative" in the sense that Pronk is using the term, and therefore the argument remains formally valid. That of course does not mean that the conclusion is true. The truth of the conclusion depends on the truth of each premise. It could be false that the prohibitions in the Bible express the will of God or that the Bible prohibits a particular action. So which premise does Pronk reject? The answer to that question is illuminating.

Stated in the terms of the current subject the orthodox argument is as follows: Christians are obligated to do the will of God; the Bible expresses the will of God; the Bible prohibits homosexual eroticism; therefore homosexual eroticism is contrary to the will of God and hence wrong. Now some evangelicals have tried to have their cake

and eat it too by affirming the truth of the second premise and yet denying the conclusion. They do so by trying to undermine the third premise. The strategy is to try to demonstrate that what the Bible appears to prohibit is really not prohibited. As we have seen, Pronk is too intellectually honest for that. The traditional orthodox exegesis is accurate, so he simply concedes the truth of the third premise. If he is to reject the conclusion, he has to take a more direct route. And he does. Pronk simply rejects the second premise. According to him, it is false to say that the prohibitions in the Bible reflect the will of God.

On the final pages of the book, Pronk's radically anti-Biblical position finally comes to the fore. Pronk frankly states that "moral positions are antecedent to the appeal to revelation" and that "the function of an appeal to Scripture is to reinforce the position one finds convincing before making that appeal." Although he does add: "There is no objection to making such an appeal [to Scripture] provided one's position has first been tested in moral deliberation within the community as a whole." The Bible, in other words, ceases to be the "canon" by which our lives as Christians are measured and the authority to which Christians are to submit their lives. Rather, a person's "experience" with something called "the community as a whole" (whatever that means) is the canon or the rule by which God's will in Holy Scripture is judged.

Pronk comes to this conclusion because he seems to believe that Biblical interpretation is radically determined by the prior ethical and even theological assumptions one brings to the text. The obvious difficulty is that this is contradicted by his own exegesis of the relevant Biblical passages on homosexuality.

Pronk's own exegesis demonstrates that one can easily enough come to the conclusion that the Bible teaches (or prohibits) x and yet still be opposed to (or in favor of) x . (In traditional theological terms we call this sin.) Even though Pronk is committed to a radical ethic of "gay liberation theology" he shares the exegetically orthodox conclusion that the Bible condemns and prohibits all homosexual behavior. He simply concludes that if the Bible teaches that homosexual activity is wrong, so much the worse for the Bible. Pronk tells us that "Gay Liberation Theology has shown us how we can read the Bible differently" (p. 321). Indeed. It teaches us that the "experience" of homoerotic orgasm trumps Biblical authority.

What then are we to say to those who claim to be evangelicals and yet approve of this sort of hermeneutic? On the back of the book one finds a ringing endorsement from R. Blair of the pro-gay organization Evangelicals Concerned and from "writer and author" Peggy Campolo. "Pronk," Blair says, "builds an effective case . . . for the significance of one's experience in all discussion of homosexuality, no matter the opinion held or what one may claim is his or her basis for that opinion." And according to Campolo the book "forces the sophisticated reader to logically reexamine the church's attitude toward ethics in general and homosexuality in particular."

But with all due deference to the opinion of Campolo, it does not take a particularly "sophisticated reader" to see that this book forces one to choose between that which is in accord with the clear teaching of Scripture and that which contradicts it. Before trading in their birthright for a pot of Pronk porridge, evangelical Christians should reflect long and hard on Pronk's recognition that the apostle Paul "viewed homosexual behavior as a typical sign, a classic example, of *paganism*" (p. 277).

Keith Pavlischek
Wynnewood, PA