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Book Reviews

IS GOD ALIVE? By Lewis S. Mudge. United Church Press, Philadelphia, Boston, 1963. 95 pages. Paperback. \$1.45.

This is not the ordinary kind of book on ecumenical stirrings. Presbyterian Lewis S. Mudge, former campus pastor at Princeton, later theological secretary of the World Presbyterian Alliance in Geneva, and now Assistant Professor of Religion and Chaplain at Amherst College, was commissioned to write the chapters (5) of this little book as a study document for a Reformed-churches' young people's (high school and college) conference on the campus of Purdue University this past summer, preparatory to the 19th General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed and Presbyterian Churches, scheduled for 1964 at Frankfurt, Germany.

In writing his book as a challenge for a young audience Mudge succeeds admirably, at least from a Reformed theological viewpoint, to cast modern-day issues into strong, existential terms, hoping thereby to lead thoughtful young Christians "to come to terms with ecumenical *facts*—facts often brought into being by the courage and initiative of young people who take the unity and mission of the church seriously" (p. 93).

To be relevant today, it is not sufficient merely to convince a man that God exists but that God matters, and matters for you, the author contends. If Christian faith is to be of some significance, it will never be enough merely to move along on the momentum of past tradition, nor assent simply to the claims of the church, nor attempt to attain a kind of theological jargon on old Christian concepts which the world today finds understandable, nor resort to a cut and dried back-to-the-Bible kind of movement. What is needed, according to Mudge, is a new creation or rebirth, in keeping with the prayer-theme of the assembly, "Come, Creator Spirit." This is the key, if new life is to be pumped into the church in our day. Who could disagree? But every Christian, particularly every Lutheran, has the right to ask here, how can the church get this mysterious power of the Spirit going, apart from the Word? Thus, while the appeal of this book is very good, the soft spot in it is the characteristic weakness within Protestantism to expect the Spirit's working and energizing and building apart from the Word, Holy Writ, thus *immediately* through the "activity of God," through men of pious good will.

"We encounter the Spirit of God by going out into the world to meet him" (p. 25). None could fault the author for seeking to stir within the hearts of this generation a desire to be critically involved with the world and its problems and great issues. Only too often have Christians turned their un-Samaritan-like backs on people in need. But where shall the new man in Christ, who is to be the "involved man" in the movements attending human freedom, human suffering, human community, take on his strength from the Holy Spirit, if it be not through Word and sacraments, the chosen vehicles of the Spirit? Involvement at all points, deep and compassionate and spiritual and Christ-like though it may be,

cannot finally end in any other manner than as another religious crusade, bound to lose forward motion once the steam of enthusiasm is spent.

Worship and prayer receive a similar emphasis by Mudge, leading him to downgrade worship of the merely-singing-God's-praises kind, and seeking rather through prayer "to see our world in a new light, to exchange paralysis and confusion for the power to act, . . . to discover where the Spirit is running through the concerns in which we are immersed" (p. 54). However, Mudge is not guilty of advising identification of the Spirit of God with every cause and idea that we conceive to be "Christlike," and, in fairness, his ability to uncover shallow church going practices and empty worship-forms must be commended. He has succeeded in presenting the challenge of our day to concerned young Christians in a thought-provoking, articulate, and appealing manner.

E. F. Klug

SCHOOLS OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD. By August C. Stelhorn. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1963. 507 pages. Cloth. \$6.75.

In view of the recent Supreme Court decision that prayers and Bible reading have no place in tax-supported classrooms every Lutheran pastor and parent may be expected to desire more information about the history, nature and purposes of Lutheran schools. The history and the battles pro and con of the Lutheran school in America would seem to provide timely reading.

Schools of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod leaves the reader impressed with the struggles and the sacrifices of parents, pastors and leaders in Synod. It took much courage, depth of conviction and patience to contribute to the survival of what often looked to many like a lost cause, especially in the years of the First World War and then in the days of the depression. To follow through on the fate of Lutheran schools in periods of economic distress, in the ideological and legal battles to eliminate Lutheran schools, is to have gained a new insight into the role and importance of this institution within the church.

While the author gives periodic glimpses of changes and improvements of the facilities, equipment, the training and status of well qualified teachers, of instructional methods and materials, financing, his main concern has been for well nigh fifty years with the school as an institution within the changing historical setting of both the church and the nation. To add concreteness to these glimpses the author treats his subject in four periods of roughly twenty-five years each, from 1850 to 1950.

Other researchers have made enlightening studies of specific phases of Lutheran parish education, such as the legal status of the Lutheran school on the American scene, the theological foundations of the ministry of teaching in and by the Church, the administration and financing of such schools, and the total program of parish education, the expansion of the Lutheran school into the high school level, the university level, into adult education, and into a variety of so-called part-time agencies, the writing of instructional materials to spell out the underlying philoso-

phy of the Lutheran school. But no one will be well informed on the subject of the church's part in the education of the citizens and church members of tomorrow until he has read, without pre-conceived notions, this significant and scholarly story. In a "final word" the author relates his story to contemporary issues and concludes with a note of decided optimism about the future of schools in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Henry J. Boettcher

TREATY OF THE GREAT KING. THE COVENANT STRUCTURE OF DEUTERONOMY. STUDIES AND COMMENTARY. By Meredith G. Kline. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1963. 149 pages. Cloth. \$3.50.

The materials in this volume have appeared in print previously. The first part consists of two chapters that first became available as articles in the *Westminster Theological Journal*, in the issues of May and November, 1960. These have been somewhat modified in the book to take into consideration more recent developments. The second part of the volume is a substantial reprint of the brief commentary contributed by Dr. Kline to *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1962). Although the author claims that the combination of materials is unusual, "it was felt that the two parts satisfactorily supplemented each other in their common unfolding of treaty patterns as found in the Mosaic covenants" (pp. 7-8).

