

# Book Reviews

*The Journey From Texts to Translations: The Origin and Development of the Bible.* By Paul D. Wegner. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1999. 462 pp., \$29.99.

Paul D. Wegner (Ph.D., King's College, University of London) is Professor of Bible at Moody Bible Institute. The purpose of his book is to survey the history of the Bible. The book is designed as an undergraduate text, but bibliographies, copious endnotes (many annotated), comprehensive general and scriptural indices, all provide ample guidance for more serious study of many topics. Cursory summaries of various issues and controversies are included also. The book is profusely illustrated, with over 125 figures (wood cuts, engravings, artifacts, drawings, etc.), over 100 tables of many kinds, and six maps.

The book is divided into five parts. Part one, "Preliminary Matters regarding the Bible," deals with essential concepts, terms, historical background of each testament, unity, and structure of the Bible. Two brief appendices are included on Septuagint manuscripts and the Synoptic Problem. Part two, "Canonization of the Bible," introduces the development of written language, Biblical languages, writing materials, and paleography. A historical survey of canonization and discussions of extra-canonical literature are informative. The canon is seen as a list of authoritative, self-authenticating books that demanded canonization because they were Word of God, rather than an authoritative list canonized by the authority of the church.

Part three, "Transmission of the Bible," follows the Hebrew and Greek texts from

inception to final forms. The discussion of the scribal eras of the Hebrew text is especially good, as are the descriptions of the orthography of Greek New Testament manuscripts. Textual Criticism of each testament is introduced as to its history, objectives, methodology, and sources. The history of the text is traced chronologically and geographically. Part four, "Early Translations of the Bible," presents the spread of the Bible to other languages, divided into the eastern and western portions of the Roman Empire. The history and prominent characteristics of each translation and the development of early printed editions of the Greek New Testament are presented succinctly.

Part five, "English Translations of the Bible," is the longest section of the book. The first chapter deals with the historical context of the spread of the gospel to Britain and early translation activity, from Caedmon (ca. 670) to the Catholic Douay-Rheims Bible (1610). The next chapter begins with the Hampton Court Conference (1604) and follows the career of the King James Bible from inception, through all of its heirs to the end of the twentieth century. A third brief appendix on the King James version debate is followed by two chapters on other modern English Bibles, from 1900-1950 and from 1951-1999. The book concludes with an abbreviated chapter on the current variety of English translations.

The author presents well-designed, concise explanations. His language is sufficiently technical, but does not lose the novice, a difficult balance to maintain. Dr. Wegner's knowledge of scholarship across several disciplines is impressive,

and he makes excellent choices in the use of material from other scholars. The socio-historical setting and background material for each period covered could be assembled and used as a narrative history.

This book has been well received and rightly so. Few other resources allow comprehensive coverage of the history of the Bible in one volume, and none of them compares favorably. Teaching the subject has necessitated sending students to a number of different sources; now that number can be greatly reduced, but unfortunately not eliminated. One of the author's stated intentions was to equip the reader to deal with attacks on modern Bible translations and to offer help in selecting translations. The direct help in these regards is sparse. The appendix on the King James debate is inadequate and begs for expansion. As this is a serious issue for many people, this section should be substantially strengthened. The last chapter, on the variety of translations, is similarly inadequate.

The issue of translation theory is not handled well and is heavily slanted toward dynamic equivalence. The term "formal equivalence" is not even used, and is passed off as "literal," and "word for word." The choice is presented as between ". . . as literal as possible or as meaningful as possible." Nowhere is it acknowledged that translation theory has theological implications. The presentation is a thinly veiled endorsement of the NIV. The important current issue of gender inclusive language is referred to, but no guidance is offered.

The section on recent translations is obsolete in two regards. The Jerusalem Bible (1966) is discussed, but the thorough revision (1985) is ignored. The New American Standard Bible (1971) is pre-

sented, but the significant update (1995), which removes many previous objections to the NASB, is ignored, except mistakenly to date it 1999.

The strengths of this work are many and obvious, and these deficiencies do not negate its extreme value. They are noted in the hope they will be corrected in a subsequent edition, as this book deserves to be a perennial text.

