Gorman, Michael J. *Paul and John in Harmony: A Theological and Historical Exploration.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2026. 182pp. + 28pp. (back matter).

Paul and John have influenced Christian theology more than any other writers. In recent years, scholars have begun to delve into the relationship between the writings of these two men. Michael J. Gorman enters the discussion with this volume. His concern is not primarily to identify common sources of their writings; rather, he seeks to discuss key theological similarities between Paul and John. In chapter 1, Gorman surveys the state of the scholarly discussion on the Johannine-Pauline relationship. He comments on the significant absence of scholarly discussion on the relationship between John and Paul's theology until the last five years. In contrast to the majority of scholars who believe that John derived his teaching from Paul, Gorman seeks to argue for the alternative view that Paul derived his teaching from John: "I contend that *John is not a Pauline Gospel; rather, Paul is a Johannine theologian*" (16).

Gorman points out several challenges in comparing the theology of two bodies of literature: (1) choosing what to compare—upholding similarities and differences; (2) being necessarily selective (not comprehensive) for the purpose of comparison; (3) categorizing the items being compared; (4) being careful not to determine the results in advance; and (5) measuring the degree of similarity (or difference). These considerations are helpful for a study like Gorman's. Gorman acknowledges that Paul and John generally use different genres; John, however, uses a letter to explain the gospel, and Paul provides Christological narratives in various places as the groundwork for his teaching in his letters. Finally, Gorman notes three possible explanations for similarities between John and Paul: (1) they independently develop their teaching based on the same early Christian teaching and traditions; (2) one of them influences the other in their theology; or (3) Pauline and Johannine teaching and writings influence each other. Gorman use chapters 2 through 5 to discuss literary and theological similarities. Chapter 6 considers the issue of influence.

Chapter 2 compares two key passages to show their similarity in Christology and in their implications for discipleship: Philippians 2:6–11 and John 13:1–20. Gorman argues that these stories "have significant linguistic, structural, and theological features in common" (17). Gorman suggests that Philippians 2:6–11 may be considered Paul's "master story" because the key terms, grammar, and themes permeate the rest of Paul's letters. It is the overarching story of Christ's work that has direct implications for the lives of believers. Gorman then argues that John 13:1–20, the foot-washing passage, is a "good candidate for the role of the Johannine master story" (19). The account captures the key themes of John's Gospel, and it carries implications for the Christian life. Gorman finds numerous key words and themes common to both passages that help demonstrate the similarities. They both emphasize Jesus as both "high" and "low," highlighting his relationship with the Father. Both focus on his acts of self-sacrificial love. This self-sacrificial love becomes paradigmatic for Jesus' followers.

Gorman presents five theses to defend the idea that these passages share the same theological features. First, each text presents a story of Christology/soteriology as well as discipleship/spirituality. Second, each text is a story about God, incarnation, and divine self-revelation. Both Paul and John

emphasize Jesus' identity as God, which serves as the presupposition for what follows. Gorman highlights that Paul explicitly states Jesus' identity as God and that he humbled himself *because of* (not in spite of) his deity. Gorman looks to John's Gospel as a whole to provide the background for Jesus' identity as God (John 1:1–18; 5:17; 8:28). He, however, seems to overlook John 13:3 as a strong support for this within the immediate context of the foot-washing account. Third, each text presents a slave narrative—Christ's humility and self-enslavement, followed by exaltation. They both present a clear descent and ascent. Paul joins Isaiah's servant of the Lord with the Lord himself; the suffering servant becomes exalted Lord. Fourth, both texts present a story of sacrificial missional love that becomes a paradigm for the disciples. Finally, each text presents a paradoxical story of Christ's free choice and his obedience. Paul highlights Jesus' emptying and humbling *himself;* Paul also points out that this self-humbling culminates in his obedience to the point of his death on the cross. John presents Jesus' decision to humble himself to serve the disciples. To account for Jesus' obedience, Gorman refers to other passages in John that emphasize Christ's obedience to the Father (4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 10:17–18; 15:12–14). Based on the evidence in chapter 2, the passages in Philippians 2 and John 13 do reveal significant similarities. Gorman closes with an assertion that "these profound similarities almost certainly cannot be coincidental" (59).

In chapter 3, Gorman asks whether Paul and John reveal other profound similarities. Whereas chapter 2 focuses on Christology, chapter 3 shifts to spirituality, focusing on the language of union with Christ and oneness in Paul and John. Gorman compares the teaching in John 15 and 1 John with Paul's teaching on unity in Christ. The topic of oneness with Christ, or participation with Christ, is generally recognized as a key concept in Pauline and Johannine theology; however, the similarities between John and Paul on this topic have been under-explored. John and Paul use "locative language" and "residential rhetoric" to describe this oneness/participation with Christ. This is a "mutual indwelling" or a "reciprocal residence," which is often referred to as *perichoresis*. This chapter focuses on metaphorical terms for location, residence, and mutual indwelling found in both John and Paul.

Gorman first examines the locative language in John's Gospel, beginning with John 15:1–11. This passage uses "abide" ten times (in Greek) and "in" fifteen times. First John also overflows with terminology for "abiding." The fact that "abiding" is scattered throughout this letter "demonstrates how central to Johannine spirituality it is" (74). Gorman then discusses locative language in Paul's letters. Paul uses "in" prominently, but he does not speak of "abiding" using John's terminology. Paul does use terms related to "dwelling" (*oikeō* and *enoikeō*) some fourteen times. Paul's comments about the Spirit dwelling in believers (1 Cor 3:16) bear a striking similarity to John's comments about the Spirit abiding with and in believers (John 14:17). Paul uses this language primarily in reference to location, participation, and transformation. Any discussion of being "in Christ" must entail submission to the "dominion" of Christ. For Paul, not only are believers in Christ, but Christ is in believers. In Romans 8 in particular, Paul seems to see some overlap between the indwelling of Christ and that of the Spirit. It is clear, then, that Paul and John share certain key concepts related to participation with Christ. Gorman builds on these observations in the following chapter.

Chapter 4 continues the discussion of locative language from chapter 3. Gorman presents four aspects of the spiritual relationship conveyed by this locative terminology: (1) mutual, (2) identity-

framing, (3) Trinitarian, and (4) active and transformational. First, in both John and Paul the indwelling is mutual. In John 15 and in several passages in 1 John, Jesus and believers abide in each other, though the emphasis is on believers abiding in Jesus. Paul also presents a similar mutuality with the emphasis on believers being in Christ. Some scholars, though, such as Richard Bauckham, do not see a connection between John's mutual indwelling and Paul's "being in Christ." Gorman devotes several pages to refuting Bauckham's view (92–94). Gorman argues that for Paul, mutual indwelling includes both intimacy and power. It is difficult to see, though, how "power" would be an element of *mutual* indwelling. This seems to imply that believers in Christ communicate power to Christ.