In his interpretation of the Book of Deuteronomy, Dr. Kline endeavors to utilize the insights that have come to Old Testament critical scholarship as a result of the rediscovery of treaties of the great kings of the Near Eastern world, especially those of the Hittite kings. G. E. Mendenhall has made a special study of the form of the covenants in the Israelite tradition in a monograph, entitled *Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East*. Dr. Mendenhall believes that he has discovered remarkably close parallels in the international treaties of Western Asia during the second millennium B. C. and Israelite covenants. The Near Eastern treaties were of two kinds: the parity treaty between equals and the suzerainty treaty between a great king and his vassals. D. J. Wiseman and K. Baltzer have also pointed out the relationship between the Biblical covenants and those of the Near East. The parallels between the suzerainty treaty and the Biblical treaty are as follows:

(1) The identification of the Great King: "Thus says, the Great King. . . ." This recalls passages like "I am the Lord" (Ex. 20:1-2) or "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel" (Josh. 24:2).

(2) A description of the historical background of the relations between the Great King and the subjects, emphasizing especially the kindnesses of the former. Compare this with Josh. 24:2-13.

(3) The stipulations of the covenant which set forth the obligations of the vassal over against his monarch. The First Commandment of the Decalogue (Ex. 20:3; cf. also 34:13; Josh. 24:14) prohibits any recognition of other gods.

(4) The stipulations that the treaty should be placed in a sanctuary of the subject and read publicly at intervals. Cf. Josh. 24:20; Deut. 31:9-13.

(5) The calling upon deities of the contracting parties as witnesses of the covenant. In the Israelite covenants such witnesses are not found.

(6) The blessings and curses are listed which will follow those who violate the covenant. Cf. Ex. 23:20-33; Lev. 26; Deut. 27-28; Josh. 8:34.

Dr. Kline contends that the Book of Deuteronomy contains five of the six elements of the suzerainty treaty and also argues that Deuteronomy is written in the form of the classic pattern of the Hittite suzerainty treaties. The fifth book of The Pentateuch is a treaty of the Great King, Jahwe, with his vassal Israel, effected through Moses. The outline of the commentary section is organized around the elements of the suzerainty treaty. Dr. Kline's interpretation of Deuteronomy is radical and different when compared with the expositions of Deuteronomy by other conservative scholars.

The thesis that Deuteronomy is written as a suzerainty treaty would, if sustained, establish the unity, the authenticity and the Mosaic authorship of the fifth book of The Pentateuch. The reviewer seriously doubts that critical scholarship will accept the author's interpretation of Deuteronomy, for it would mean yielding one of the important critical positions in Old Testament criticism and necessitate a revamping of thinking on the origin of a number of books in the Old Testament.

Raymond Surburg

THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA AND THEIR PLACE IN THE PLAN OF THE APOCALYPSE. By W. M. Ramsay. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1963. x and 446 pages. Cloth. \$4.95.

This volume is a reprint of the 1904 edition. It consists of 31 chapters and notes on each chapter.

The book may readily be divided into two parts. In chapters I-XIII much introductory material is given, most of it of a geographical, historical, and archaeological nature. All of it sheds light on the conditions under which the early Christians lived. For instance, a number of chapters are devoted to such subjects as writing, travel, transmission of letters, the postal system, the imperial religion, persecution of the Jews under the Roman emperors, Jewish colonists in Asian cities and pagan converts in the early Church. All of these will prove interesting to the reader and furnish him with excellent background material, as the author here lays the foundation for his discussion of the Seven Letters and of the cities in which the seven churches were located.

In the remaining chapters of his book the noted author discusses the letters themselves. To each letter he devotes two chapters, one to a discussion of the city and the other to a brief analysis of the letter itself. He sees in the natural features of the city and in its history the distinguishing characteristic of the congregation located there. He characterizes each city with a single word or a succinct phrase. Ephesus is the City of Change, Smyrna is the City of Life, etc. In this characterization of the city the author finds the dominant and distinguishing note in the

letter addressed to the congregation there. This principle he applies consistently to each letter, although admitting that it does not hold in the case of Laodicea. In his analysis of the letters the author does not give a detailed exegetical treatment of the text. He does, however, pay attention to individual phrases and gives much interesting and valuable information on various topics, such as emperor worship and the heresy of the Nicolaitans.

The value of the book lies in the fund of information concerning the Province of Asia and conditions which prevailed in early times. This will prove helpful and should stimulate to further study. The reader may, on the other hand, feel that the author presses certain points of comparison between the historical and natural features of the seven cities and the seven churches too much. It might also be noted at this point that the author considers St. John's view of the Nicolaitans "bigoted."

In summary it may be stated that the pastor who plans a series of sermons on the Seven Letters will want to have this book. He will find it informative and helpful.

George Dolak

MONEY AND THE CHURCH. By Luther P. Powell. Association Press, New York, 1962. 252 pages. Cloth. \$3.75.

The fly-leaf exaggerates when it states, "In a book brimming with quotations and with attested true accounts of remarkable happenings, is contained the first complete history of stewardship." The book is limited to one very specific phase of stewardship, namely, money. It is quite precisely what the title indicates: an historical study surveying the main epochs of Christendom that yield information about money and the church.

Before Constantine the emphasis seems to be on first-fruits and a loving generosity which exceeded the tithe. Between Constantine and Gregory the Great the tithe became, first, a law of the church, and finally, a law of the civil courts. The Middle Ages present a sordid story in which revenue-producing doctrines (grace by merit, etc.) commercialized the church and abused the sincere Christian by means of a whole gamut of money-raising devices from papal taxations to indulgences. Although financial abuses helped to foment the Reformation, the movement itself did little to produce an immediate program for supporting the church which was in harmony with the voluntary principle of the New Testament. Men were imprisoned for not paying their tithes and such as held views which contradicted compulsory tithing as the will of God were subject to martyrdom.