Charles W. Draper

*Life in The Family: An Oral History of the Children of God.* By James D. Chancellor. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000, 291 pp., \$29.95.

*Life in The Family: An Oral History of the Children of God* is a unique and useful book. Most books written by evangelicals about aberrant groups are polemics. *Life in The Family* is certainly not a polemic but neither is it an apologetic for The Family. It is in fact exactly what the subtitle declares it to be: an oral history. James Chancellor has given his readers a book that allows the Children of God to tell their own story in their own words. It reads very much like a transcript of interviews with members of the group. *Life in The Family* is the result of nearly a decade of intimate personal study by Chancellor of the group. Chancellor set out to answer the question: "Who are these people?" With regard to this question, he is overwhelmingly successful.

Chancellor applies a sociological rather than a theological method to analyzing The Family. For this reason there are some theological questions left unanswered that will have to be addressed in other works. Chancellor's failure to analyze the movement accordingly will no doubt be criti-

cized by some. But before one can properly begin to assess a group theologically one must situate the group at the present time. The Family understands itself differently in the post-Berg era of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, than it did in its infancy in the 1960s. Chancellor chronicles how a number of practices of the past are no longer endorsed, not the least of these being the well-publicized “flirty fishing.” In addition the group is no longer as confrontational or as top-down oriented in its authority structure. In short, *Life in The Family* brings the reader up to date on certain practices and attitudes of the group. For those interested in the study of new religious movements this book serves to provide a snap shot of life in the second-generation, post-founder era of a new religious movement.

Chancellor’s method places him in position to assess The Family theologically in a way that no other evangelical has done to date. Hopefully Chancellor will see fit to do so. Questions that need to be answered include: “Does the group’s ‘simply praying the sinner’s prayer and you’ll be saved,’ approach to evangelism reflect a latent Antinomianism within The Family?” “What is one to make of the group’s acceptance of Moses Berg as a prophet?” “Can the group’s acceptance of “beyond the grave” messages from Berg be considered anything other than occultic in nature, and therefore non-Christian?” These and other theological questions need to be answered, but a single book can only do so much.

This book should be read by all those involved in countercult ministry (as well as those involved in anticult groups—countercult and anticult are *not* the same thing!), as well as academics specializing in the study of new religious movements.

Robert B. Stewart  
New Orleans Baptist  
Theological Seminary

*Church Authority in American Culture: The Second Cardinal Bernardin Conference.* Intro. By Philip J. Murnion. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1999, 157 pp., \$14.95 paper.

This volume presents the papers and discussions from the second Cardinal Bernardin Conference, held March 6-8, 1998. The conference was sponsored by the Catholic Common Ground Initiative, a movement begun by the late Joseph Cardinal Bernardin in 1996. It sponsors conferences such as the one presented in this book in the hopes of fostering dialogue and reducing the polarization developing among Catholics who differ on critical issues, such as the one discussed in this book: church authority.

The book includes an introduction and overview of the conference by Philip J. Murnion, four papers presented at the conference (on papal authority, authority of an episcopal conference, authority of a local congregation, and authority in American culture), and transcripts of a panel discussion by the authors of the four papers and two general discussions, including comments and questions from a number of the fifty listed participants in the conference.

The book is of value to Southern Baptists and other evangelicals in two ways. First, it is an informative window into contemporary issues and discussions in Catholicism. The changes initiated by Vatican II continue to spread, and with those changes understanding Catholicism has become more complex and more difficult. For example, for those who associ-

ate Catholicism with an authoritative (and authoritarian) hierarchy, this book is an eye-opener. Out of all the authors and participants reflected in this book, only Avery Dulles gave a strong defense of the traditional view of the authority of the church's hierarchy.

Second, the issue of church authority is one that is extremely hot in Southern Baptist life today. Some want to identify the essence of Southern Baptists as freedom for the individual, with a corresponding denial of any church authority. Others would say that while Southern Baptists have strongly stood for freedom from state coercion, they have also maintained the importance of fidelity in matters of doctrine, and have given their churches the authority necessary to protect themselves from heresy. While this book relates specifically to Catholic life, I heard echoes of Southern Baptists in many of the statements and sentiments expressed. And the analysis of American culture by sociologist Philip Selznick is valuable for all those who seek to lead churches in an increasingly difficult and even hostile contemporary American context. This book will repay a thoughtful reading.