Gorman presents "identity" as the second aspect of locative language. Abiding in Jesus is central to the identity of the disciples. This identity is prominent in John 15 with Jesus' image of himself as the vine and his disciples as the branches. Additionally, Jesus' prayer in John 17 emphasizes Jesus' being "in them" (17:26). Therefore, "Jesus in us is our core identity" (98). For Paul, being "in Christ" is "the most basic identity of believers" (99), and the indwelling is mutual. The third aspect of locative language is Trinitarian. Those who are in Christ are also in the Father and in the Spirit (John 17:20–23; 14:17; Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 6:11). For both John and Paul, participation and fellowship in Christ constitute participation in the Spirit. In order to uphold the unity of the Trinity, Gorman comments, "Theologically speaking we may appropriate the work of inhabitation to the Spirit, rather than the Father, but there is only one God who inhabits and who is inhabited. Paul's perichoretic spirituality is Trinitarian" (112). It would be inappropriate to think of one being in Christ and in the Spirit but not also in the Father.

The final aspect of locative language is its impact on active, transformational character. John and Paul both present a moral and missional spirituality. Spirituality is no mere private, internal mystical experience; it entails a mission to the world. Gorman refers to this as "missional theosis." Abiding in the vine results in bearing fruit. This fruit-bearing is itself transformative as "it is actually in bearing fruit that the disciples become disciples; in doing so, they will become what they already are" (116). Similarly, for Paul, the concept of Christ in the believer (Gal 2:20) "must lead to the Christian moral life" (119). For both Paul and John, bearing fruit is a key outcome of mutual indwelling. Gorman concludes that though there are minor differences between Paul and John, "the depth and breadth of the significant likenesses is impressive" (126).

Chapter 5, titled "Prequels and Sequels," discusses three primary topics: (1) the Father's double sending of the Son and Spirit, (2) the act of believing "into" Christ, and (3) the life-giving activity of God. First, Gorman examines the "backstory of the incarnation" (i.e., the prequel), which is the sending of the Son. Both Paul and John speak of the Father's saving purpose in sending the Son in coordination with the Son's incarnation and death. Both authors include a corresponding sending of the Spirit. In a sense, the sending of the Spirit is the sequel to the incarnation. Gorman comments that many assume that John and Paul are merely drawing on early Christian tradition in these formulaic texts. For Gorman, though, the problem is that no such formulaic tradition exists outside of Paul and John (137). Though other NT writers speak of the sending of the Son, no others use the specific formulas both Paul and John use; they are "distinctively Johannine and Pauline" (138).

Gorman then discusses believing "into" Christ as the prequel to the locative/residential concept of being "in Christ." For Paul, faith is the means by which a person moves into Christ (e.g., Phil 1:29; Gal 2:16). The majority of such Pauline passages use the preposition *eis*, though it is often translated as "in" rather than "into." Galatians 2:16 is prominent here as believing *into* Christ results in a status of being *in Christ*. John's emphasis on believing "into" (*eis*) Christ is well known. This indicates that believing is more than merely trusting; rather, it is "a dedication of one's life" to Jesus (147). This is similar to the Pauline emphasis found in passages such as Galatians 2:16. Both John and Paul use similar prepositional patterns for key concepts. Humans are enslaved *in* sin and walking *in* darkness. When they come to Christ, they believe *into* Christ. In the new life, they abide *in* Jesus, and they walk *in* the light/the truth/newness of life. Among NT authors, Paul and John alone present this full pattern culminating in being *in* Christ as a result of believing *into* Christ.

Gorman closes the chapter with one final sequel. Both Paul and John use the term *zōopoieō* for God's giving of life to people. For both authors, this divine activity involves each person of the Trinity; also, both authors present this giving of life as both a present and future reality.

Chapter 6, Gorman's final chapter, initially reviews his previous findings, concluding that Paul and John are in harmony in "some quite striking ways" (158). The chapter is mostly dedicated to a discussion of which writer influenced the other. Gorman's overall argument in the previous five chapters is not dependent on the outcome of the question in chapter 6. Most scholars hold to one of two theories. The first theory is that Paul and John drew on the same early Christian traditions, but they did not originally influence each other. These traditions were either rooted in OT teaching or they were "in the air" in early Christianity. One key problem with this view is that scholars have not been able to find a shared tradition. The alternative theory is that either Paul or John influenced the other. The more popular view among scholars is that Paul influenced John; John's Gospel therefore would be a "Pauline Gospel." A third theory is that John and Paul mutually influenced each other, but Gorman cites no scholarly argumentation for this view.

Gorman's argument in this chapter, though, is that Paul is a Johannine theologian. For Gorman, fundamentally, it is "easier to imagine" Paul using concepts from John's Gospel and applying them in different contexts than it is to imagine John taking Pauline concepts and building them into his narrative of Jesus in his Gospel. For example, would John really have taken Paul's language about "mutual abiding" and then added it to the lips of Jesus in one discourse? Gorman argues that Johannine tradition or even an early version of John's Gospel may have influenced Paul's letters.

Gorman's unique contribution in this chapter, though, is a "brief" and "preliminary" argument that John's Gospel was written at an earlier date than is generally assumed among scholars. Gorman presents eight arguments to support this view. First, he believes that Paul must have been familiar with John 13–17, since he shares many of the same words and themes that John does in this section. So what else could Paul have read from this Gospel? John 13–17 would not have been written as an independent unit without speaking of Jesus' ministry and subsequent death and resurrection. "It is therefore likely that Paul knew the Gospel as a whole" (170). Therefore, John's Gospel must have been completed before AD 50. Second, Gorman addresses the typical arguments for a late dating of John's Gospel, concluding that there is no evidence to support the view. Third, Gorman sees no "historical,

literary, or theological reason to say that John's Christology *must* follow Paul's" (173). The typical argument is that John's "high Christology" implies that John's Gospel must have been written later than the other NT writings. But why is this a necessary conclusion? Fourth, there is no compelling reason to date John in the 60s; it could well have been written in the 40s. Fifth, Gorman supports the idea of an early date (before 50) for all four Gospels, which would explain Paul's awareness of all four Gospels.

Paul and John in Harmony provides some helpful contributions to the discussion of the relationship between Johannine and Pauline theology. Many of the positive contributions are highlighted above. Gorman makes excellent use of Scripture to support his arguments, particularly when summarizing the themes common to Paul and John. The content in chapters 2 through 5 provides the most meat on which to chew. The striking similarities between John 13 and Philippians 2:5-11 are noteworthy and are overlooked elsewhere. The presentation on union with Christ and believing "into" Christ in chapters 3 and 4 was also well done. The discussion in chapter 5 on prequels and sequels was creative and convincing. Though Gorman's argument in chapter 6 lacks meaningful evidence, he acknowledges this and is careful to distinguish between arguments supported by evidence and those that are not. As a prolific Pauline scholar, Gorman does cater a bit to less conservative scholarship. Throughout the book, he regularly differentiates between the disputed and undisputed letters of Paul. He also identifies the author of 1 John as "whoever it may be" (178).

Gorman argues that John influenced Paul. Though Gorman presents a number of similarities shared by Paul and John, he fails to provide any actual evidence that one influenced the other. Gorman appears to be at risk of parallelomania, arguing that because there are shared characteristics one must have originated from the other. The only "evidence" is that in certain portions of their writings, Paul and John refer to the same themes and occasionally use the same words. It would, however, seem odd if their content did not overlap at certain points. Gorman's argument is also strongly dependent on identifying John 13 as John's "master story," a proposition that seems questionable. Gorman later refers to Paul's obvious awareness of John 13–17, based on Paul's supposed usage of John 13 in composing Philippians 2 as well as Paul's "in Christ" language reflecting John's "abiding" language in John 15. This reasoning is circular.