Two-thirds of the book deals with money and the church in America. While philosophies of voluntary support were prevalent in early America, there were such developments as lotteries and pew rentals. Confusion seems to reign in contemporary America in philosophy and practice, and many denominations find themselves caught between "merchandising" schemes and an emphasis on voluntary proportionate giving.

Dr. Powell concludes the book with a plea for spiritualized giving, that giving be emphasized as a response to the love of God, and that as a self-discipline the Christian give a tithe as a minimum proportion.

Arthur E. Graf.

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN CARDS (Greek and Latin Text). Edited by Silverio Zedda, S. J. Facolta Teologica, S. J., Chieri (Torino), Italy, 1962 (2nd ed.). 4464 cards. Lire 5500; \$9.00 (plus postage).

One wonders why nobody thought of doing this before! "this" being the printing of the entire New Testament on numbered cards (from 1 to 4464), each bearing from one to four verses of the Greek text (Latin is added below), identified always by reference to book, chapter, and verse/s.

In the parallel passages of the Synoptics special care has been taken to divide the text according to corresponding sections. The whole set comes packaged in four boxes of corrugated cardboard and includes twenty-seven red photogloss cards for use as dividers. The Greek text is that of Merk's eighth critical edition.

The advantages of this device for intensive study of parallel passages, or for the thorough investigation of a Biblical concept, doctrine, or word, are readily apparent: e.g., the possibility of laying out in full view all pertinent passages at once; the immediate availability of a fuller context than that provided by even the best concordances; the capacity for quick arrangement in categories and for equally quick rearrangement as may be desirable; and the like more. We know also of a student who has begun memorizing the Greek NT by carrying several of these cards with him at all times, so that he can consult them in any idle moment. *O si sic omnes!*

Richard Jungkuntz

INCARNATION TO ASCENSION: A PASTORAL INTERPRETATION.

By James E. Wagner. The Christian Education Press, Philadelphia, 1962. 111 pages. Cloth. \$2.50.

Pastors cannot avoid being interpreters of Scripture. The question is: What are the principles that guide their interpreting? The principles a pastor accepts as being valid and workable will be determined largely by his theological orientation. In stressing the pastor's role as an interpreter of Scripture, the author proceeds from a liberal-evangelical point of view. His interpretation of four essential Christian doctrines, the incarnation, the crucifixion, the resurrection and the ascension, is liberal in the sense of being catholic and comprehensive, and evangelical as connoting commitment to the faith proclaimed within the historic creeds and confessions.

The author conceives of his task as being mediatorial between the "believe as I believe or else" category of Christians and the liberals who are just as narrow and dogmatic in their liberalism. He wishes "to challenge dogmatic rigidities of every kind" (p. 23). He has some good things to say about the primacy of the Bible in preaching and in pastoral

work. He also makes a point for preaching being teaching, for a pastor cannot help but teach if he is interpreting.

On the other hand, the author's "liberal-evangelical" interpretation appears to be deeply influenced by scientific empiricism. While the resurrection of Christ was, for the disciples, a resurrection of the body, we need to qualify their interpretation of this event in the light of modern knowledge. Likewise, it is immaterial whether the ascension is looked upon as historical reporting or as the expression of a devout and wondering poetry. With regard to the incarnation, the virgin birth is unimportant. The crucifixion, in turn, lends itself to varying interpretations, all of which are necessary for a more complete understanding of its significance.

The author has sought to confront 20th century skepticism with a rational, practical interpretation of essential Christian truth. He presents the meaning of doctrine for life in a way that is often gripping and illuminating. But in the process he has sacrificed something essentially Christian, namely acceptance of the kind of historical events the Bible describes in connection with Christ. The Christian religion is anchored in specific historical events in the life of Jesus Christ. Granted that the resurrection is ultimately an article of faith, but how is faith possible if the bodily resurrection of Christ is made doubtful? And if the ascension never really happened, how is it possible to believe that Christ now reigns and will return as Judge?

Dr. Wagner, who is president of the United Church of Christ and vice-president of the World Alliance of Reformed and Presbyterian Churches, has crammed much thought-provoking material into his small book. But he opens the door to a theology of doubt, a theology that is not proclaimed in the historic creeds Christendom.

Gerhard Aho

SERMONIC STUDIES, Volume II. By Various Authors. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1963. 616 pages. Cloth. \$7.50.

There is no end to the publishing of books, and, we could add, of sermon books. Sermons that apply God's Word to people's needs can edify through the printed page as well as from the pulpit. The more such sermons find their way into print, the better. With the publication of the present collection, Concordia has enriched sermonic literature with a book that is instructive and stimulating.

Representing a continuation of the studies based on the Standard Epistles, *Sermonic Studies*, Volume II, covers the Trinity season texts. What makes this volume different from the ordinary sermon book is that each text is treated exegetically and homiletically in quite a thorough way. Thus there is not only a sermon based on the text, but an exegetical study and several outlines as well. Pastors will note with interest the methods employed by the various authors. Here can be seen the chips of the workshop, the precious nuggets revealed by a careful study of the text and the relation of the truths of the text to the totality of Christian doctrine. Homiletical skills can be seen in the four sermon outlines on

each text, for the authors are able to organize their material in a unified, logical way. While each of the four outlines is different, they all carry through the central thought of the text. The finished product, the complete sermon, develops the truths of the text in a manner that will enable people today to see their involvement in what God has done and is doing for men's salvation. The sermons especially reveal pastoral understanding, concern with showing the relevance of Scripture to people caught up in the complexities, fears and temptations of modern life.

This book can serve as a fine resource tool for pastors. By participating in some of the by-products of sermon making set down in *Sermonic Studies*, preachers will grow in their knowledge of the Word and will gain insights which will enable them to communicate the Word better to their hearers. The price is not too high for this instructive and stimulating book.

Gerhard Aho

THE Gnostic RELIGION. By Hans Jonas. Second edition, revised. Beacon Press, Boston, 1963. xix and 355 pages. Paper. \$2.45.