John S. Hammett  
Southeastern Baptist  
Theological Seminary

*The Celtic Way of Evangelism.* By George G. Hunter III. Nashville: Abingdon, 2000, 144 pp., \$15.00 paper.

George Hunter serves as the Dean of the E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism at Asbury Theological Seminary. He also teaches evangelism at Asbury.

The Celts are popular today—largely as a result Thomas Cahill's best-selling book, *How the Irish Saved Civilization*. Most mail-order catalogs feature Celtic music, clothing, and poetry. Christian publishers have joined in, offering books on Celtic worship, liturgy, and theology. Hunter's book serves well as a primer on Celtic Christianity, especially the Celtic church's efforts at evangelism and missions.

George Hunter's doctorate is in communications, and that training shines through the pages of the book. He is a master communicator, and the book is written in a refreshingly clear, forthright style. The numerous footnotes and helpful bibliography will enable the interested reader to delve deeper.

In his Preface Hunter confesses that he is not a historian, and that becomes clear one reads the book. It seems that Hunter never met a Celt he did not like. The approach taken is uncritical, and the book reads like a panegyric to the Celtic church. One can only wonder if the Celtic church had any weaknesses.

A second weakness of the book is Hunter's attempt to show how the Celtic church's approach to evangelism is appropriate to postmodernity. The author tries hard at this, but it seems he is always stretching to make comparisons. This reviewer was puzzled, too, by the author's excursus on ministry to those suffering from addiction. It did not seem to fit the topic at hand.

In spite of the stated weaknesses, this book has much to offer someone who is curious about Celtic Christianity. It is a good introduction and a valuable springboard for further study. Would that the church of every age exhibited the same commitment to missions that the Celtic church did.

John Mark Terry

*John Calvin, Heart Aflame: Daily Readings from Calvin on the Psalms.* Phillipsburg, PA: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1999, 366 pp., \$14.99 paper.

*Through Faith Alone: 365 Devotional Readings from Martin Luther.* St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1999, 366 pp., \$12.99 paper.

Are daily devotional books a good idea? Typically, they spend a page briefly commenting on a single verse, perhaps tying it into a story. (The shortest entries ever could be those in Eugene Peterson's recent *Time with the Prophets*—a short paragraph and a short prayer fill less than a page in a half-size book.) If this one page is all the Scripture one gets in a day, one will starve spiritually (though it should be said, a short reading done consistently is surely better than no reading at all). So, some have wondered about the long-term value of a daily devotional.

On the other hand, one can use a daily devotional book along with other devotional activities (e.g. more Bible reading and meditation). The real issue, perhaps, is the quality of the devotional comments. Two recently published options offer a quality opportunity to get the day started with either of the two greatest leaders of the Reformation.

As one might suspect, the selections from Calvin are decidedly more exegetical and theological than Luther's. However, this is largely due to the source of Calvin's thoughts: selections from his commentaries on the Psalms. As a result, though the anonymous compiler selected Calvin's work on some of the juiciest Psalms (e.g. 22, 23, 51, 90, 103, and 119), the material is more intellectually demanding than most devotional books.

Yet one is being exposed to reverential contemplation on the Bible's book of worship by arguably the greatest Bible commentator the Church has ever seen. (And it must be added that Calvin's pastorally-driven commentaries are far more devotional than the more technical commentaries of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.) So time with this book is time well spent. Consider Calvin on Ps. 18: 1,2: "As (God) requires nothing so expressly as to possess all the affections of our heart, and to have them going towards him, so there is no sacrifice which he values more than when we are bound fast to him by the claim of a free and spontaneous love." (p. 50) In these readings Calvin, as usual, draws us into a theocentric frame of mind and heart and reminds us often of our stubborn resistance to God's goodness and commands, calling us to humility, repentance, worship, and love. Not a bad way to start the day.