Gorman (along with other scholars) gives insufficient consideration to the possibility that Paul and John did not influence each other. Yet Gorman has provided no evidence for one depending on or influencing the other. John certainly learned much from the Lord Jesus during his earthly ministry, and then the Holy Spirit taught John much more (John 16:12–15). At the same time, Paul was an expert OT scholar prior to his conversion, and he subsequently received revelation directly from Jesus Christ (Gal 1:12–18). Given these facts, why would one author need to borrow from or learn from the other? Certainly, Paul and John knew each other (Gal 2:9–10), and they would almost certainly have discussed many of the ideas about which they wrote. Without having any evidence to the contrary, though, it seems best to say that both Paul and John were influenced by Jesus Christ and were separately carried along by the Spirit to produce their God-breathed writings. The million-dollar question is, "Why does it matter who influenced whom?" Gorman does not quite answer this question.

In the end, Gorman's work is a helpful introduction to some similarities between Pauline and Johannine theology; any evidence that one primarily influenced the other, though, is lacking.

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Trueman, Carl R. *The Desecration of Man: How the Rejection of God Degrades Our Humanity.* New York: Sentinel, 2026. 256pp.

The ability to translate and synthesize scholarly research into digestible prose that the average church member can appreciate is a rare skill. Even more impressive is scholarly ability complemented by a pastoral concern for the average church member. Cultural commentary is valuable but hard. Contemporary life can be complex and confusing, and it is often not easy to say how a Christian should think about the rapid, seemingly chaotic changes in Western culture over the last century. Carl Trueman has written several books in the last few years that aid the church's understanding of modern life. The theme in each one is a different answer to the question, "What happened to Christian culture?" Specifically, he attempts to explain how contemporary Western society has lost its Christian norms around sexuality, which is perhaps the most visible evidence of a post-Christian ethos.

Trueman's newest book, *The Desecration of Man*, adds a new step to the analysis. The previous books are a kind of intellectual history that excavate the ideological assumptions that escaped the academy into the rest of society. The new book describes the *effects* of this transformation, specifically on modern understanding of human life. The book is thus an essay in theological anthropology. The Christian view is that "human beings are created by God with a given set of dependencies and obligations, limits, and ends. We are rational, dependent, limited, teleological beings" (12). Man is made in the image of God. What happens, then, when this claim is rejected?

The first thing that happens is a loss of meaning and purpose. And quickly thereafter comes a loss of defensible social norms. Trueman frames the discussion with Fredrich Nietzsche's parable of the madman. Nietzsche describes a scene in which a crazy-sounding prophet arrives and announces the death of God. The parable is sometimes taken as evidence of Nietzsche's atheism, but this interpretation misunderstands his point. It is less that God is dead than that the *idea* of God is no longer effective in modern life. The madman is not *causing* the death of God; he is saying that religion no longer has any power over society. The people think they can just continue as normal. But they are wrong. With no God, they now become responsible for everything, not just their obedience and worship to him. They must make for themselves their own moral codes and their own purposes. This is an enormous task, one better suited to divinity. At first it is thrilling. But it becomes unavoidable and oppressive toil. We might more accurately say that the madman is foretelling the effects of practical atheism in the Christian West. Though the effects will come later, they will come, and the costs will be very great.

Trueman reports on the costs about 150 years later. And they have been great. By giving up the theological understanding of human nature, modern society has been forced to find an alternative. Initially this change feels like freedom. Humans no longer feel bound by divine rules or design; they get to choose for themselves. But what Nietzsche saw, and what Trueman documents, is that freedom can become a great burden. We are able to "make our own meaning," but then we also must do so, even if we don't want to. We have to find some other conceptual framework to understand ourselves. We might decide that we are just animals, greater perhaps than others, but not essentially different. We might see ourselves as commodities, like any other marketable good, so that we can buy and sell

ourselves and each other. We might use our technology to try to change our natures, or at least the social expression of our natures, so that others will recognize us for who we are "on the inside."

These alternative human natures are evidence of what Trueman calls "desecration." Here Trueman responds to a different account of modern life that has some currency in Christian circles. The problem in modern life, the claim goes, is that it is "disenchanted." Everything is "scientific," measurable, engineered, mechanical, and bureaucratic. The solution is to find elements of human existence that resist this tendency, such as art or spirituality. Trueman maintains that the disenchantment thesis is fine, so far as it goes, but that it does not go far enough (20). The real problem is that the sacred nature of human life no longer matters. When we no longer understand mankind with reference to God's purpose and work, we not only misunderstand human beings, but we also attack human nature itself.

This destructive tendency manifests in some specific contemporary contexts. In human sexuality, first the culture tears down the cultural boundaries around sexual activity and thus removes purpose and meaning from it. Sexuality is just personal expression, rather than participation in the ongoing life of the human family. Second, contemporary technology removes the natural consequences of ungoverned sexual activity. Ironically, contemporary culture says both that sexual feelings are the most important feelings and that sex is nothing more than the feelings. Contemporary technology permits intentionally separating sexuality and procreation, which in turn makes childbearing an achievement and children a commodity. Childbearing becomes "mechanized" in the sense that it is an engineered procedure aimed at a defined outcome. But as with other manufactured goods, the mechanical process affects the significance of the action. Reproductive technologies can seem praiseworthy in isolation, but when they become commonplace, they don't mean the same thing. Ordinary human procreation is special in part because it cannot be controlled. Making it into an engineered procedure changes its role in structuring human relationships by making it a form of self-expression with no necessary link to procreation.

The other end of life gets confused too. On the one hand, death remains a fearful enemy. But on the other hand, when life has little meaning, there is less reason to avoid death. The sixth chapter of the book discusses modern confusion about death, but in several respects it is the weakest in the book. There are some great one-line comments, but overall the treatment seems insufficiently Christian. Though there are allusions to Christian teaching, there is no discussion of the Resurrection. Trueman disagrees with Sir Roger Scruton about the way in which death structures life. But it isn't clear that Trueman has understood Scruton's point. Scruton argues that an activity must come to an end in order to be what it is. Thus death is part of what gives meaning to a life, by bringing its activities to a terminus, even if not a completion. Scruton doesn't need to say that death is *good*; he needs only to say that activities without endings are *different*. This observation should have Christian resonance, for it would help explain how life in the new creation could be different. Activities there will not be forced to end and thus may take on a new character.

Chapter 7 is the strength of the book. Three aspects of Christian worship—creed, cult, and code—resist the desecration of man by uniting the three final ends—the true, the beautiful, and the good. Together, the three practices, and their corresponding goods, structure a human life and mutually support each other as means of restoring the sacredness of mankind. If the basic problem in late

modernity is that the image of God no longer informs human self-understanding, then the Christian religion restores that understanding by constantly rehearsing its truth and significance.

Nevertheless, the book as a whole is not Trueman's best. It often feels like several shorter articles that have been forced together, with some excellent citations of influential thinkers to sustain interest and momentum. It can be repetitive and shallow in its analysis. Someone who has read his earlier books will find little original thought here, particularly before the final chapter.

