Book Reviews

Bare, Daniel. *Black Fundamentalists: Conservative Christianity and Racial Identity in the Segregation Era*. New York: New York University Press, 2021. 233 pp. + 25 pp. (back matter)

In 1927 Mrs. W. T. Larimer, Assistant Secretary of the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, addressed an audience at the Winona Lake Bible Conference on the need to support the rights of African Americans and even more to join with black churches in joint endeavors to promote Christian harmony.[1] What is so intriguing about this address is how rare it was for white fundamentalist audiences to hear anything about such topics. Fundamentalism focused on theological issues—the "fundamentals" for which they were named—but fundamentalist speakers also discussed social and political issues such as immigration, evolution, and international conflict. Issues of race, however, were far from common topics. Even rarer was mention of fellow black believers with shared theological convictions.

Two books in recent years have examined the relationship of African Americans to fundamentalism in the first half of the twentieth century. In her book *Doctrine and Race*, Mary Beth Swetnam Matthews discusses the interactions of fundamentalists with the black community and how white fundamentalists viewed issues of concern to African Americans. However, she stresses social and cultural issues to the point that identifying a "black fundamentalism" in the book is really impossible—whatever sympathies may have existed—and she treats the two groups as essentially separate.[2] Daniel Bare in *Black Fundamentalism* takes a different tack in putting forth a black fundamentalist identity, which shows both similarities to and differences from the mainstream of the movement.

Bare suggests that observers have ignored black fundamentalism in part because they tend to see the movement as institutional rather than theological. African Americans were rarely part of fundamentalist institutions. Also black religious conservatives were not so sympathetic to the separatist tendencies that often characterized fundamentalism. Rather, racial pressures encouraged African American Christians of all theological views to maintain institutional unity in the face of racial discrimination. However, Bare sees a doctrinal kinship between white and black defenders of the fundamentals. He does not reject approaches to fundamentalism that emphasize its social, political, and cultural aspects, but he wants to include a perspective that also discusses doctrinal issues and attitudes.

For his theological framework, Bare uses the traditional concern of fundamentalists for "the five fundamentals." He recognizes the disputed nature of the list of the five doctrines, which varies with different sources, and he includes a lengthy and helpful footnote on the whole concept. After

[1] Mrs. W. T. Larimer, "They of Another Color," *Winona Echoes* (Winona Lake: Victor M. Hatfield), 147–57.

[2] *Doctrine and Race: African American Evangelicals and Fundamentalism Between the Wars,* Religion and American Culture (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2017).

due consideration, Bare decides on the following list for his analysis: "biblical inspiration and inerrancy, the deity of Christ, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, and the physical resurrection and literal second coming of Christ." His list is a fair distillation, although one might argue the last point could easily be divided to make six.

Using this structure the author identifies black religious leaders who not only defended these fundamentals but also labeled themselves as fundamentalists. Articles and addresses in African American publications defended the essentials of Christianity and rejected any form of modernism that questioned the fundamentals. Indeed, some argued that only by adhering to the essentials of Christianity could the United States solve its racial problems—an interesting slant on the argument of white fundamentalists that only by maintaining the fundamentals of the faith could America preserve its allegedly Christian civilization.

In addition to scrutinizing individual black advocates of fundamentalism, Bare also records the unique story of the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville (now American Baptist College). This school was a joint effort between the Southern Baptist and National Baptist Conventions. Unlike most other educational efforts by white Christians to help black churches, the ABTS had a racially integrated board and faculty, while others (such as Carver Bible Institute and Southern Bible Institute) began with almost exclusively white leadership. The seminary enjoyed some success, but its history also revealed tensions that showed even the best-intentioned white Christian outreaches to black Christians suffered from contemporary racial attitudes.

Complicating the story was conflict within the black community over such defenses of orthodoxy. Black critics regarded fundamentalism as an obstacle to racial progress and saw African American defenders of the faith as advancing ideas more harmful than helpful to racial progress.

Bare focuses mostly on black fundamentalism and not so much on how white fundamentalists viewed racial issues. In this respect Matthews's book reveals more of white attitudes, although the evidence she cites tends to be that which is discreditable to fundamentalists.[3] (Interestingly, both Bare and Mathews use the very negative example of Texas fundamentalist J. Frank Norris, who always seems to be a ready source of anecdotes showing fundamentalism in a poor light.) Bare, however, devotes much more attention to the African American conservatives whose stories he argues have been ignored.