Quite different in tone and intellectual level is the set of slightly shorter daily readings from the sermons, devotional writings, as well as commentaries of Luther. Luther's musings, though more practical and "down-to-earth" than Calvin's, are equally devout. Perhaps because of his unique journey, Luther had an unusual degree of self-awareness, and shares his own struggles and waywardness (more frequently than his younger peer). Being a good Lutheran, he frequently brings up the gospel of God's free grace, encouraging the reader to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to get through the day. At the same time, Luther was no antinomian. He holds high the ethical and spiritual standards of his Lord, but usually with an eye on the cross. Interestingly, themes from his earlier, monastic orientation are present, but transformed by the

grace awakening he experienced. For example, he fosters a Protestant monastic spirit when he writes that believers are “temporary residents of a foreign land. This world is merely a hotel that they will have to soon leave. Because they know this, they don’t allow themselves to become too attached to the things of this world” (10/29). But he wrote with the pastoral sensitivity of a person who has experienced and worked through spiritual bondage. After recounting some of his legalistic striving for perfection while a monk, he said he has learned to speak to himself more kindly: “Martin, you cannot be completely without sin because you are still in this body. As a result, you will experience the conflict with the corrupt nature. The corrupt nature battles against the Spirit, just as Paul teaches. Therefore, don’t give up, but fight against it so that you do not gratify these evil desires” (2/23).

We are living in a time when many evangelicals interested in spirituality are abandoning their Reformation heritage and relying solely on Roman Catholic or Orthodox devotional authors. But the Reformation was not a wrong turn. It was a necessary step in God’s providential and historical clarifying of the truths of Scripture, and it brought about a necessary corrective to the dualism of monastic spirituality. These two books offer a wonderful introduction to the spirituality of the Reformers and show why they were so influential in their day and why others continue to spend time mentoring with them, now in daily devotionals, regarding the deep things of God.

Eric Johnson

*Seven Secrets to Spiritual Success.* By Woodroll Kroll. Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2000, 184 pp., \$16.99 paper.

Dr. Woodroll Kroll is best known for his role as president and senior Bible teacher for the radio broadcast ministry *Back to the Bible*. He is also the Bible teacher for the same organization’s weekly television program. He is acclaimed for his work as an author (he has written more than two dozen books), his service as keynote speaker at an array of conferences and workshops, and his proliferation of teaching videocassettes. Kroll has an international following, and his areas of ministry cross many geographical boundaries.

While the title of this book prompted an initial cringe on my part, the depth of thought and the soundness of the counsel it contains pleasantly surprised me. While it does not seem likely that we can ever fully attain “spiritual success” in this lifetime, this book provides valuable guidelines that can lead one toward greater personal spiritual maturity.

This book offers seven key biblical principles that when applied can catapult one’s spiritual life to a greater level of intimacy with the Father. Each involves an element of spiritual self-evaluation as well as a directive as to how to move beyond the area of struggle.

It is full of such gems of wisdom as the following: “When Christians rely solely on others for their spiritual sustenance, they risk becoming unfit and anemic” (p. 66). “Mentoring is about successful living, not theological dogma” (p. 89). “Don’t think of the church as the place you go to get a blessing, but as the place you go to be a blessing” (p. 72). The insights contained within this book are not only bibli-

cally grounded but practical, appropriate and attainable.

I would recommend this book as a resource for any class that seeks to promote personal spiritual formation. It would be particularly helpful to any one who is seeking personal spiritual renewal.

Susan Schriver

*The Spirituality of the Cross: The Way of the First Evangelicals.* By Gene Edward Veith, Jr. Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999, 127 pp., \$8.99 paper.

What do you get when you cross Martin Luther, C. S. Lewis, and David Wells? You get Gene Edward Veith, Jr., the cultural editor of *World* magazine—a bold Lutheran confronting the culture and calling evangelicals to something beyond pop Christianity. In *The Spirituality of the Cross*, Veith gives “an introduction to the Lutheran spiritual tradition”(p.11). In a day when books on spirituality are a dime a dozen, Veith’s work is as refreshing as the Reformation itself. He does not write as a theologian or a pastor (however he seems to be well acquainted with Lutheran theology), rather, he recounts his Lutheran pilgrimage from a layman’s point of view.

