

# REVIEWS

***The Nature Miracles of Jesus: Problems, Perspectives, and Prospects.*** Edited by Graham H. Twelftree. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2017. xix + 285 pp.

In the preface of this collection of essays, editor Graham Twelftree opens with a sentence that shapes the direction of this volume: “The nature miracles of Jesus are a problem, philosophically, historically, and theologically” (xi). The focus of the volume is a collection of seven miracle stories—Jesus turning water into wine, stilling a storm, feeding large crowds with minimal food, walking on water, cursing a fig tree, directing a large catch of fish, and finding a coin in a fish’s mouth. The major problem with these stories is that they are incredible to the ears of modern audiences and call into question the reliability of the storytellers. This, in turn, has significant implications for historical Jesus research, and by extension, the church’s understanding of Jesus. With this volume Twelftree seeks to begin a conversation that may help bring some consensus to our understanding of these stories.

Twelftree structures the volume around the alliterative subtitle of the book. The opening section, “Problems,” consists of one chapter in which Twelftree highlights certain issues in the study of these stories. He begins with a brief treatment of the label “nature miracles,” surveying the biblical language used to describe these events and musing on whether the label is useful for describing them before settling on its usage in the volume. The bulk of the chapter is devoted to a historical overview of the study of these stories, paying particular attention to the question of the perceived historicity of these miracles. He observes that up to the time of the scientific study of the Gospels (Twelftree begins his discussion of this era with Reimarus), the historical veracity of these events in Jesus’ life was simply assumed. With the “scientific era,” as Twelftree calls it, the historical reliability of the nature miracles was largely rejected, leading to the current state of the question in which scholars exhibit a wide array of positions from acceptance of the

historicity of these stories to extreme skepticism. The major section of the book, “Perspectives,” consists of a representation of current positions of the historical reliability of the nature miracle stories and their impact on historical Jesus research.

The “Perspectives” section opens (ch. 2) with an essay by Craig Keener who argues for the historicity of the nature miracles, appealing to other reliable information in the Gospels in which Jesus is portrayed as a wonder worker as support for considering the reliability of the nature miracle stories. Moreover, employing the criterion of analogy, Keener points to his larger work on miracles (*Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011]) to demonstrate that the Gospel accounts have analogies in the present. In his estimation, only a predisposition against the possibility of miracles militates against accepting the historicity of the nature miracle stories. In chapter 3, Eric Eve follows with the perspective that the nature miracles may have originated in historical events in Jesus’ life (though some stories may simply be myth), but over time these kernels were developed into their canonical forms through a process that involved shaping via Old Testament themes and the values of early Christian communities. In chapter 4, James Crossley argues that historical investigation of miracle accounts lies beyond the scope of the historical-critical enterprise, in large measure due to a growing sentiment that the criteria of historicity are ill-suited to assessing whether supernatural acts may have actually occurred. Crossley’s tack is to view the nature miracles as pure myth whose only real historical value is to confirm that early Christians believed miracles were possible.

In the fifth chapter, Ruben Zimmermann offers a literary-hermeneutical approach to the nature miracles that distinguishes between the discourse and the story levels of a narrative. Whereas the nature miracles are depicted as factual events at the discourse level, the accounts describe something quite beyond the experience of the readers, depicting at the story level something more akin to a fictive genre. Zimmermann argues that the tension between the discourse and story levels was felt by the ancient audiences and should be maintained today for its value in communal storytelling.

Chapters 6 and 7 are philosophical in nature, taking as their points of departure Hume's rejection of miracles as violations of the laws of nature. Michael Levine (ch. 6) argues that the possibility of miracles lies less in consideration of natural laws than in the nature of causation. After examining both regularity and necessitarian accounts of causation, Levine provides a detailed analysis of the "logical entailment" theory of causation to show, on the one hand, that it is not sufficiently "loose" to allow for the possibility of miracles, but on the other hand, adherence to it entangles one with several implausible ontological commitments. In chapter 7, Timothy McGrew shows that the collapse of Hume's project has provided for a reconsideration of the possibility of miracles, exemplified in the work of such philosophers of science as Richard Swinburne who argue that given the high probability of some bare form of theism there is no upper limit on the plausibility of such doctrines as miracles, especially in light of modern accounts of miracles.

In the final chapter of the section (ch. 8), Scot McKnight makes a radical departure from the tenor of the preceding chapters in arguing that not only is historical investigation severely limited in what it can accomplish in terms of establishing the historical occurrence of the nature miracles, but it is destructive to the church's life and faith in that it subordinates creedal and canonical portrayals of Jesus to those constructed via historical criticism, which are intrinsically skeptical. McKnight argues for a "radical separationism" between the church's plain reading of the Gospels and historical enquiry to nurture the church's faith.

The volume's final section, "Prospects," includes chapters in which the volume's contributors engage each other's essays (ch. 9) and in which Twelftree summarizes what has gone before and argues for a direction forward that entails an interdisciplinary approach that values both the church's commitments and the need for historical investigation into the nature miracles (ch. 10).