Black Fundamentalism is an excellent historical study, but perhaps there is something beyond just history that we can take away from this book. In an article outlining "images" that writers have used to describe the black church in American history, Leon McBeth includes "the Joseph Image" of author Carter Woodson. The idea is that as Joseph was sold into slavery but became the instrument of deliverance for his family, so the black church—untouched by the racist attitudes prevalent in the American culture and even in American churches—could provide a testimony to a purer form of Christianity to the white churches in the United States. We need not press the analogy to recognize that there are facets of the Joseph image that fundamentalists and their heirs might consider. Bare's

[3] For a good (if brief) discussion of fundamentalism and racial issues see Douglas Carl Abrams, *Old-Time Religion Embracing Modernist Culture: American Fundamentalism Between the Wars* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2017), 139–47.

book suggests white fundamentalists have missed some vital cultural issues involving race and have overlooked allies who are already fighting against liberalism.[4]

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[4] Leon McBeth, "Images of the Black Church in America," *Baptist History and Heritage* 16 (1981): 21–22.

Blackwell, Ben C., John K. Goodrich, and Jason Maston, eds. *Reading Revelation in Context: John's Apocalypse and Second Temple Judaism*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2019. 182pp. + 22pp. (back matter)

Reading Revelation in Context is an accessible resource for reading Revelation in light of second temple literature, especially those pieces considered to be apocalyptic. Each chapter of the book links a chapter of Revelation with an extra-biblical source that supposedly illuminates it. Each chapter follows the same basic pattern: the extra-biblical source is introduced and the material relevant to interpreting Revelation is described, Revelation material illuminated by the source is discussed, "additional ancient texts" which also may shed light on a given chapter of Revelation are listed, and a bibliography is provided (which includes a listing of translations of the key extrabiblical source discussed).

Chapter 1 compares the Parables of Enoch (1 Enoch 37–71) with Revelation 1. Benjamin Reynolds establishes that both John and the Parables of Enoch bring together Daniel's Son of Man language with other Old Testament messianic texts. Reynolds does not claim that John drew on 1 Enoch.

In chapter 2, Mark Mathews observes that 1 Enoch 103:5–8 makes a connection between sinners and wealth and that the churches that received critique in Revelation 2–3 were also noted for their wealth. The connections seem a bit tenuous.

David A. deSilva observes that *The Testament of Levi* presents a journey to heaven in which various ranks of angels are seen before God's throne, which is placed in a temple setting. In light of this, deSilva suggests that the four living creatures, the twenty-four elders, and the seven spirits represent differing orders of angels serving in God's temple. However, the seven spirits in chapter 4 should be interpreted in light of Revelation 1:4, which is a Trinitarian context.

In Chapter 4, Dana Harris finds it notable that 4 Ezra and Revelation 5 both include messianic lion imagery (Rev. 5:5; 4 Ezra 12:31–36). In both cases there is an allusion back to Genesis 49. Several times Harris explains the parallel as reflecting a shared interpretive tradition, which is likely. Once Harris seems to suggest Revelation's dependence on 4 Ezra, but this is unlikely if 4 Ezra was written in AD 100 as Harris suggests.

Chapter 5 discusses 2 Maccabees and Revelation 6, martyrdom being important to both. However, Ian Paul ends up highlighting differences more than similarities.

In chapter 6 Ronald Herms observes that the Psalms of Solomon include a passage that speaks of God marking people for either salvation or judgment (15:4–9). Herms identifies Genesis 4:15; Ezekiel 9:4–6; and Habakkuk 1:12 as the biblical background for this idea. Though Herms thinks that the Old Testament background stands behind Revelation 7 and 14, he thinks the Psalms of Solomon show how this theme of marking worked itself out in another post-OT text that was concerned with the suffering of God's people.

Jason Matson thinks the Testament of Adam indicates that the silence in Revelation 8 is to allow the prayers of the martyrs to be heard. However, the Testament of Adam in its final form was likely composed several centuries after Revelation and does not reveal the reason for the silence. Matson provides that reason from unspecified Jewish traditions.