Although the subtitle is a little bold, Veith does well unpacking the main title. The “spirituality” he has in mind is not a “content free, theologically vacuous quest for transcendent experiences” (p. 14). Rather, Veith argues that genuine spirituality is completely dependent on objective truth. After an introduction in which he explains the significance of Lutherans being the first to be called “evangelicals,” the first chapter, “Justification,” introduces the dynamics of sin and grace. As

the cornerstone of Lutheran spirituality, justification is what makes this spirituality a “spirituality of the cross.”

“Theology of the Cross,” the third chapter, not only continues to explain that God frequently hides himself in the mundane, as he does in the wafer and the wine (chap. 2, “The Means of Grace”), but offers a much needed reminder that pain, suffering, and struggle are a necessary part of God’s plan for the Christian. Luther’s theology of the cross is not simply a pat answer or a new theodicy that explains why God lets bad things happen. Rather, “for Luther, struggling with the ‘why’ is at the essence of trial” (p. 64).

Chapter four, “Vocation,” explains how the Lutheran spirituality plays out in the workaday world. Not only is God hidden in the cross and the means of grace, but God is also hidden behind ordinary vocations, what Luther calls “the masks of our Lord God” (p. 75). Parents, farmers, retailers, and soldiers all show “that God is graciously at work, caring for the human race through the work of other human beings” (p. 75). According to Veith, Luther’s understanding of vocation as a divine “calling” for every individual may be one of his “most original contributions to understanding the spiritual life” (p. 71). Even though most evangelicals will find themselves shying away from the sacramental tone of the entire work (or at least they should), there are several reasons why pastors and theology students, even Baptists, ought to get Veith’s recent monograph. First, while it is a simple introduction to Lutheran spirituality, it is not without depth and substance. Second, every chapter is immensely practical. Third, Veith gives helpful notes on “the classic text” of whatever main subject he is covering (e.g., Law and Gospel). Finally,

and most importantly, using Luther's concept of two kingdoms, Veith unashamedly calls the church to be distinct from the worldly culture around it. In a day when evangelicals are prone to imitate the world, confusing the sacred with the secular, *The Spirituality of the Cross* issues a much needed call to holiness.

Pete Schemm

Southeastern College at Wake Forest

*High Church Baptists in the South: The Origin, Nature, and Influence of Landmarkism.* By James E. Tull. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2000, xvii + 182pp., \$35.00.

James E. Tull was a pastor and later a professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He contributed several important volumes to Baptist life and thought, but his doctoral dissertation, *A History of Southern Baptist Landmarkism in the Light of Historical Baptist Ecclesiology*, is his enduring scholarly legacy, an indispensable resource for anyone researching the Landmark movement. Before he died in 1989, Tull was preparing a condensation of that work for a new generation of students of Baptist history, but was unable to complete the manuscript. Dr. Morris Ashcraft finished the volume and edited it for publication.

The book examines the historical milieu out of which early Landmarkism grew and gives a very fair and balanced assessment of the theology and hermeneutics of the original Landmark movement. It ends with a brief sketch of the later history of the movement in the twentieth century. Tull notes that Landmarkism arose in Tennessee in the wake of the Campbellite controversy and in the con-

text of debate over support for foreign missions that was brought on by the formation of the new Southern Baptist Convention (p. 10). The center of the debate was essentially ecclesiological, dealing with such matters as alien immersion, sharing pulpits with paedobaptists, and closed communion (30-34). The Landmarkers believed that the true church was founded by Christ, had been in existence perpetually since its beginning, and had maintained the same essential structure during this entire time (p. 14).

The volume gives special attention to the writings of the famous/infamous nineteenth century triumvirate: J. R. Graves, J. M. Pendleton, and Amos Cooper Dayton. Tull demonstrates that these three did not operate lock-step on all issues, but that they did all affirm the perpetuity of the church as a local body of believers organized around principles that were baptistic.