Perhaps most damagingly, the "desecration" thesis seems to never really be defended. Early in the book Trueman says that "[desecration] implies the intentional abuse or destruction of something holy, something of more than ordinary significance" (14). Unfortunately, this definition is not very illuminating (if it is even a definition). It requires a further definition of "holy" (and perhaps also of "ordinary"). Yet "holy" cannot just mean "that which ought not be destroyed or abused." To use it to define desecration risks a vicious circle. The argument seems to be that *something* is special about humans—call it "the image of God"—but what this specialness consists in, and why it matters, is less clear. Though Trueman attempts to say *how* desecration happens, he says much less about *what it is*.

Indeed, one might wonder if in certain respects the problem in modern life is not that humans have lost their sacredness but that they have made too much of it. Human beings worship themselves rather than God. Society will have something sacred—if not God, then something inferior. Thus, to say that the problem in modern life is the desecration of man may misdiagnose the problem. For example, it is true that modern life has badly misunderstood the significance of sex. But it would also be incorrect to say that Christianity regards sex as sacred in the sense of being *holy*. Sex is *good* and special in certain respects. It is a gift from God that contributes to the ends for which he made mankind. But in a sense, sex is very secular—so secular that marriage will not persist into the new creation. Thus, the opposite of sacred cannot be "secular." To say that it is the opposite of "profane" is just to restate the claim.

It is telling, perhaps, that Trueman's title is most directly stated in a block quotation around halfway through the book. The quotation refers to "artfully desecrating the sacred," and it appears in a quoted defense of drag-queen story hour (93). Though the quotation clearly illustrates the deep perversity of modern sexual politics, it is curious that it is taken to be a good explanation. A theorist of drag is not obviously well-suited to understand accurately the nature of the sacred. Indeed, as Trueman points out elsewhere, emphasizing the transgressiveness is part of the goal, and thus it is in the interest of the transgressors to overstate the sacredness so as to amplify the transgression. The actual effect is a caricature that is neither funny nor subtle.

It is clear that modern society is valorizing rejections of human physicality. Nietzsche was prescient in this aspect at least. Indeed, Trueman could have added examples, such as the prominent ways in which people abuse their own body through neglect or obsession with appearance, the attempts to live indefinitely through increasingly arcane medical therapies, the stated ambition among some technologists to hybridize or replace humans with computers, and so on. The moral judgments in the book are on target. The final chapter's emphasis on the ways in which the Christian gospel critiques the foolishness of the world is excellent. But the overall effect is somewhat less than the sum of its

parts. Christians who need somewhere to start may find this book helpful, but it should be a gateway to deeper study rather than a final word on the topic.

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Hensley, Drew. *Invisible Grief: An Honest Conversation on the Pain and Loss of Unrealized Hopes, Dreams, and Good Desires*. Geanies House, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2026. 187pp. + 12pp. (front matter) + 9pp. (back matter).

As Drew Hensley and his wife experienced the pain of childlessness, Drew began to envision a book that would address human sorrow in one of its overlooked dimensions—*invisible grief*. By *invisible grief* he means "a deep-seated reminder of what has never been and may never be" (1) and "the death of hopes, dreams, and desires" (3). Hensley's work speaks to a specific niche: good desires that God has not met. Many sorrows stem from the loss of something or someone already existing (health, family, friends, job), and many unrealized hopes, dreams, and wishes are indistinguishable from what the Scriptures call *lusts*. That is, the reason for our grief is that we want something God has not given, and we are upset that our wishes remain unfulfilled. Hensley would have us navigate away from these to consider how we ought to respond to God-given desires that remain unfulfilled.

Hensley weaves a plausible narrative of three acts: "what we lay down" (chs. 1–3), "what we pick up" (chs. 4–7) and "how we move forward" (chs. 8–9). The author describes first how he attempted to outrun his grief via alcohol, denial, and laughter (deflection), but he found these merely postponed, complicated, and exaggerated the grief that he felt. Next, he answers four lies that society (or Satan) uses to confuse believers about their sorrow. These include: "Bad things don't happen to good Christians" (31), "I'm being punished" (33), "Time heals all wounds" (36), and "the fallacy of relative privation" (42), in which one denies the significance of one form of suffering in light of more severe suffering elsewhere. As he develops how these lies have taken hold in our culture, Hensley exposes and rejects the prosperity gospel as false doctrine, and he calls it predatorial, selfish, humanistic, and cruel. He also properly differentiates punishment and discipline (35)—observing that God does use discipline frequently with his children, but he does not punish them because of Christ's suffering on their behalf. Hensley concludes this section by addressing one of the most destructive thoughts that we must set aside: *God doesn't care*. Hensley shows just how easily a good desire can become a demand—dethroning God by insisting on the supreme and necessary worth of someone or something other than God's own person. The human mind transmutes *God did not give me what I wanted* into *God does not care* with astonishing ease.

In the second section of *Invisible Grief*, Hensley assures the reader that "it's okay to not be okay." This is one of the more scripturally laden sections in which the experiences of David (Pss 10, 13, 22, 31) and Jesus exhibit the sorrows of the soul that can attend a faithful life. Chapter 5 argues that grief is a gift that leads us to new understanding (82), "new appreciation" (83), and even "new abilities" (84). Grasping the identity-shaping effect of specific griefs, Hensley focuses chapter 6 on the necessity of having our identity grounded on and shaped by the Scriptures generally and the gospel specifically. Because sorrow can occupy so much of people's conscious thoughts, they may adopt a false identity.

> In a world marred by the unexpected, where dreams can slip through our fingers like sand and good desires seem to wither on the vine, it's easy to let our pain and losses become the lens through which we see our entire lives. These experiences, while deeply formative, threaten to redefine us if we let them take center stage. We take on new primary names: "barren, single, disabled, orphan,

> broken, helpless, hopeless." Even though these names are liars (and they definitely are), with chronic grief these false identifiers can grow larger and larger. (94)

The final chapter in this section addresses the reality that God can use pain to bring about a constructive end, but the chapter disappoints in its truncated theology. Hensley distances God from suffering, sorrow, pain, and loss to such an extent that he merely "allows" the curse and "allows" the misery, pain, and deformity in this world (113). But this theological stance both personifies the curse and fails to solve what Hensley feels it does. A God who "allows" all this calamity (when he has the power to stop it if he wished to do so) is no more absolved than the God who intended calamity and misery to exist under the curse and who actively ordered it to be so (alternately, there is an active force in the universe that is powerful enough to override the divine will). Thus, one who follows Hensley's logic must resort either to Rabbi Kushiner's powerless deity or a cruel one (since Hensley has defined agency in calamity as cruel). In this respect, Hensley's formulation in this chapter is doctrinally weak. A better solution stems from Scripture. Amos 3:6 demonstrates that God explicitly takes credit for calamity while rejecting that his agency in doing so is cruel. Sinners deserve nothing but misery and judgment; so, there is no cruelty in God to ordain and establish the curse in all of its effects.