No theologically trained clergyman is totally unfamiliar with gnosticism, for he has often met with the subject—notably in writings about the Johannine literature of the New Testament or as an area of ancient church history. Surely this repeated experience with the subject and with the term has led to a kind of working definition, which, for want of more detailed knowledge, serves a limited purpose. But in spite of such semi-acquaintance, gnosticism, like other “isms” of the ancient past, remains obscure and distant for most. To that problem three evenings with Jonas' book is a solution.

To his credit, the author is very patient with the reader who is a novice in this subject. His method is a movement from the general to the specific, from the comparatively simple to the comparatively complex. After a chapter of historical survey, he defines and explains the major ideas and tenets of the gnostic movement, no mean task, because by Jonas' own testimony the gnostic religion is “widely diversified” and only “more or less systematic.” Next, many terms from the imagery and symbolic language of the movement are explained and illustrated. Perhaps the reader's feeling of growing competence is deceptive at this point, but he begins to read about Archons, living Light, and alien man as though he understands. Finally, since gnostic thought is and must remain a “confusing variety of the actual material,” Jonas discusses and quotes with extensive commentary a number of the prominent gnostic authors. Then, at the very end, as a bonus of the second edition, the author shares his analysis of similarities between ancient gnosticism and modern nihilism and existentialism.

This useful procedure, supplemented nicely by the author's lucid style, makes the book a meaningful introduction to its subject. But “introduction” is a poorly chosen descriptive term for this book if it suggests something less than a scholarly, well-documented, and authoritative

study. This book is all these things, as its extensive bibliography and its almost exclusive dependence upon primary sources abundantly testify.

The book addresses itself to no burning issue in the church, but it presents and discusses a subject which the theologian cannot, without detriment, ignore. The usefulness of the book is placed on a broad base inasmuch as its reporting is objective and its conclusions largely non-controversial.

Ray F. Martens

WINNING THEM BACK. By Waldo J. Werning, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1963. 80 pages. Paper. \$1.75.

Unless the trend can be reversed, in the span of one century, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod will lose double its present membership. We are annually losing a membership equal to one hundred average size congregations. The author's concern for these thousands who like Demas forsake Christ and His church has prompted him to write a book suggesting a methodology for winning them back.

After setting forth the biblical basis for the church's concern for its delinquent members, he suggests procedure and content for personal visitations. His self-evaluation guides for congregational boards suggest that a part of the fault for delinquency lies with the congregation. One question he is bold enough to ask is "What can be done to make the various parts of the worship service more meaningful to all the people?" It is the reviewer's candid opinion that ministers particularly ought to ask that question seriously.

The eight form letters to delinquents and such as ought to transfer indicate that the author rightly assumes that God can speak to people also through the written Word. Their strength lies in a straightforward, simple, clear style. A few more Bible passages and more emphasis on the delinquents' relationship to Christ might have made them even better. The Parish Shepherding Plan and reference to two church attendance crusades conclude the book.

Where pastor and people are willing to meet Christ under the cross in a sincere desire to serve Him better the book will be helpful. The danger of publishing such a book, as the author who is stewardship and mission counselor of the Southern Nebraska District well knows, lies in this that pastors and boards might use the book as an excuse for more sitting sessions in self-analysis in an unconscious effort to escape the more difficult task of visiting the delinquent.

Arthur E. Graf

HOW TO STUDY PHILIPPIANS, COLOSSIANS, AND PHILEMON. HOW TO TEACH PHILIPPIANS, COLOSSIANS, AND PHILEMON. By Joseph M. Gettys. How to Study the Bible Series. John Knox Press, Richmond, Virginia, 1964. Paper. \$1.50 (student manual). \$1.00 (teacher's guide).

"Many people fail to get the maximum help from their study of the Bible because they lean so heavily on a commentary that they do not

let God speak to them directly through the Scriptures." The How to Study the Bible Series attempts to remedy that situation. While the lessons are designed primarily for private study, a place is also envisioned for group discussion of the results of the private study.

The study of each section of text is divided into three separate approaches called: "Original Study," that is, a noting of the major ideas in each section, developing paragraph titles and the like; "Detailed Study," which seeks to lead the student deeper into the text by posing questions for thought and investigation; and, finally, "Advanced Study," which directs the student to commentaries and other specialized reference works for a deeper appreciation and understanding of the text.

Each epistle is prefaced with an introductory lesson that sets the stage for the study of the epistle proper. These introductions, while employing the findings of contemporary scholarship, are quite cautious in their conclusions. Each lesson for study then covers approximately one chapter of text.

The teacher's guide is designed to prepare the teacher for leading a discussion of the material already studied in private. This manual is well written and shows a continual concern for tying the material together so as to maintain a continuity of thought.

Anyone who will diligently work out these lessons according to the author's clear and carefully explained outline will profit greatly from the experience both in terms of understanding these epistles and in terms of personal spiritual growth.

Arliegh Lutz

THE CHRISTIAN ALTAR. By C. E. Pocknee. A. R. Mowbray & Co., Ltd., London, 1963. 112 pages. Cloth. 25s.

The history and development of the altar in the Christian Church is a long and complicated process. This book traces the history of the altar from the wooden table of the first centuries to the modern altar.

Since the church building exists for the sake of the altar and not the altar for the sake of the church building, knowledge of the history of the altar, its development, and function in the life of the community of believers is of great importance. The liturgical movement has exerted an influence on many new churches being built during our time. The design of the church, the relation of the church to the altar, the position of the altar and its appointments show this. Yet an equal number of churches, if not more, are being built without any evident understanding of the altar and its significance. Pocknee's book will be of great help to those building new churches, remodeling old ones, and to those who seek simply to know more about the altar in their church.

The "free standing" altar is discussed at some length, showing that not all altars of the early church were free-standing, and that even if many were, this did not always mean that the celebrant invariably stood facing the people. Controversies as to how many candles, what type cross, and how many flowers should be on the altar are taken care of with the statement that none of these belong on the altar in the first place.