The Landmark movement has left its brand on Baptists in the twentieth century. Many independent Baptists count themselves among modern adherents of this tradition. The SBC too has been impacted, sometimes for good, often for ill. Among the positive affirmations of Landmarkism: the importance of the local church, the importance of church discipline, that the ordinances should be administered by the local congregation, that ordination is a function of a local body and not of an association, the maintenance of immersion as the only acceptable form of baptism at a time when some Baptists were flirting with accepting aspersion or affusion. But Landmarkism has also had its dark side: some adherents have assumed Baptist superiority over other evangelicals, some have rejected any immersion other than that done by a Baptist body,

some have argued for Baptist successionism in absence of clear historical grounds.

The Landmark movement has changed since 1851, the year of its founding, but it is still here. That is both good and bad. Those who read Tull's book will have a better chance of weighing the good against the bad. Though the book is somewhat pricey, those who seek to understand our heritage ought to purchase and read it.

Chad Brand

*131 Christians Everyone Should Know.* Editors of Christian History Magazine. Foreword by J. I. Packer. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2000, 384 pp., \$14.99 paper.

Every now and then a nice little resource comes along which is really made for everyone. This is one of those books. The title says it all. Each chapter is two-to-four pages long. Each features a timeline, a brief biography, a statement about the major role(s) played by the person in question, and a few choice quotes from his or her work. The selections include theologians (Edwards, Augustine), pastors (Spurgeon and Ambrose, for instance), missionaries (Hudson Taylor, Columbanus), poets (Dante and Isaac Watts, among others), mystics (such as Teresa of Avila and Hildegard of Bingen, but also including "inner travelers" such as Oswald Chambers), rulers (Henry VIII and Constantine—no one said they were all "good Christians"!), martyrs (Bonhoeffer and Cranmer and about eight more), activists (Wilberforce and Rauschenbusch top the list in this section), scholars (Origen, Copernicus), "movers and shakers" (monastic pioneers such as

Benedict and Dominic and reformers of various kinds such as Zwingli and Ignatius of Loyola), denominational founders (Menno Simons and Knox, as well as Alexander Campbell—sorry, we know he did not found a denomination—and Aimee Semple McPherson, everyone's sister), and musicians and artists (Bach and C. S. Lewis), and more. This is a veritable Who's Who of church history, though like most Who's Who selections, we will all wonder how this or that person got in and how in the world the editors could have left some of our favorite Christians out.

*131 Christians* will be very valuable to pastors looking for a brief summary for enhancing preaching and teaching. Sunday School teachers likewise will find it useful for plumbing the treasures of the past. It is a nice supplemental book for use in college church history courses. Again, it is a fine resource and ought to be on everyone's shelf.

Chad Brand

*The Christology of the Fourth Gospel: Its Unity and Disunity in the Light of John 6.* By Paul N. Anderson. WUNT 2/78. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1996, xiv + 329 pp., n. p. paper.

This work is a revision of Anderson's doctoral thesis which he completed at the University of Glasgow under John Riches. Anderson's goal is to explore the christological tensions in John's gospel, using chapter 6 as his point of entry for the study. The first section of the dissertation is a survey of scholarship in which recent approaches to the christology of the fourth gospel are canvassed, significant commentaries are examined, and three

different approaches (Kysar, Borgen, and Barrett) to John 6 are sketched in. What is evident in this section, and throughout the whole dissertation, is that Anderson is conversant with contemporary Johannine scholarship, and hence can conduct his study by interacting with scholars who have set the agenda for Johannine studies.

In the second part of the book, Anderson explores the unity and disunity of John 6, and the work of Rudolf Bultmann is the point of departure for his study. Anderson emphasizes throughout that Bultmann poses the right questions, even though his answers are unsatisfactory. Hence, contrary to Bultmann, Anderson argues for the stylistic and linguistic unity of John 6, for there is no stylistic evidence that enables us to distinguish between the signs source and the revelation discourses. Bultmann also argued for disunity interpretively, but Anderson rightly replies that John 6 makes sense as a whole in its context, pointing out that Bultmann fails to see Johannine irony at crucial places in the narrative. The sign and discourse need not be torn apart in order to interpret the chapter accurately. Bultmann also believes that John 6:51-58 is a later redaction by another writer because of the eucharistic theology contained therein. Anderson rightly contests again the interpretation proposed, contending that Bultmann reads the verses anachronistically, that the context flows naturally from the preceding verses, and that the verses fit theologically into the context. Anderson concludes, therefore, that the christological unity and disunity in John cannot be explained by external factors, such as different sources or various redactors. Instead the tensions in the gospel are due to the work of one writer.