Section three proposes two primary mechanisms by which to carry invisible grief without faltering—community and joy. Hensley wisely does not promise resolution in this life. Pain does not always go away. Sorrows do not always dim. But those who withdraw from community are cutting themselves off from one of God's means of care. People don't always say "the right thing at the right time." They sometimes offer poor, careless, or hurtful advice. But God ordained that other believers should be a "conduit of grace" when we are hurting (149). Finally, the last chapter entertains the fact that since we are complex beings, we can retain both grief and joy at the same time. That is, the fact that we sorrow is not adequate cause to give up hope and joy.

There are several points at which *Invisible Grief* could offer the reader a clearer presentation. First, although it claims to address a unique kind of grief that attends unmet expectations, hopes, and dreams, the book's counsel applies equally to other forms of grief. In other words, it is difficult to differentiate a thoughtful Christian response to visible as opposed to invisible griefs. If recognition of the *existence* of invisible griefs is the goal, this outcome was achieved. If a distinct plan of action stemming from such recognition is the goal, *Invisible Grief* falls short. Second, as noted previously, it is hard to distinguish these "invisible griefs" from simple desires, lusts, demands, and wants. The Scriptures show us how to deal with our desires—especially those that conflict with God's apparent will for our lives. The reader might expect Hensley to address more extensively the fact that a high proportion of our unmet desires are simply sinful—either in the object sought or in the devotion of the heart to that object. Third, the author's extensive referencing of CCM and secular psychotherapies exhibits an integrationist approach to life that seems to accept the world's opinions on matters of the soul. This blunts the value of *Invisible Griefs* as a blueprint for a distinctly Christian response to soul care. Finally, the author occasionally over-realizes his applications. For instance, in citing Jeremiah 29:11 as immediately applicable to his reader, he is taking a promise given to Israel (and only to Israel given the explicitness of the seventy-year captivity) and treating it as written to the church (160).

Invisible Grief effectively draws the reader to consider unmet desires and expectations. Because we are spiritual beings who can consider not only what *is* but what *could* and *ought* to be, unrealized hopes are genuine sources of sorrow in a fallen world. And the solution to invisible grief is the same as it is for visible grief—the grace of God in the present and the hope of eternal life in the future, and both of these come through Christ.

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McKnight, Scot, and Adrienne Gibson. *Traumatized Church: What Paul's Relationship with the Corinthian Church Teaches Us About Helping Those Who Are Hurting*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2026. 236pp. + 15pp. (front matter) + 11pp. (back matter).

In *Traumatized Church*, NT professor Scot McKnight teams up with licensed professional counselor Adrienne Gibson to address psychological trauma (Gibson) and to examine the apostle Paul's relationship with the church at Corinth through the lens of a trauma-informed reading. The authors subdivide the book into four sections: Trauma Informed, Trauma Sensitive, Trauma Safe, and Trauma Healthy. The first three chapters define trauma—"an event or an experience that overwhelms our capacity to cope" (1)—express its subjectivity or perception-orientation (11), assert that it is embodied physiologically (16), reify its effects (17), expand diverse human conflicts into trauma (20), and express the four responses (fight, flight, freeze, or fawn) to threats (36).

Chapters 4 through 8 encourage the reader to become "trauma sensitive" via active listening to an injured person's story, claims, and explanations. Here the authors acknowledge that many church conflicts stem from a quest for power (50–51), that unjust accusations may exist (51), and that the perpetrator may invert (and subvert) victim-perpetrator roles (52). Chapter 5 articulates key charges that the Corinthian rebels leveled against the apostle Paul. They called him fickle (68), duplicitous (70), inadequate in appearance (71), mediocre (77), incapable as an orator (79), preferential (80), and surpassed by others (82). Chapters 6 and 7 reconstruct Paul's responses to these charges and claim that Paul gives all the hallmarks of being traumatized (88). Chapter 8 encourages readers to affirm their own anger and trauma as a first step toward healing.

The third section of the book, Trauma Safe, urges churches to create safe spaces for traumatized individuals. Some of the recommendations in chapter 9 (especially those regarding physical safety) are highly practical in heightening our alertness to actual threats. Chapters 10 through 14 advocate a combination of social-secular shibboleths (boundaries, trust and transparency, mutuality, empowerment, and cultural awareness) and common moral sense. The aspects of these chapters that address normal virtuous interactions are eminently useful, but the authors treat sound moral judgment and practice as if they are discoveries of modern secular-trauma theory. A biblically informed church will already be growing in a healthy practice of mutual love and edification without the help of trauma theory. The final one-chapter section advocates oddly secular ways to beat trauma: "enjoy your hobbies" (224), "get a therapist" (225), "find at least one sage" (226), "support groups" (227), and "friends" (227). If these are the mechanisms that a Christian audience should use to address trauma, the Scriptures in general and Paul in particular appear to be sorely lacking. Gibson and McKnight reject the sufficiency of Scripture to address the soul needs of humanity.

As a general informational read, *Traumatized Church* will remind the conscientious reader that suffering is everywhere in a fallen world. It has numerous shapes, durations, and intensities. And it intersects the human heart in varied ways. McKnight and Gibson urge us not to be glib, indifferent, or oblivious toward trauma. The better we understand the kinds of sorrows and fears that people carry (attunement), the better we will represent the grace of God in the church.

While audience responses to *Traumatized Church* are sure to differ, all should recognize several areas open to dispute. The authors take an integrationist approach. The book advocates an entirely secular psychological view of trauma and trauma counseling (4). Gibson appears to subscribe to Bessel van der Kolk's popular but unproven and unscientific "the-body-keeps-score" theory of trauma (12).[1] The consequence is that the book turns innocent interactions into violent traumatizations, insulates the sinful hearts of self-proclaimed traumatized individuals from biblical critique, and generally panders to the victim culture of modern America. Because of this integrationist psychological mindset, the authors reify trauma as an active force that has power to produce automatic outcomes in a person's life that the individual is powerless to resist (32). This removes a person's heart responses (will, emotions, beliefs) from the equation and absolves him of guilt for what the Scriptures call sin. God's Word appeals to heart change—most often in terms of growth of faith—as the primary means of moving through and past trauma, but this is nearly entirely lacking from *Traumatized Church*.

By casting trauma in entirely subjective terms (the personalized experience of the individual), the authors extend trauma beyond physical events (such as car wrecks, the death of a child, divorce, and sexual assault) to every conceivable emotional, social, spiritual, or physical injury whatsoever (real or imagined, warranted or unwarranted, trivial or severe, brief or extended). These do not constitute the same class of events. Many "traumatized" people need to confront reality. They are sinning by actively responding with fear, anxiety, or depression to the *ordinary* suffering that is prevalent in a fallen world. The fact that their responses are sinful does not make the event itself more painful or the church's responsibility to rebuke, encourage, and comfort any different. The book offers no realistic biblical solutions for the traumatized individual or for the church that is trying to guide him toward spiritual healing. Instead, it urges the church to walk on eggshells and to abet the spiritual and emotional immaturity of its members. Thus, trauma-informed counseling turns the therapist into an enabler. Trauma-informed psychotherapies often do real violence to those who have experienced real trauma by lumping them together with self-absorbed individuals who view any personal reversal or misfortune as "trauma."