Assessing the value of a collection such as this requires an engagement with each essay. Space restrictions preclude that here, but thankfully, Twelftree has accomplished something akin to this by allowing the contributors to engage each other. So a more general assessment is offered here. The value of the volume is distilled

succinctly in the second sentence of the preface to the book. After noting that the nature miracles pose certain problems for interpreters, Twelftree states: “Yet, surprisingly, this is the first book dedicated to these miracle stories” (xi). In this light, the volume performs a needed service by bringing this scholarly lacuna to the fore. Three features are noteworthy. First, Twelftree’s survey of the reception of these stories is a succinct primer that illustrates not only the historical perspectives of the historicity of these accounts, but also just why little attention has been paid to these specific stories. Up to the scientific era, their historicity was assumed; from that point forward, their implausibility was assumed. This survey is a sort of microcosm of the enterprise of historical Jesus research. Second, Twelftree is to be commended for assembling such a broad representation of perspectives on the topic. In a manageable volume, readers will be exposed to the broad variety of perspectives current in scholarship today. Third, the chapter in which contributors engage each other helps readers to identify points of contention between the positions that may not be apparent as the essays are read in sequence. This chapter also illustrates how irenic scholarly engagement may proceed even in light of substantial disagreement.

Perhaps *The Nature Miracles of Jesus* will ignite the kind of interest in these stories that Twelftree desires to occur. If this is indeed the first volume dedicated specifically to these stories, it is a good introduction to the kinds of considerations that may characterize future discussion.

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**The Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ:  
Deification of Jesus in Early Christian Discourse.** By  
David K. Bernard. Blandford Forum, Dorset, England:  
Deo, 2016. ix + 280 pp.

The biography of Fuller Seminary professor, George Eldon Ladd, is cleverly titled *A Place at the Table*. In the mid-twentieth century, Ladd

sought to rehabilitate the flagging image of evangelical thought in hopes of joining mainstream Protestant academia.

A similar desire seems to lie behind David K. Bernard's *The Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ*. Bernard is the general superintendent of the United Pentecostal Church International and the most prolific author of the Oneness (Apostolic) Pentecostal movement. Unlike previous apologetic works centering completely on Oneness Pentecostal distinctives — the absolute unity of God fully incarnate in Jesus Christ and the Acts 2:38 “plan of salvation” — this work engages the larger academic world on its own terms and uses the tested methodology of socio-rhetorical criticism to investigate primitive Christology and offer contributions to this study from the Oneness perspective.

Bernard's study, a revision of his University of South Africa doctoral thesis, centers on the exegesis of 2 Corinthians 3:16–4:6, extending the arguments of the “early high Christology club” (EHCC) — scholars like Martin Hengel, Larry Hurtado, Richard Bauckham, and James D. G. Dunn — who hold that the earliest Christians embraced the full divinity of Jesus from the earliest post-Easter period.

Bernard begins with a lively walk-through of the views of the EHCC, interacting with their evidence, analyzing their arguments, and selectively choosing among their conclusions. Bernard seems most impressed with Hurtado's isolation of the “language of divinity” applied to Jesus in the devotional (prayer and worship) life of the earliest church. He also seems troubled, but intrigued by the questions James Dunn raises about the development of ideas of incarnation and the parting of the ways of the Jews and Christians. (This is exactly the same way I read these writings.)

Next, Bernard takes an extensive look at monotheism in Second Temple Judaism and Hellenistic culture, seeking to identify the social location of Pauline Christianity. He builds his exegetical framework on the “language of deification,” ascribing deity to Jesus in the New Testament writings — first in the broad terms of Second Temple Judaism, then in much greater detail in an exhaustive journey through each passage in the Corinthian correspondence that affirms or alludes to the deity of Jesus.

Then, Bernard moves on to a detailed exegesis of 2 Corinthians 3:16–4:6. To his credit, he offers a balanced “big picture” exegesis, grasping the entire meaning of the passage and emphasizing social location and rhetorical devices, while not succumbing to the temptation of saturating every word of the passage with impossibly deep meaning. Bernard concludes this work by “exploring the textures” – social and ideological — that his study has uncovered about Paul’s distinctive Christology and soteriology against the backdrop of Jewish monotheism.

Bernard’s work is lively and well-written, a major accomplishment given the confines of the dissertation format. He engages wide ranging scholarship — including opposing viewpoints, specifically the “history of religions” school of Bousset. He advances his unique doctrinal insights regarding the divinity and humanity of Christ as the key to interpreting biblical language within a growing consensus of early high Christology and bases his findings on the respected socio-rhetorical methodology of Vernon K. Robbins and others. In short, Bernard has earned a place at the table of evangelical theology despite his minority views.

I do have two criticisms and one question.