Anderson's own contribution, then, is

to suggest that the faith development model of Fowler and the transforming encounter view of Loder provide assistance in comprehending the Johannine message. Anderson takes the reader through the six stages of faith development in Fowler, arguing that the Johannine message is quite similar to what Fowler calls "conjunctive faith." In this stage a person rejects simplistic answers and realizes that life is more complex and disordered than previously realized. At this stage the ambiguities of life are embraced and included as part of one's worldview. The five steps involved in transforming encounters, as suggested by Loder, are also explained. Anderson argues that John's Gospel reflects fundamentally the subjective experience of a transforming encounter, so that the focus is not on the historical events that occurred. Anderson argues that Bultmann's view of dialectic is not far from the theories of Fowler and Loder. Anderson applies these theories by setting John over against Mark. In Mark miracles are acts of power that advance God's kingdom, while in John they are revelatory. He argues that the Johannine tradition is more complex and sophisticated than the Markan. The latter viewed Jesus as a worker of miracles, did not understand that miracles do not always happen, and chalked up the failure to see miracles to a lack of faith. The fourth evangelist, on the other hand, has a much more complex understanding of miracles, realizing that they are pointers to something deeper. Three comments should be made about Anderson's work at this stage. First, the stages of Fowler and Loder can be helpful, but Anderson too easily superimposes them on the Fourth Gospel. Second, even more astonishing is his simplistic assess-

ment of Mark's Gospel. He typecasts Mark as a kind of extreme charismatic gospel. I can only register here my disagreement, noting that many scholars argue that the miracles in Mark are pointers to something deeper. Indeed, the emphasis on suffering in the second half of Mark explodes Anderson's theory. Third, even though he criticizes either-or thinking, Anderson still seems to fall into it, portraying John as more interested in subjective experience than historical facticity.

The last section of Anderson's thesis explores John 6 in more detail, including a detailed exegesis of the text. He views John 6 as containing independent tradition, a view that is shared by most scholars today. John 6:25-66 is explained as an exhortation of two ways, so that one either eats of Jesus and lives or refuses to partake of him and perishes. Unfortunately, Anderson continues to argue that John is engaged in a polemic against Peter's simplistic miracle theology in Mark. I must also register another disagreement, for he misinterprets John to say that the manna in the wilderness was actually the agent of death, something that is not borne out by the text. For one who embraces Fowler's stages of faith Anderson, surprisingly, returns again to seeing a polarity between John and Peter. Petrine ecclesiology (Matt 16:17-19) is organizational and institutional, while John's view of the church is familial and relational. The Matthean account focuses on positions of privilege, whereas John sees ministry as service rooted in an encounter with Jesus. Anderson should have taken advantage of his own use of Fowler here, for he ignores the emphasis on service in the Matthean tradition and the polemic against the selfish abuse of authority (Matt

20:20-28). Further, he engages in the kind of mirror reading that is utterly subjective in explaining John's Gospel, so that he sees the Gospel as being more tolerant and ambiguous christologically than 1 John. As with many intelligent scholars, he shows that he is creative, but being creative is not the same thing as being convincing. A flawed and subjective method leads to fallacious conclusions. The problem with this study is that Anderson is not critical enough, in that he leaps to simplistic conclusions without carefully considering all the evidence. D. Moody Smith correctly assesses Anderson's work in the introduction when he says that author's work, though appearing to be conservative in some respects, is actually "bold and imaginative." Where Smith sees a virtue, I see a vice. I would put the emphasis on the word "imaginative," and speculative. Even though Anderson rightly critiques Bultmann, presents some good insights of his own, and rightly sees the unity of John 6, he does not advance our understanding of John's christology in a significant way. His own view falls prey to the kind of disjunctive thinking that he criticizes.

Thomas R. Schreiner