Several fallacies weaken the book's main argument that Paul exhibits the signs of personal trauma in his interactions with Corinth. First, since Paul was never *overwhelmed* in his capacity to cope, by definition he was not traumatized. Did he experience severe stress that made him despair even of life? Absolutely. Did he "cope" by the grace and power of God? Undoubtedly. *Traumatized Church* improperly conflates severe stress with a psychologized definition of *trauma*. (Disclaimer: Setting aside the psychologized definition of *trauma*, I would be happy to agree that Paul's experiences both with the Corinthian church and throughout the rest of his missionary endeavors were traumatic in the more general dictionary sense. After all, he spent twenty-four hours clinging to flotsam from a shipwreck! [2 Cor 11:25].) Second, the authors speculate on the text of Scripture and then base further claims on that speculation. For instance, the claim that Paul (possibly, plausibly, probably) fled Corinth due to trauma and took refuge in Ephesus because it was safe is purely speculative. Nothing in Acts (or the

[1] Gibson's privately owned counseling center advocates secular psychotherapies including CBT, EMDR, Mindfulness, Person-Centered, Attachment, and other non-Christian theories but is strangely silent on biblical authority for soul care. See her website, https://www.valorcounselingaz.com/services-1.

letters to Corinth) imply that Paul's leaving Corinth was due to stress. Additionally, given that he fought with beasts at Ephesus (ironically mentioned in 1 Cor 15:32), it is apparent that Ephesus was not a "safe space" for Paul.

The reader will also want to observe two other shortcomings. First, *Traumatized Church* flows with a sustained undercurrent of anti-conservatism. While the authors repeatedly praise women pastors, who are *explicitly* excluded from the pastoral office by Scripture (23, 54, 59, 61, 76), they find the energy to verbally abuse conservative Christians gratuitously and needlessly (109), and they explicitly affirm DEI—slanderously claiming its existence in Scripture (206). In fact, after scanning the book carefully one might conclude that the only specific targets of their attacks (outside of generic traumatizers) are conservative Christians (an interesting juxtaposition given that DEI widely advocates and encourages three actual, violent traumatizers in atheistic Marxism, sexual perversion, and racial injustice). This reversal is ironic given their mentioning of DARVO (deny, attack, reverse victim and offender) in the context of trauma.

The second major shortcoming is an inadequate view of Scripture. While it is true that the narrative portions of Scripture do not always depict imitable examples or what *should* have happened in a particular case, the source material for this book is the Corinthian correspondence. McKnight claims that the apostle Paul is full of "nastiness and defensiveness and avoidance" in his letters to Corinth (13; cf. 38, 41–42). If true, then these letters are hardly authoritative Scripture. The statement that we should "have trauma therapists reading over our shoulders and whispering in our ears if we want to hear accurately what Paul says to the Corinthians" is infelicitous at best and wholly inadequate if actually intended the way it reads (134). It presumes the necessity of postmodern secular pseudosciences for a proper understanding of God's Word. And concluding that "forming trauma-healthy churches is at the root of grace-shaped and Spirit-formed transformation of character" seems to replace the actual gospel, the Holy Spirit, and biblical virtues with a secular pseudo virtue (219).

The portrayal of Paul as suffering from PTSD suffers two major defects (13). First, there was no "post"-ness to the strain he was under when he wrote 1 and 2 Corinthians. Second, there is a complete absence of a disorder. To be disordered, Paul would need to be *inappropriately overreacting* to *non-threatening* situations after the actual threat was long resolved. Instead, Paul was actively addressing a combination of doctrinal and practical threats to the church itself. That is, Paul is clearly less offended by the Corinthians' disposition toward him (except as it affected their view of his apostleship and, thereby, authority to convey God's Word to them) and far more concerned by their moral and spiritual chaos. This is probably a minor quibble, but it may indicate that the authors have become so interested in finding evidence to justify a theory that false equivalences have slipped into their analysis.

Traumatized Church is likely to have the greatest impact on evangelical churches who tend toward integrationist views of counseling or on pastors and counselors who have not previously considered the pervasiveness and depth of sorrow that is represented in the pew every Sunday and their own responsibility to act mercifully in response to that sorrow. All should be aware that the church is full of hurting people. All should understand that we can *cause* that hurt, *feel* that hurt, and *help* that hurt. However, the pervasive integration of secular psychology throughout the book invalidates it as a serious

work for those who accept the orthodox doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture in all matters regarding soul care.

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Naselli, Andrew David. *How to Write a Paper: Five Steps to Writing a Theological or Literary Research Paper*. Lake Elmo, MN: Build & Fight, 2026. 127pp. + 10pp. (front matter).

A well-written theological paper is a goal worth pursuing for the virtues cultivated, the understanding achieved, and the theological shaping experienced. The rewards of this exercise, however, are greatly diminished if the aim is unclear, the means are unfamiliar, or the execution poor. All too commonly, one or more of these critical weaknesses attends the paper-writing experience of a theological student.

In *How to Write a Paper*, Andrew Naselli (Professor of Systematic Theology and NT for Bethlehem College and Seminary in Minneapolis; lead pastor of Christ the King Church in Stillwater, Minnesota; and prolific author, most recently co-authoring an update of the classic guide *Exegetical Fallacies* with D. A. Carson) brings to bear extensive experience in theological education and theological writing to provide accessible and actionable guidance for the endeavor of writing a theological research paper. This guidance is intended not only to significantly strengthen the final *product*, but also to improve a student's formative experience of the *process*.

After an introductory chapter, Naselli pursues these aims by breaking down the task of paper-writing into five key steps, each step occupying one chapter.

Chapter 1, "Six Introductory Questions," explains who the book is for (students, especially college and graduate school students), how it should be used (to save students and their teachers much grief by helping students know what to do to produce quality papers), why the author wrote it (to help students learn to write better and think better and to create papers that are a delight to read), why the book focuses on a *theological* or *literary* research paper (these are the types of research paper that students write at the author's school and these differ from other types of papers), what benefits attend working hard at writing a research paper (writing and thinking more clearly and deeply, communicating more clearly and concisely, more fairly evaluating opposing arguments, better affirming what is good and refuting what is not, better influencing others, better cultivating self-control, more faithfully stewarding God-given skills), and what steps are involved in writing a quality theological or literary research paper (understand the assignments, plan ahead, choose your approach, research and write, and revise). This chapter achieves its main value in articulating compelling reasons to invest in the worthwhile process of writing well. It also provides helpful up-front clarity regarding who will most likely find the rest of the book helpful and why.

Chapter 2, "Step 1. Understand the Assignment," directs students to orient their attention to the key requirements of their assignment (topic, word count, and format), to enter the assignment with a mindset geared toward making an academic argument as distinguished from preaching a sermon, and to ask clarifying questions up-front, as needed. Naselli also distinguishes five types of theological papers, which, as an instructor, I find to be helpful distinctions I aspire to be clearer about in future assignment instructions.

Chapter 3, "Step 2. Plan Ahead," exhorts the reader to "prepare far in advance so that you complete your research paper well before the deadline." That type of advice is easy to dismiss in the whirlwind

of real life (especially for busy students), so this practical and motivational chapter consists mostly of seven fairly persuasive arguments for this practice (you'll have to pick up the book to get those).