Making the Holy Table such a pedestal for candles, cross, flowers, etc. only detracts from the purpose of the altar. Many illustrations are used to illustrate the history of the altar and good present usage.

While not included in this review, two other recent books by Pocknee deserve mention: *Cross and Crucifix in Christian Worship and Devotion*; and *Liturgical Vesture: Its Origins and Development*. All of the books are well written and provide good resource material.

Daniel Brockopp

FROM MOSES TO QUMRAN. By H. H. Rowley. Association Press, New York, 1963. xiv and 293 pages. Cloth. \$7.50.

Although the price of the American edition seems unnecessarily high, this collection of essays previously published separately over a span of two decades will be of interest to many in this country who have learned to respect the work of this dean of British Old Testament scholars.

Despite the title's seeming promise the book is not characterized by a unifying theme, consisting rather of quite separate studies on the nature of Biblical authority, the supposed role of Moses in the growth of monotheism, the meaning of OT sacrifice, the place of ritual in the thought of the prophets, the meaning of Job, the relation of Jeremiah to Deuteronomy, the connection of John's baptism with Jewish proselyte baptism, and the question of Christian origins and Qumran.

Readers familiar with Rowley's theology and critical position will find nothing new here, but a carefully worked out explication of some of the author's favorite themes as they impinge on current issues in Biblical interpretation. The last two essays seem to this reviewer to possess merit above the others. Students will find the footnotes (updated for the publication of the essays in book form) a bibliographical treasure.

Richard Jungkuntz

CAN I TRUST MY BIBLE?: IMPORTANT QUESTIONS OFTEN ASKED ABOUT THE BIBLE . . . With some answers by Eight Evangelical Scholars. Moody Press, Chicago, 1963. 190 pages. Cloth. \$3.50.

Is the Bible really trustworthy? The eight contributors to this symposium (seven Ph.D.'s and one Th.D.) answer, Yes! Addressing themselves to questions concerning the canon and text of the Bible, inspiration, prophecy, the accuracy of Bible history, and the relationship between science and the Bible, these essays present the position of eight contemporary neo-evangelical scholars.

Inspiration is made the test of canonicity (p. 71) and is adduced by showing that the Old Testament was written largely by prophets (p. 74) and the New Testament by apostles (p. 87). After consideration of the evidence, especially that of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the text of the Old Testament is declared to be "completely reliable" (p. 132), and in another rather technical and statistical essay the integrity of the New Testament text is declared to be "beyond dispute" (p. 168). The Christian is convinced of the inspiration of the Bible not by rational argu-

ments, but by the testimony of the Holy Spirit. This conviction "dawns" on the Christian (p. 27) as God "produces belief in the mind." The fulfillment of Messianic and other prophecies, especially those concerning the ancient city of Tyre, are advanced to show that Old Testament prophecy is really prophetic. The evidence furnished by archaeology is marshalled to support the historical accuracy of the Old Testament, though it is admitted that this evidence also raises some new problems (p. 150). Arguing on the basis of the historical reliability of the Lukan writings, the New Testament is also declared to be historically accurate (p. 190). The essay on the relationship between science and the Bible is written from the viewpoint that there is no basic conflict between science and the Bible (p. 50). The author of this essay argues with conviction for the legitimate place of both.

As is the case with many symposiums, the quality of these essays is uneven. A number of basic questions pertinent to the subject matter discussed are omitted or dealt with only in passing. An occasional question mark also seems in place. One wonders about the case made for the cumulative effect of the Old Testament prophecies in the same context with an admission that each prophecy taken by itself might be "explained away" (p. 110). One also wonders about the emphasis on "proof" and "logical deductions" (p. 21ff.) for showing the inspiration of the Bible, if in fact the "proof" of inspiration is the testimony of the Holy Spirit (p. 25f.).

As its title states this volume will provide some information for use in answering important questions asked about the Bible. It will also provide some useful information for the preparation of Bible Class material.

Arleigh Lutz

MAN IN GOD'S WORLD. By Helmut Thielicke. Translated and edited by John W. Doberstein. Harper and Row, New York, 1963. 223 pages. Cloth. \$3.95.

Translator Doberstein has succeeded masterfully in making available in English another volume of the writings of Helmut Thielicke. In this book, as in the volume, *The Freedom of the Christian Man*, the reader is led into the theological framework which lies behind the author's popular and powerful preaching. Also, these books provide a preview of Thielicke's systematic treatment of Christian ethics which will soon appear in translation. The main thesis of *Man in God's World* emphasizes that the divine creation and preservation of this world is understood by the Christian in terms of a personal relationship between God and man. The Bible puts man, and not philosophical concepts about time or space, at the center of things. The Biblical account of creation, Thielicke believes, is not intended to explain how the world came into being, but what kind of personal relationship is intended by the Creator between Himself and His creatures. This is the emphasis of Luther's explanation of the first article of the Apostles Creed: "I believe that God has created *me* . . ."

While Deism and the so-called "religious" man sees God's rule operative only on the outside—in the cosmos—the Christian experiences it in

personal relationship with God. His picture of the world is not something he can prove, as rationalistic and materialistic world views attempt to do, but something he receives as a gift from the creator. Original sin involves the having of a world view apart from this personal Father-child relationship. Such a cleavage results in idolatry, the following of gods and goals on the outside, in the created order of things.

Thielicke's chapter on the world-view of biology must have had significant relevance to his hearers during World War II when these lectures were delivered. Against the "super-race" theories of Nazism, as well as any other purely biological world-view, Thielicke stresses the transcendence of God. The Creator is not to be identified with His creatures. Nature is the drama in which the Christian sees God at work in a particularity which biologism or materialism does not allow. In Christ man is a unique and special creation, chosen as an individual for fellowship with God.