Ian Boxall identifies two main parallels between the Animal Apocalypse (1 Enoch 85–90) and Revelation 9: (1) fallen angels depicted as fallen stars and (2) animals that war against God's people. The first symbol is not unique to 1 Enoch, as Boxall notes. The second contains some significant differences (also noted by Boxall). First, the animals in 1 Enoch are normal whereas the ones in Revelation are composite. Second, the animals in 1 Enoch represent human nations whereas in Revelation they represent demons.

Chapter 9 adduces parallels regarding angels in Jubilees and Revelation 10. The difficulty with Goodrich's proposed connections is that in every case the parallels between Revelation and the OT are much clearer and stronger than the connections with Jubilees.

In chapter 10 Garrick Allen proposes that 4 Ezra 13 and Revelation 11 share some significant parallels, which he represents in a chart. However, the parallels are clearer in the chart than in the text. In the body of the article, Garrick acknowledged some of these discontinuities. In fact, the body of the article seems to focus on the dissimilarities. In the end it is not clear what 4 Ezra 13 contributes to the understanding of Revelation 11.

Archie Wright suggests parallels between Revelation 12 and an extrabiblical account of Satan's fall in the Life of Adam and Eve 12:1–17. He thinks these parallels suggest Revelation's dependence on this source. However, the parallels cited fall short of demonstrating dependence, for all of the parallel elements also appear in canonical Scripture. What is more, Revelation 12 is likely portraying eschatological events rather than primeval ones.

Jamie Davies appeals to 4 Ezra 11–12 to argue for a preterist reading of Revelation 13. Though 4 Ezra 11–12 links Daniel's fourth beast to first-century Rome, it also is about the Messiah's advent at the end of days. This makes a preterist reading of 4 Ezra a modern perspective rather than the perspective of the author.

In chapter 13 Ben Blackwell notes that the Damascus Document makes a clear division between the righteous and the wicked and that it involves the "overlapping" actions of God, angels, and humans. However, these are very broad themes which appear in earlier Scripture.

In chapter 14 Benjamin Wold relates the septets of plagues in Revelation to the Qumran document, Words of the Luminaries. He focuses on how this work was shaped by Leviticus 26 and its presentation of judgment in a septet. Wold is not claiming that John was dependent upon the Words of the Luminaries. He observes that seeing the passages that the author of the Qumran document relied on can make us sensitive to the range of passages drawn on by John.

In chapter 15, Edith Humphrey draws on the fact that Revelation 17 makes use of a symbolic woman to make a connection with the writing, Joseph and Aseneth, in which Aseneth symbolizes repentance. Humphrey recognizes that the two women represent opposites (repentance for Aseneth, rebellion for the whore of Babylon). Humphrey does not claim any dependance of Revelation upon Joseph and Aseneth. It also seems that Aseneth symbolizes repentance differently than the whore of Babylon symbolizes rebellion. Aseneth is a character in a novella type story who symbolizes repentance (or would it be better to say *exemplifies* repentance) by her actions within the story. The whore of Babylon is pure symbol all the way through.

In her chapter on Revelation 18, Cynthia Long Westfall notes that 1 Enoch 91:1–105:2 critiques "power," "wealth," "extravagance," "luxury," "consumerism," and the leveraging of these for "oppression" and "injustice." It also predicts eschatological judgment on the wicked. The question remains whether the Epistle of Enoch is simply reflecting its biblical milieu or whether it adds something unique to the interpretation of Revelation 18.

Michael Gorman observes that Psalm 17 from the Psalms of Solomon draws on the same Old Testament texts that Revelation 19 draws on (Pss. 2; 110; Isa. 11). He notes that there is debate over whether Psalm 17 presents a nonviolent Messiah. While he acknowledges that debate as still ongoing, he argues (unpersuasively in my view) that Revelation 19 presents a nonviolent Messiah.

In chapter 18, Elizabeth Shively draws parallels between 1 Enoch 10 and Revelation 20. She claims that both passages involve angels who bind fallen angels within the earth for a period of time before those fallen angels are judged by fire. She concludes that 1 Enoch and Revelation are drawing from a common tradition. This was an instance in which the parallels seem real, rather than contrived.