In chapter 4, "Step 3. Choose Your Approach," Naselli helpfully distinguishes between proving a thesis (deductive approach) and exploring a problem (inductive approach). Telling students *to do* so does not mean they will know *how* to do it—so thankfully, the rest of the chapter provides clarity on the difference between the two. Helpful charts distinguish between *proving a thesis and exploring a problem*, distinguish between *sample deductive theses and inductive research questions*, and contrast *strengths and weaknesses of both approaches*. Achieving this kind of methodological clarity is important; the concepts this chapter covers are critical to getting students productively started down the right path early in the writing process.

Chapter 5, "Step 4. Research and Write," is the heart of the book and the longest chapter. In it, Naselli treats the research and writing process in six components: (1) *Research* (with nine tips), (2) *Organize the Paper* (with four tips), (3) *Develop a Coherent Argument* (with nine tips), (4) *Interact with Contrary Views* (with four tips), (5) *Write Clearly and Concisely* (with seven rules), and (6) *Use Proper Grammar, Syntax, and Format* (with twenty-four rules). Leveraging significant skill gained from world-class training (Naselli credits Layton Talbert and D. A. Carson for teaching him to research and write), prolific professional writing, and extensive experience as a professor of theology, Naselli clearly presents these six components and fifty-seven rules/tips in a chapter worth more than the price of the book.

In chapter 6, "Step 5. Polish the Cannonball," Naselli briefly advances two strategies for the revision process: (1) "Solicit feedback" and (2) "Read your paper aloud to help you refine how you argue and to improve your grammar and style." This crucial step may deserve more development and specificity than was given in the short space devoted to it. However, I believe much of the detailed material students need to be successful in this endeavor is included in chapter 5 (especially in the thirty-one rules provided under components five and six in that chapter). I plan to point this out to students so that they know how to use the rest of the book to give this final step the detailed attention and emphasis it deserves in their personal writing process.

Five substantial appendices augment the value of the book in practical ways. Appendix A deals with plagiarism. Appendix B is a timely, winsome take on the use of artificial intelligence, providing policy wording and explanations the author uses with his own students. Appendix C provides a sample grading rubric. Appendix D provides helpful productivity advice for students (this topic isn't out of place, either, as it essentially expands on chapter 3, "Plan Ahead," by giving detailed advice on how to wisely steward time for research and writing ahead of the last-minute crunch). Appendix E provides two detailed examples of the research and writing process from the author's own recent projects. I found this final inclusion particularly helpful, in that it helped me visualize how to better tackle professional research and writing projects with organization and intentionality.

How to Write a Paper is a practical, accessible, skillfully crafted how-to. In places (for instance, in some asides or footnotes) the book comes across as a bit more informal or personal than I might have expected, but Naselli was clear from the outset that this book was written first with his own students and his own classroom in mind. I am grateful to be welcomed into that space to reap the benefit of

what he has skillfully put together for them. This book's clarity, practicality, and manageable length combine with actionable, specific exhortation to make it a genuinely helpful resource for students pursuing research and writing excellence.

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Schreiner, Patrick. *The Four Senses of Scripture: Learning from Ancient Ways of Reading the Bible.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2026. 234pp. + 31pp. (front matter) + 24pp. (back matter).

Patrick Schreiner is son of famed NT scholar and professor Thomas R. Schreiner. Patrick presently serves as professor of NT and biblical theology and is the director of the residency PhD program at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (MBTS), which has one of the largest PhD in theology enrollments in the world.

The Four Senses of Scripture is a volume dedicated to the "retrieval" of the *quadriga* (14–15). The *quadriga* is a hermeneutic that employs four elements: the literal, allegorical, tropological, and anagogical. The thesis is explicitly stated: "The fourfold approach to interpretation offers a more comprehensive way of reading Scripture than the dominant modern academic approaches do" (7; cf. 229). As a "retrieval" work, the aim is that readers would engage with and follow the hermeneutical model exemplified by Christian medieval interpretation.

Schreiner unpacks his volume in three parts. Part 1 assimilates readers to the need, content, and central hermeneutical influence on the structure of the *quadriga*. Part 2 defines each element of the *quadriga*, shows how it is interconnected with the other elements, and describes its import for biblical study. Part 3 defends the approach in response to objections. Two appendices follow.

Schreiner demonstrates an excellent familiarity with ancient and current literature on the topic. It is especially apparent in the section that briefly traces the history of typology (208). The book is in many ways a reflection of the boom in evangelical academics to push the utilization of so-called ancient hermeneutical methods of interpretation. Theological Interpretation of Scripture (TIS) has come to be the most popular attempt. The *quadriga* (fourfold sense) is a subgenre of TIS. In 2010 Schreiner's alma mater made TIS the focus of its summer edition in volume 14 of *The Southern Baptist Theological Journal* (*SBJT*). Schreiner's work may be viewed as an extension of that stream of thought.

Several inconsistencies are apparent throughout the volume, leading to the conclusion that Schreiner does not prove his thesis. Through a few questionable uses of early church history in chapter 2, Schreiner assumes the antiquity of the *quadriga* and uses it as support for his criticism of an exclusive "grammatical-historical" method. He implies that the "singular" grammatical-historical method is not ancient but the evangelical child of "the historical-critical school" (12). Thus, it is a method that is not truly Christian. He identifies it as lacking "a historical pedigree that goes beyond the last 150 years" (12). He again does not attempt to prove his assertion. The recent scholarship of Paul Hartog in *Discovering Dispensationalism: Tracing the Development of Dispensational Thought from the First to the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Cory M. Marsh and James I. Fazio (El Cajon, CA: SCS Press, 2023) provides evidence contrary to Schreiner's claim. It was published the same year he began writing his book.

A third critique is Schreiner's consistent undermining of (or at least double-talk around) the centrality and necessity of the grammatical-historical hermeneutic: "To reject allegory wholesale is to reject Paul's labeling of his own interpretive practices" (17). He later writes, "The literal sense can stand on its own" (33). Yet his overarching conclusion throughout the volume is that the literal sense cannot stand on its own.

Space prohibits discussion of semiotics in chapter 3. Its purpose is to furnish the reader with the worldview of the medieval mind. In this chapter Schreiner intends to enable readers to make more of biblical metaphors and correlations than are present in the biblical text. Thus, he defends the Platonic character of medieval thinking and argues for what he calls a "participatory" reading of Scripture (199–200).

Chapter 4 is devoted to defining "the literal sense" from a *quadriga*-driven hermeneutic. The central thrust is to view Scripture as a bifurcation between human and divine authorship. The result is that the human author may have intended one meaning when writing a passage, but God ultimately had multiple. Schreiner's view of divine and human authorship is a rejection of the received laws of language and the univocal nature of Scripture. Scripture speaks from a unitary voice because all the words of Scripture are God's words, providing the locus of meaning from within individual passages.