The last chapters on fate, providence, freedom and bondage, and the reality of the demonic must have been particularly significant to those audiences of fearful, but eager listeners assembled at Stuttgart under somewhat precarious circumstances. The only way to an appreciation of the mystery of providence, says Thielicke, is to enter into a personal relationship with Him who provides. Faith in providence is "faith in spite of appearances to the contrary." Faith is never something finished or possessed, but a pilgrimage from the trial of doubt to the praise of God.

The Christian sees life only on the basis of its goal and end. It is God coming to man who knows the end and reveals it in His own way. Such revelation brings man to a knowledge of himself, to a recognition of the evil and the demonic in him and around him, and to the venture of discipleship. It is the latter, the engagement with God in a personal relationship, that gives meaning to life. While it doesn't solve the questions of fate and providence, of freewill and predestination, it provides the way to approach them and liberates the Christian to a life of responsible service to God and fellowman.

There is little doubt that Thielicke is communicating to the contemporary world in its own terms and to its present situation. If his message sounds strange to churchmen accustomed to a more systematic and speculative interpretation of the Christian Gospel, perhaps it may help them to recognize the urgency of allowing the traditional formulations of the Church to come alive through re-statement and re-interpretation for a world which desperately needs to hear them. *B. F. Kurzweg*

WORSHIP AND CONGREGATION. Ecumenical Studies in Worship, No. 12. By Wilhelm Hahn. Translated by Geoffrey Buswell. John Knox Press, Richmond, Virginia, 1963. 75 pages. Paper. \$1.75.

Drawing out the implications of the theology of worship for the actual ordering of the Sunday Service and the building up of the life of the congregation is the purpose of this book. As such it is addressed not only to the theologian and parish pastor, but also to the layman engaged in the worship of his church.

The book is a valuable contribution to the study of the worship of the Church. The author discusses first of all the theology of worship, using as his point of departure statements from the famous sermon of Luther at the consecration of the Castle Church at Torgau in 1544. Although one finds the author's statements here on the Real Presence inadequate and disappointing, there is much to be gained from a careful study of his presentation of the presence of Christ in worship.

Hahn sees three sections of worship which must be coordinated: the *ordinarium*, the *proprium*, and the free elements. The inclusion of the free elements (the portions of worship which "neither can nor should be planned or laid down beforehand") is surprising and, it would appear, quite unnecessary to our understanding of worship. Under the title of "free elements" the author includes announcements during the Service, extempore prayer after the Sermon, etc. The combination of the three sections of worship produces then an indication of the temporal setting of worship: the *ordinarium* linking the Church with the "dimension of eternity"; the *proprium* with the Church year; and the free elements with the present moment. Under such an analysis, we believe, the Sermon, rightly understood and preached, will combine all three into a unified whole, and well take care of the immediate situation and present moment.

One finds many valuable contributions in this little book. While we will not agree with all that the author has to say in regard to the position of children in the Sunday Service, we must applaud his statement that "the instruction given even to young children should be first and foremost a training for worship."

The book will be a good addition to the library of the parish pastor, theological student and layman, and will certainly help to enrich the understanding of the role of worship in the life of the Church.

Daniel Brockopp

NEW TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA. Vol. I: GOSPELS AND RELATED WRITINGS. By Edgar Hennecke. Edited by Wilhelm Schneemelcher. English translation edited by R. McL. Wilson. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1963. 531 pages. \$7.50.

Based on the third edition (1959) of Hennecke's hitherto indispensable *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen*, but corrected where necessary and updated—especially in the section on the Nag Hammadi findings—this volume is the first half of a long awaited English replacement for M. R. James's worthy but superannuated single-volume work of more than a generation ago.

Eighty-four valuable pages of general and special introduction by Schneemelcher place the fascinating yet exasperating sources in proper perspective. Full bibliographical data (a deficiency in James's book) accompany each section and sub-section. An added bonus is the inclusion of the English editor's own new translation of the Coptic *Gospel of Thomas* and a precis of the Valentinian(?) *Gospel of Truth*.

Without doubt this will be the standard reference work in its field for several decades at least.

Richard Jungkuntz

THE FAILURE OF THEOLOGY IN MODERN LITERATURE. By John Killinger. Abingdon Press, New York, 1963. 239 pages. Cloth. \$5.00.

The "Christian critic" of contemporary literature is faced with a double task. First of all, respecting the work of the artist, he attempts as much "objectivity" as is possible: he does not equate the writer with one of his protagonists; he seeks to get at the real primacy of a work—avoiding the "heresy of paraphrase"; he does not dichotomize *form* from *content*; he does not separate the *experience* of exposure to a work from the content of the work itself; he does not place the work "into an unreal competition with theology" (Cleanth Brooks); etc.

At the same time, the Christian cannot renounce the "creative criticism" which is part of theology's task. He must "ask hard questions of the creative arts . . . (Theology) must judge, or it has nothing at all to say" (pp. 15-16).

Killinger has attempted this balance—and found it—in a decade when several decades of works on "theology and literature" have appeared—and when one is inclined to ask "can any new, good thing come out" in this area? Killinger seriously probes the point of entry into the malaise and "country of the mind" of our time. He draws on the recent decades of interdisciplinary studies and examines the prophetic voices of Faulkner, Hemingway, Wolfe, Fitzgerald, Camus, Nietzsche, Greene, Melville, Eliot, Sinclair Lewis, and hosts of other artists. Like Balaam, he is willing to listen to "the word of the Lord being spoken from the mouth of the ass" (p. 14). But like Randall Stewart in *American Literature and Christian Doctrine* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1958, p. viii), he also sheds the sterility of *neuter-ality*, and charges this literature to "give an answer for the faith" that is in it. K. holds that there have not been many works primarily of a literary nature that have at the same time represented adequately the essential mood of the Christian faith" (p. 17). This is the implication of his book's title—that "theology *qua* theology has not made a very definite impact on contemporary literature—certainly nothing like that it registered in the times of Dante and Milton" (p. 35).

It is from Dante's "divine!" *Commedia* that he takes his tack throughout the book, examining his authors in relation to several recurrent themes in Christian theology—God, Man, Church, Sacraments, Ministry, Last Things, and Atonement.