In chapter 19 Jonathan Moo compares the account of the New Jerusalem to 4 Ezra. He observes that "[i]t is unlikely that either author knew of each other's book," but he finds the comparison worthwhile since the two books were written around the same time and share both "genre" and "a number of motifs and ideas."

Sarah Underwood Dixon adduces a parallel between the Apocalypse of Zephaniah 6.11–12 and Revelation 19:10; 22:8–9. In both passages the person receiving an apocalyptic vision falls before an angel and is rebuked by the angel and told to worship only God. Dixon notes that similar scenes occur in Ascension of Isaiah 7.21–22 and Tobit 12:16–22. She does not claim any dependence between these texts.

Reading Revelation in Context provides an interesting introduction to a segment of Second Temple literature. However, it fails to demonstrate the importance of this literature for understanding Revelation. Presuming that the authors chose the best companion texts, the lack of a strong connection between many of the texts and Revelation was notable. The most convincing parallels were due to the texts drawing on the same Old Testament material as Revelation. This reinforces what is plain from the numerous allusions to the Old Testament in Revelation: the most important source for rightly reading Revelation is antecedent Scripture.

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Kim, Brittany, and Charlie Trimm. *Understanding Old Testament Theology: Mapping the Terrain of Recent Approaches.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2020. 162pp. + 15pp. (back matter)

The intense specialization of biblical scholarship makes it difficult to keep up with research and trends even in one's own field. This was already the case when I did doctoral work in OT theology in the 1990s. At that time I received significant help from the analysis of the discipline in Gerhard Hasel's *Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate,* 4th ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991). While Hasel's work continues to serve as a foundational resource, it has not been updated to reflect the scholarship of the last three decades. To fill this void, Brittany Kim (Northeastern Seminary and North Park Theological Seminary) and Charlie Trimm (Talbot School of Theology, Biola University) have collaborated to write *Understanding Old Testament Theology: Mapping the Terrain of Recent Approaches.*

In their introduction Kim and Trimm discuss "the promise and problems" in current study of the theology of the OT (1–4). They identify six "flash points" that reflect the diversity of the discipline:

1. The degree of unity in the OT, including the question of a central theme that ties together the OT books
2. The connection between the OT and the NT
3. The significance of the individual interpreter's context
4. Whether OT theology should be descriptive or prescriptive
5. Questions concerning the relationship between historical study and theological study as well as other methodological concerns
6. How an OT theology should be structured

The authors acknowledge the confusion that can result from scholarly disagreement over such weighty questions, but they take up the challenge. "We seek to address this problem by offering a guide through the maze of publications in the field and giving you a taste of the rich banquet that Old Testament theology spreads for those who accept its invitation" (4).

Kim and Trimm foreground a different image, however: mapping terrain. OT theology is like a mountainous wilderness, and the mountain peaks represent various approaches to the discipline. Specifically, current scholarship reflects three broad approaches or orientations: history, theme, and context. These three approaches form the three parts of the book. Further, each approach divides into subcategories—the paths leading to a peak—and each subcategory is the subject of one chapter.

Part 1 discusses the historical approach: a focus on the development of Israel's faith over time. Chapter 1 deals with "Old Testament Theology Grounded in Biblical (Hi)story," where "(hi)story" conveys the dual idea of the history itself and the narrative recounting the history. Here scholars concentrate on how the OT itself describes the progression of Israel's theology. This differs from the subject of chapter 2: "Historical-Critical Old Testament Theology." Writers in this vein question or reject the biblical presentation and reconstruct Israel's theological development following various theories of composition.

Part 2 focuses on the thematic approach. "Multiplex Thematic Old Testament Theology" (chapter 3) describes theologies oriented to a variety of themes such as worship or the character of God or divine blessing. By contrast, "Old Testament Theology Focused around [on?] a Central Theme" (chapter 4) seeks the famous *Mitte* that unifies the OT and ultimately the whole Bible. Candidates include covenant (e.g., William J. Dumbrell), the kingdom of God (e.g., Stephen G. Dempster), the divine presence (e.g., J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays), and the mission of God (e.g., Christopher J. H. Wright).