The most serious critique of this volume is its support for "the allegorical sense" (91). Allegorism permeates most of the book. Chapter 5 is devoted to it. Schreiner defines *allegory* as "the Christological sense of Scripture, where we perceive the deeper meaning of the words in conjunction with authorial intent" (92). Schreiner engages in a conflation of terms to an alarming degree in this chapter and throughout the volume in support of the use of the allegorical sense. The terms *typological, allegorical, spiritual, figural,* and *symbolic* are transmuted to mean the same thing (see 31, 92, 96, 97, 117, 118). Schreiner empathizes with identifying allegory as a "Christianized-Platonic sense" and "biblical alchemy" (92).

Schreiner is convinced that the allegorical sense is essential for a faithful hermeneutic: "If any of the four senses is divorced from the others, we starve, pervert, and corrupt meaning" (12). In other words, he essentially asserts that those who do *not* include the allegorical sense in their hermeneutic are irresponsible with Scripture.

All of his demands for the inclusion of an allegorical approach to Scripture come to bear in the exegetical discussions within both chapter 5 and the remaining chapters in part 2. Christ is identified as "the key to the Scriptures" (108). This assertion is made, not as a theological reality that shapes every facet of the canon, but as a reality that supposedly transforms linguistics and grammar from more of a science to more of an art (104).

By identifying Christ in this way Schreiner argues that "Joshua's conquest" is "the victory of Christ" (108). Does this mean that Christ's victory is incomplete as Joshua's was? The queen of Sheba's visit means the same thing as Ephesians 3:6. David and Goliath is not about God's sovereignty (1 Sam 17:47), but about "spiritual combat" (144).

Schreiner's major exegetical failure is his claim that Paul understands the two women of Galatians 4:24 "allegorically" (114): "Paul says these things are to be taken allegorically" (142). Scripture offers no evidence that Paul interpreted allegorically. Schreiner escapes dealing with the lexical issue by opening the preceding paragraph with the assertion, "Semantics aside" (114). He ignores the fact that the active form of the verb can mean "to interpret allegorically," but the passive form means "to be expressed by way of allegory" (MGS, s.v. "ἀλληγορέω"). Paul uses the passive form and thus conveys that he was not interpreting the Genesis account in an allegorical manner but spoke illustratively.

Schreiner then stresses his point: "Paul explicitly names this reading allegory, revealing that our modern definition of typology falls short of capturing what he actually does" (116).

While there is much to commend this volume's explanation of the other three so-called senses, which amount to interpretation and application, one could rightly contend that it is essentially a manual on "how to allegorize Scripture." Schreiner's allegorical approach intentionally permeates the entire volume. Its final chapter is a response to those who oppose allegorizing Scripture. He ultimately concludes that to allegorize Scripture accurately one must learn "to distinguish 'biblical' allegory from 'unbiblical' allegory" (206), since it becomes apparent that the approach is not related to the received laws of language.

Scholars will likely ask the question about guardrails for employing an allegorical reading that prevent an interpreter from venturing into meanings opposite the text. Schreiner's initial answer is: "It is hard to quantify how far is too far" (217). He is convinced that it is unwise "to define allegory on lexicography alone" (213). He even argues that "one ought to be wary of too quickly running to Christological readings" (217). Ultimately, he concludes that "allegory is . . noticing how everything is connected in some way to the Son" (221). Thus, for Schreiner, it seems that all interpretations are right interpretations as long as they find their way to Christ.

Schreiner contends that he is doing something genuinely different, though his reading of Scripture is genetically related to common typological approaches. In this, he is partially correct. He is advocating for something different. His reintroduction of the *quadriga* aims to make something out of the text of Scripture that it does not mean. Such is the most common definition of allegorical interpretation.

This volume is a mid-level academic work. It is probably most useful for a class covering current trends in biblical interpretation. It is not a book that will be useful for modeling a consistent or reliable hermeneutical method. As interesting and novel as the *quadriga* might seem to many Bible readers, the system is loaded with so many qualifications (e.g., its inherent subjectivity) that users of this method will most likely experience a paralysis by analysis when seeking the central meaning of a passage.

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Fisher, Jeffrey A., and Martin I. Klauber, eds. *Pastoral Care in the Protestant Tradition: Essays in Honor of Scott M. Manetsch.* Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2026. 237pp.

The Reformation dramatically changed much in the life of the church and in the lives of individual Christians. The doctrinal framework of justification by faith alone with the resulting adjustment of the place of sanctification (i.e., as the fruit of justification) contributed to a new understanding of the Christian life, as did the doctrine of the priesthood of believers. The authority of Scripture alone, as the formal principle of the Reformation, gave shape to how one should pursue and evaluate the Christian life. The influence of such ideas are the theme of this book.

This work collects essays that treat the Reformation's impact on pastoral care, or as it was traditionally known, the "care of souls." The book is a festschrift for Scott Manetsch of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and author of *Calvin's Company of Pastors: Pastoral Care and the Emerging Reformed Church, 1536–1609,* Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). The contributors to this volume set out to explore and develop the ideas Manetsch examined in his larger work. The result is a revealing and sometimes intriguing series of studies. The epigraph for the book, a quotation from John Calvin on Titus 1:9, aptly captures the spirit of the anthology: "The pastor ought to have two voices: one, for gathering the sheep; and another, for warding off and driving away wolves and thieves."

The book divides into two parts: descriptions of pastoral care in Reformation Europe and the use and application of Scripture in pastoral care in that era. The contributors are a capable group of scholars whose work is uniformly of high quality. Each essay provides some enlightenment on the main topic.

What did pastoral care consist of in the thinking of the Reformers? Amy Nelson Burnett offers part of the answer when she points out how, among the Reformed of Switzerland and central Europe, pastoral care relied on preaching, catechization, and church discipline. Catechization was in fact a special concern in other traditions as well, as Andre Gazal shows in his discussion of pastoral care among Anglicans. Other means of care the authors describe include visitation of the sick and more broadly home visitation in general.

The second part of the book explores how clergy of the Reformation era and their heirs used the Scripture in their pastoral care. Richard Muller examines, for instance, how Matthew Henry used the Book of Psalms for pastoral care. Jeffrey Fisher notes the Reformed use of Isaiah 40–66 as a source of comfort, a most appropriate application of that section of Scripture in line with its theological purpose. Fisher argues that among the Reformed the preaching and teaching of Scripture was a fundamental element of pastoral care in addition to traditional means such as home visitation and church discipline. He cites as evidence the Heidelberg Catechism, a doctrinal work noted for its devotional warmth in laying out the essentials of theology.

One essay that stands out for its unusual approach is Todd Hains on Luther's preaching on Christ's temptation. He shows how Luther shifted from the custom of teaching the passage in preparation for Lent to an exercise of pastoral care for his congregation. Hains's method in this essay catches the

reader's attention by not just describing what Luther did. Instead, he relates how Luther unfolded this passage to the hearer, using Luther's own words along with his own summary.

Criticisms of the book are few and mild. It would have been helpful to have an index, for example, including a Scripture index. But it is difficult to fault what is actually present in the work. The value of the study is not just historical information but the subject's application to the needs of the modern church. The subject of pastoral care enriches fields such as biblical counseling, although the two are not synonymous. Not all contemporary practitioners of pastoral care follow the framework of the biblical-counseling model, and some who practice biblical counseling are not pastors. Still the Protestant heritage of pastoral care from the Reformation provides patterns for the modern church to study and profit from.

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