Among the many answers for the "Paradox of the *Manifest Absence*" of God in literature, K. feels the most direct reason is that "(the world) has first lost Christ, and the loss of Christ means the loss of relation" (p. 45). But K. does not, accordingly, disparage the work of the literary artist. Why do we keep turning to their works? "Why indeed, unless we find there is something in the way these writers depict the godless world that actually speaks to us of God, that makes plain to us what is missing from the picture?" (p. 53).

Someone else said it a while back. He "formulated the paradoxical statement that where God is revealed, there he is also hidden, and where he is hidden there he is also revealed—the *deus revelatus* is always *deus absconditus*, and vice versa" (p. 57).

He was a young Augustinian friar turned reformer.

Donald L. Deffner

A GRAMMAR OF NEW TESTAMENT GREEK. By James Hope Moulton. Vol. III: SYNTAX. By Nigel Turner. T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1963. xxii and 418 pages. Cloth. 60s.

It's a good thing once to have a grammar that separates the uninspiring data of morphology from the romantic stuff of which syntax is made, not by chapter divisions merely, but by the hard covers of separate volumes. The materials of verbal accident require for useful presentation little more than mechanical organization, such as could be provided by one of our more intelligent electronic computers. But it takes a human being, and an exceptional one at that, who is part poet, part philosopher, and part seer, to set forth in advantageous form the myriad virtues and complexities, the potentialities and ambiguities, of verbal relationships.

Now, six decades after the Prolegomena appeared as Vol. I of this work, and a full generation after Vol. II on Accident, we have the volume on Syntax toward which the whole enterprise was aimed in the first place—framed and fashioned, however, by another hand and mind than the original author's.

Space forbids anything like a comprehensive survey of Dr. Turner's study, and random selection of examples would be unjust to the masterful rationale of the whole. The major divisions are two: an analytical presentation of "Word-Material For Sentence Building," and a synthetic treatment of "Sentence Structure."

Characteristic of Turner's approach (in which he departs from Moulton's own view) is the tendency to recognize a substantial measure of Semitic influence on the NT, to such a degree indeed that it once more seems possible to speak without apology of "Biblical Greek."

Indispensable for the teacher of exegesis, textual critic, and comparative philologist, this illuminating work ought also to be on the desk or at least within arm's reach of every serious-minded preacher of the Word in its New Testament garb.

Richard Jungkuntz

RUDOLF BULTMANN: HISTORY OF THE SYNOPTIC TRADITION. John Marsh, translator. Harper and Row, New York, 1963. 456 pages. Cloth. \$8.50.

New Testament criticism has moved on to other things since Bultmann wrote this significant volume on Form Criticism in 1931; even Bultmann himself moved on to myth and Demythologization. But *Formgeschichte*, now popularized, has penetrated to some degree almost all exegesis today and this volume is still basic for the understanding of the method, as Robert Grant says on the jacket: "Form Criticism is evidently

here to stay, and in this book it is encountered in the work of a master." John Marsh of Mansfield College, Oxford, who was a student of Bultmann at Marburg back in the thirties, is to be commended for his excellent job of translating Bultmann's difficult German. To render a work so heavily weighted with all sorts of footnotes, statistics, and un-heard-of references had to be "a labor of love", as he says in the *Preface*.

Bultmann divides the volume into three major parts: I. The Tradition of the Sayings of Jesus. II. The Tradition of the Narrative Material. III. The Editing of the Traditional Material. Under these three headings he delineates what he assumes to be the various "forms" (Apothegms, Sayings, Miracle Stories, Legends, etc.) in which the Gospel material circulated before it was committed to writing. His method is to divide the synoptic material (some of which does not fit his molds) into these categories and then proceed to analyse them piece by piece and thus to trace their history to the ultimate source. Such breaking up of the frame-work of the Gospels not only settles the Synoptic Problem for Bultmann but also gives each unit its "proper interpretation."

In stating his task in the important introductory chapter he says that he leans on the previous work of Wellhausen and Gunkel in the Old Testament and that of Wrede, Schmidt, Dibelius and others in the New Testament, and that Form Criticism grew out of the inadequacy of the old documentary theories (p. 2). It is interesting to note, however, that Bultmann continues to build upon the documentary source hypotheses. This leads him to the study the life of the Christian community to see what influences shaped the forms (*Sitz im Leben*). At this point literary criticism becomes historical criticism and Bultmann, a conscientious and honest scholar, admits a most devastating weakness of all Form Criticism—the *argumentum in circulo*:

"It is essential to realize that form-criticism is fundamentally indistinguishable from all historical work in this, that it has to move in a circle. The forms of the literary tradition must be used to establish the influences operating in the life of the community, and the life of the community must be used to render the forms themselves intelligible." (p. 5)

Then Bultmann makes the radical step for which he has been severely criticized, namely, to pass value judgment on the historicity of the forms:

"In distinction from Dibelius I am indeed convinced that form-criticism, just because literary forms are related to the life and history of the primitive Church, not only presuppose judgments of facts alongside judgments of literary criticism, but also lead to judgments about the facts (the genuineness of the saying, the historicity of the report and the like)." (p. 5)

He begins with the *Apothegm*, a term he borrowed from Greek literature. He says it is a saying of Jesus set in a brief context or story. The redactor often simply creates a story or setting for these sayings in the interest of apologetics, polemics, teaching or missionary preaching. Not all of Jesus's Sayings are genuine and sometimes His prophetic

words become a *vaticinium ex eventu* (a prophecy written after the event) (pp. 113,122). Likewise, the miracle stories are not all historical, and Bultmann makes a problem of how they found their way into the tradition.