Part 3 is the most diverse, explaining approaches that highlight one kind of context or another for OT theology. In "Canonical Old Testament Theology" (chapter 5), the entire Christian canon provides the context. By contrast, "Jewish Biblical Theology" (chapter 6) analyzes the teaching of the Hebrew Bible from streams within contemporary Judaism, including those shaped theologically by the experience of the Holocaust. The final contextual approach is "Postmodern Old Testament Theology" (chapter 7). This rubric naturally encompasses a wide-ranging assortment of subjectively and socially oriented methodologies and conclusions.

Kim and Trimm's conclusion summarizes the various approaches to OT theology. Then follows an overview of OT theology sources not dealt with under the main headings of the book, which points the reader to an online annotated bibliography for additional material. The authors continue by sharing some reflections on the future of OT theology. They close the book by encouraging the reader to keep exploring the field, providing a list of questions to guide study. An appendix provides a chart that synopsizes the key points of the approaches to OT theology.

The back cover is not exaggerating when it claims that "*Understanding Old Testament Theology* provides the only summary introduction of its kind to the field of Old Testament theology." Kim and Trimm have expertly condensed an immense amount of scholarship into this thin volume. Though they acknowledge that their categorization is not airtight (10), their classification provides sound analysis that helps make sense of the bewildering array of OT theologies available today.

Clear and consistent organization characterizes *Understanding Old Testament Theology*. Each chapter follows the same structure. At the beginning Kim and Trimm provide a concise definition of the kind of OT theology to be discussed. This definition identifies common features as well as points of tension, and these elements echo relevant "flash points" from the book's introduction. For example,

> Canonical Old Testament theologies focus on the final canonical form of the biblical text, interpret texts in light of their broader Old Testament context, read the Old Testament as Christian Scripture, and see Old Testament theology as prescriptive. Points of tension among proponents of this approach include which canon is followed, the significance of the history of interpretation, and the role of historical-critical methods. (92)

Following the definition, the authors give a bibliography of a half-dozen or so texts that will be covered as key representatives of the theology at hand. For the chapter on canonical OT theology, the bibliography includes authors such as Brevard S. Childs, Paul R. House, and Charles H. H. Scobie (92). The bulk of the chapter then explains and illustrates the common features and points of tension

introduced in the definition. Each chapter ends by considering the Book of Exodus as a brief case study of how scholars of the selected persuasion actually do OT theology. The repeated combination of explanation and illustration keeps the discussion from being unhelpfully vague.

Insofar as Kim and Trimm aim at description not prescription, I find little to quarrel with. I wonder, however, about the small amount of evaluation they do provide. Their main complaint about the contemporary discipline of OT theology? The field is dominated by white males (154–56). While this concern is not entirely unworthy, I can think of more urgent problems in OT theology.

In particular, many of the theologians Kim and Trimm discuss have an unorthodox bibliology. Whether following a historical-critical, postmodern, or other direction, these scholars reject the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture and consequently diminish its authority. Given that *Understanding Old Testament Theology* is published by an evangelical publisher (Zondervan) and that Kim and Trimm earned their PhDs at an evangelical institution (Wheaton College), one may be able to assume that the authors hold a high view of Scripture. This is not an explicit emphasis in the book, however. Instead, the following represents the flavor of Kim and Trimm's approach:

> Since every attempt to capture the theology of the Old Testament is partial and constrained by the perspective of the interpreter, we look forward to seeing further contributions to the field by a wide variety of scholars—female and male, Western and majority world—using each of the approaches we have outlined and possibly some new ones. While we as readers will not always agree with the assumptions and conclusions of scholars working in the field, each Old Testament theology has something to teach us if we are open to listening.

This does not strike me as a model of careful discernment.

Nonetheless, *Understanding Old Testament Theology* provides a wealth of information useful in an academic setting. The question is determining the level of instruction for which the book is most appropriate. In an introductory OT theology course, my own approach is to provide a brief survey of the discipline but focus on getting the students to interact with the text of the OT itself. *Understanding Old Testament Theology* would be distracting and even overwhelming in a setting like this. But for an intermediate or advanced level, the book would serve as a convenient and comprehensive guide to late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century scholarship in the field.

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Wilson, Jared C. *Gospel-Driven Ministry: An Introduction to the Calling and Work of a Pastor*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2021. 234 pp.

Gospel-Driven Ministry: An Introduction to the Calling and Work of a Pastor, by Jared C. Wilson, enters a strong field of modern works that provide a means of training and mentoring the next generation of pastors. Wilson is employed as assistant professor of pastoral ministry at Spurgeon College and author in residence at Midwestern Baptist Seminary. Having served in pastoral ministry previously, he currently directs the Pastoral Training Center (PTC) at his local church, Liberty Baptist Church, in Liberty, Missouri.[5] *Gospel-Driven Ministry* coordinates in design and follows closely on the heels of his previous book, *Gospel-Driven Church* (2019), which proved helpful in promoting a "Gospel-Driven" philosophy of ministry—a biblical, convictional alternative to the attractional-church mindset of a large segment of Evangelicalism.

Wilson wrote *Gospel-Driven Ministry* to "show the ways in which those given the stewardship of [gospel ministry]—pastors of local churches—must meditate on it, proclaim it, and adorn it with their lives (and their deaths)" (7). A ministry that is Gospel-centered will, according to Wilson, be "given the strength and joy to carry out this momentous task" (7).

Wilson begins with a chapter on "The Pastor," where he lays out the modern dilemma: "Ministers today are expected to be gifted public speakers and catalytic leaders, yet very little else. The CEO model of ministry dominates" (9). He describes and decries the consumeristic mindset of many churches regarding their pastoral expectations. Wilson spends the remainder of chapter one presenting a biblical description of a pastor's role, work, qualifications, calling and commissioning. In an era of high-profile pastoral failures, he rightly emphasizes the need for a personal calling matched by a qualified life.

Wilson's work is particularly notable for rooting the qualifications of a pastor in the affirmation of a local church. He writes, "The pastoral office is undeniably connected to a local congregation . . . the role of pastor is inextricably connected to a particular people for whom and to whom the pastor is covenantally responsible. Only a church . . . grants that person the title 'Pastor'—a seminary degree or an ordination certificate alone does not" (23). He concludes poignantly: "someone who wants to serve over a church should be a product of a church" (24). This is sage advice in the context of the parachurch locus of most ministerial training.

His next chapter on "The Power" focuses on the necessity of the pastor to believe in and make use of the transformative power of the gospel in ministry. Especially helpful is his encouragement to pastors to find their ministry identity in faithful gospel work. This will protect pastors both from "seeking to be impressive" and from feelings of failure if one "never sees tremendous growth" (40).

In chapter three, "Worshiping," Wilson opines that "Disordered worship is the major disease threatening every local church," leading to tangential problems like politics in the church, an

[5] The PTC is an eighteen-month cohort-based process in which participants will collaborate in discussions on assigned readings, undergo group and individual coaching, and receive on-the-ground ministry experience. See https://www.lbcliberty.org/ptc.

imbalanced social gospel emphasis, and biblical illiteracy (45–46). The solution offered is three-fold: adorational [personal] study, prayerful preparation, and exultational exposition, where one preaches with passion that is formed through study and prayer.

Chapters four and five are focused on the work of preaching itself. Preaching, Wilson states, is more than "informational download" (58). Preaching is "proclamation that exults in exposing God's glory in Christ . . . all martialed toward the only power to change" (59–61). With an alliterative preacher's outline in mind, the author instructs that sermons must be contextual, convictional, clear, compassionate, and cross-centered (61–66). Wilson does an excellent job of linking preaching to pastoring, taking issue with multisite or online/video sermons. He writes that the preacher who focuses more on preaching than shepherding and who is "less and less involved with his congregation, is actually undermining the task to which he is trying to devote more time" (67). Faithful shepherds preach, knowing their people and their context, while expositing the Word with empathy. Following this charge is a very helpful survey of reasons an expositional ministry is best for the long-term health of a church. Chapter five focuses on presenting a practical method for sermon preparation, including some thoughtful reasons for manuscripting one's sermons.