Preachers and Bible teachers will be interested in learning that Bultmann designates the familiar narrative material of the Gospels as legendary. He defines a legend as those parts of the tradition which are not miracle stories in the proper sense, and instead of being historical are religious and edifying (p. 244). The Last Supper is a cult legend. The Baptism of Jesus may be historical, "but the story as we have it must be classified as legend" (p. 246). The Temptation is a legend which perhaps goes back to the nature myths of the kind that tell of Marduk's fight with the dragon of Chaos or to the tales of the "Temptations of Holy Men" like those told of Buddha (p. 253). (However, Bultmann shows his exegetical genius by the valuable insights he gives one of the various temptations of Jesus). The Transfiguration was once a resurrection story. The Triumphal Entry and most of the Passion History is legendary in character. He considers the narrative of Jesus's death as probably historical but says "it is strongly disfigured by legend". The same is true of the Easter Narratives, (especially the Story of the Empty Tomb) and the Infancy Narratives.

The reader should pay particular attention to Bultmann's summary chapter entitled "Conclusion" (pp. 368ff.) in which he says that while the Gospel tradition had its origin in the primitive Palestinian Church it was shaped by the Hellenistic Church. The tradition, in turn, can only be understood in terms of the Christian Kerygma which the Gospels merely illustrated and expanded:

"The Christ who is preached is not the historical Jesus, but the Christ of faith and the cult. Hence in the foreground of the preaching of Christ stands the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the saving acts which are known by faith and become effective for the believer in Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Thus the kerygma of Christ is cultic legend and the Gospels are expanded cult legends." (p. 370)

Our assessment of Bultmann's Form Criticism is mainly negative. One has to be frightfully uncritical to accept what Bultmann offers with so little evidence. It seems to be the old historical criticism in new dress. It is not only a solution of the Synoptic Problem but also the dissolution of the Gospels themselves. It is true, we must face the fact that the first Gospel was oral and Form Criticism does throw light on the oral period of the Gospel. If there were these *periscopes*, perhaps they take us to the very headwaters of the Gospel of our Gospels; but these findings are prostituted by the radical example of Bultmann. For example, the form of a story does not tell us whether it is true or false. Bultmann's method is much more radical than any harmonizations of the Gospels have ever been. He wishes to re-write the New Testament according to his own assumptions, and the Gospels become a patch-work. He assumes the role of a ghost-writer re-doing a posthumous novel. His method is not exegesis but geology of the text.

Thus we believe that most of the criticism aimed at Bultmann has been justified. It is a very arbitrary method. Those who use Form Criticism to interpret Scripture should realize this. But perhaps our greatest disappointment in Bultmann is that the origin of the Christian Religion takes place on a horizontal plane—never do we hear him speak of the influence of God's Holy Spirit on the writers of the Gospels. The blessed Gospel is cut off from the dynamic of the Holy Spirit. We must ask, if faith created the Gospels, what created the faith? Thus it was but a stone's throw for Bultmann to go from radical Form Criticism to Demythologization. But that is another story. We would, however, appeal to pastors and teachers to study this volume and see for themselves. Fortunately, the barrier of the German is now gone and many more will be able to do this.

Lorman Petersen

ORIGINS OF THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS. By Ned B. Stonehouse. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1963. 201 pages. \$4.50.

In this posthumously published work of the successor to the great Gresham Machen we have a careful and dispassionate study of one of the most persistent problems facing the N. T. scholar today, namely, the origin of the Synoptic Gospels as we now possess them in the canonical Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

Dr. Stonehouse takes up four of the most significant questions related to this subject, that is, authorship, order and interrelationship, the apostolic tradition, and finally, the matter of their ultimate origin.

Under the heading of authorship Dr. Stonehouse holds to the traditional thinking on this subject. He says, pp. 46-47, "It is my considered opinion that the apostolic authorship of Matthew is as strongly attested as any fact of ancient church history."

Stonehouse then continues by discussing at great length the subject of the order and interdependence of the synoptics. Here in a rather cautious way he finally concludes that Matthew utilized Mark and that Luke perhaps used both of them. In line with this thought he also believes that Matthew wrote his gospel originally in Greek, not in Aramaic. To this reviewer this is the weakest part of the book. Anyone acquainted with the arguments regarding the priority of Mark as over against the priority of Matthew is aware of the way in which the available data can be played with to prove almost anything. However, I must confess to the same agnosticism I had before reading Stonehouse's book. Some scholars use patristic evidence very fully in their isagogical studies, some use it less. Stonehouse uses it a great deal, but on the priority of Mark he uses none at all—for there is none.

When he comes to the apostolic tradition and the ultimate origin of the synoptic material, however, Stonehouse is at his best and following in the great Machen tradition. The last four chapters of this book are not only worth the purchase of the book, but they ought to be required reading for every pastor in our church. His testimony is loud and clear. He traces Neo-orthodoxy right up from the liberalism of Baur, Strauss,

Harnack, and Ritschl. Bultmann is in this tradition, of course. Stonehouse takes up the matter of historicism in modern theology in a manner equaled by very few. Paul Althaus' *Fact and Faith in the Kerygma of Today* is a step in this direction, but Stonehouse does it even better. Read this book. You will benefit from it.

J. A. O. Preus

AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH. By Thomas Coates. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1964. 98 pages. Paperback. \$1.50.

This is one of the paperbacks issued periodically by Concordia Publishing House for general readers in the church. It ably discusses the importance of the question of Authority in the Church for every Christian and then proceeds to discuss in order the authority of Jesus Christ as the primary authority in the church; then Holy Scripture as revealed authority; the church deriving its authority from the Scripture; the authority of the official confessions of the church; and other types of authority as exemplified in the various forms of church government. There is a special chapter on the authority of the synod and of the congregation. The booklet provides easy and profitable reading, and pastors should recommend it to their members.

One error crept in on page 21 where a certain Scripture reference is given as found in I Peter, when it is actually in II Peter. The explanation of the meaning of "canon" on page 34 is awkward. The canonical writings are not "those writings which measure up to a certain standard," but they are, rather, the standard by which the church measures her proclamation.

Fred Kramer