Amid his instruction on preaching, Wilson gives some helpful cautions regarding sermon illustrations. He says, "You shouldn't trust your illustration to do what only God's Word can do" (94). While many books on homiletics give much attention to illustration, *Gospel-Driven Ministry* keeps illustrations in their proper place. Also included in chapter five are instructions on preaching at weddings, funerals and during the ordinances. Wilson provides both practical advice and cautions in these special preaching situations.

Chapter six provides a solid survey of the nature, heart, practice, and principles of pastoral care and pastoral counseling. Particularly helpful are his encouragements to "validate feelings without affirming assumptions" so that people have a safe place to express themselves while you pastorally bring the Word to bear on their circumstances, giving the Spirit time to work (134–135). In an age where much counseling has become professionalized, Wilson encourages pastors that, even when referring people to outside counselors, that counsel becomes "a complement to—not a replacement for—your pastoral care" (136).

In the next chapter on "Leading," the author provides what seems like a "catch-all" of leadership principles. This chapter is best used in context with personal conversations with pastoral trainees, while sharing one's own ministry experience. In reading this chapter, one feels like Wilson may have wanted to write an entire book on leadership but is instead trying to distill several principles into one chapter. In summary, the pastor must keep in mind the connection between one's "leadership skills" and "pastoral sensibilities" (143).

"Fighting (And Making Peace)" brings the reader into the realm of pastoral conflict. The author helpfully identifies the spheres of conflict—that conflict is not primarily between pastors and their flock. While some conflict is between the pastor and an individual, all conflict includes the activity of Satan and our own sinful flesh. Often conflict involves "wolves" who are primarily concerned to destroy unity in a local church through sowing discord or false doctrine. Wilson encourages pastors to make use of biblical church discipline to protect the church as a whole (171). God can use hostility

and conflict for His good purposes, being mindful that "the Lord, in his wisdom, has stewarded this situation to you . . . not to prove your greatness, but to prove his" (179).

The final two chapters on "Living" and "Dying" provide advice for long-term ministry fruitfulness. Self-care is urged. Through prayerful dependence, "establishing rhythms for healthy ministry" (195 ff.), and actively avoiding burnout by prioritizing rest and setting margins, pastors can trust that "normal ministry will produce fruit" (211). On considering death, Wilson quotes C. S. Lewis' popular phrase "Die before you die. There is no chance after." Wilson aptly quips that "the truth is, there are a million little deaths to die along the road to the big one" (217).

Negative criticisms of the book are relatively few. While the reader may desire more depth in each section, one should not expect *Gospel-Driven Ministry* to go beyond its purpose. It is not intended to replace the classics of Bridges, Spurgeon, and Baxter. It is a good modern introductory complement to these. Wilson is not always clear on hermeneutical principles—occasionally applying OT teaching to the NT church context. For instance, he describes the call to pastoral ministry as "no less supernatural" than the direct-revelatory calls of those in the OT and NT. He also describes the calling to ministry as "still a miracle" (17). This can be confusing for those simply burdened for ministry and "desiring the office of an overseer" (1 Tm 3:1) who may not have experienced anything supernatural. He also roots some of his argument for a plurality of elders too firmly in the Exodus 18 account of Moses' needing to delegate leadership duties (21–22). One is left desiring more positive illustrations. Most of his ministry illustrations reflect conversations or circumstances that went awry, rather than those that went well. These are relatively minor critiques considering the whole work, however.

Positively, Wilson's writing style is engaging, with a mixture of scriptural teaching and personal illustrations throughout each chapter. His conclusion "On the Readiness to Pastor" is purposefully gospel centered. New pastors should expect this work to provide some structure and form to preparation, but overall, the greatest need is to know the people one is called to pastor (224) and to experience the power of the gospel personally (226). Wilson is clearly committed to the sufficiency of a biblical model of pastoral ministry. Refreshingly, there isn't much in the book that makes one want to be a follower of Wilson himself. Rather, the reader is driven to be a faithful gospel minister.

Gospel-Driven Ministry provides an accessible, readable introduction to pastoral ministry. It is a valuable option for introductory pastoral theology classes. It particularly seems useful for the kind of context in which Wilson is involved, where an experienced pastor reads through the chapter with prospective pastoral candidates, while discussing one's own experience. Closing each chapter are "For Reflection" and "For Further Study:" sections. Wilson has provided a very helpful addition to practical theology training.

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