First, Bernard oversells Oneness Pentecostal theology as a “marginal voice” in the Western-dominated theological discussion and appeals to a postmodern hermeneutic that looks to non-Western expressions of Christianity for a minority corrective voice. But classical Pentecostal theology (including its Oneness offshoot) is thoroughly Western. While Pentecostal music and worship may draw from African and African-American roots, its theology derives from the Wesleyan and Reformed traditions united with revivalism, millennialism, restorationism, and holiness experiences beyond conversion. Oneness Pentecostalism deserves a hearing among evangelical theologians, but not because of its non-Western roots.

Second, Bernard’s “north star” is David Reed’s now sacrosanct observation that Oneness Pentecostalism is an “expression of Jewish Christian theology” — a statement based on Jean Daniélou’s thoroughly dated research written before the full impact of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Nag Hammadi texts on study of Second Temple Judaism. Moreover, Daniélou’s study predates Ed Sanders’ “rediscovery” of Second Temple

Judaism as a “religion of grace” over the long-held caricature of Judaism as a “religion of works.” Sanders ushered in the “new perspective on Paul” and the ongoing “Paul within Judaism” scholarship. I am not saying that Reed’s insight is wrong, but it needs to be updated in light of the advances in scholarship — perhaps a task for David Bernard in the near future.

Finally, I have a question — an honest and sincere question — regarding Oneness Pentecostal Christology. Bernard consistently appeals to what I have labeled elsewhere (in the absence of a better term) the “Father-Son” Christology, a view that explains the biblical distinction between God and Jesus (the Father and the Son) in terms of the dual nature of Christ. God (the Father) refers to the transcendence of God; Jesus (Christ or Son) refers to the humanity of Jesus, the immanence of God incarnate in human form. (In sticky exegetical situations, Oneness Pentecostals sometimes equivocate as to whether the term “Son” or Jesus refers to the incarnate God or just the human side of the incarnation.)

Bernard sees this Christology as Hebraic —reflecting the Old Testament monotheism — while seeing other views (especially Nicene-Constantinople Trinitarianism) as radical restatements of early Christian thought in Greek philosophical categories at the expense of a truly Jewish monotheism. And herein lies my question.

Does not the Father-Son Christology lean heavily on the language of the Chalcedonian Creed? Two natures, one person. Unconfused, but inseparable with the properties of each nature being preserved. It seems special pleading to take opposing ideas as “the acute Hellenization of Christianity” when one can just as easily see this specific version of Oneness theology rising from similar categories. Rooting theology in a selective reading of the Chalcedonian Creed does not seem any less Hellenistic than the philosophical speculation of the Cappadocian fathers and Nicene-Constantinople Creed.

Having said all this, David Bernard’s *The Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ* stands as a welcome first foray into evangelical scholarship by a Oneness Pentecostal thinker. Bernard has served his doctrinal position and denominational constituents well. Welcome to a place at the table.

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***The Truth About Grace: Spirit-Empowered Perspectives.***

Edited by Vinson Synan. Foreword by William M.

Wilson. Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2018. xv + 272 pp.

Throughout church history, no issue has proven more contentious than the relationship between grace and law, between what God gives and what God demands. In recent years, the question has emerged again in various facets of what critics have called the “hyper-grace” movement. Although not monolithic, the movement is characterized by a pronounced emphasis on grace and correspondingly, it is thought, a neglect bordering on denial of the proper place of law or holiness in the Christian life.

Empowered21, a global relational network serving the more than six hundred million Spirit-empowered believers around the world, commissioned scholars to present papers on grace from historical and theological perspectives. Their contributions have been edited by Vinson Synan, the leading historian of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements. This useful volume evinces some of the breadth of Spirit-empowered Christianity. Its seventeen articles represent Wesleyan, Reformed, Anglican, Lutheran, Pentecostal, and Charismatic perspectives, written by persons from Latin America, Italy, the United Kingdom, Ireland, India, Singapore, Jamaica, and the United States.

David Moore finds pastoral and theological insight regarding these matters in a sermon by Jack Hayford, delivered after the suicide of a worship leader. Hayford places a firm emphasis on grace in asserting that humans do not possess the power to initiate their salvation or to perpetuate it by their works. It is all grounded in the grace of God extended in the Cross of Christ. Yet a delicate balance must be maintained between the utter sufficiency of Christ’s atoning work and the responsibility of the individual to remain in a state of grace. A single act of sin—even suicide—or an ongoing struggle with a particular sin will not deprive one of salvation. Nevertheless, if a believer chooses a pathway of ongoing sinning in a spirit of indifference, salvation can be lost.



Michael Brown evaluates the claim that all sins—past, present and future—are already forgiven in Christ. Such a doctrine, he concludes, can lead to reckless, ungodly living. His position is that when the sinner turns in faith and repentance to Christ, only those sins committed up to that point are forgiven. All future sins need to be confessed and sincerely repented of for there to be forgiveness. Yet Brown is not denying eternal security. A believer who sins does not become unsaved, but needs to “apply the blood of Jesus” to be cleansed once more. This is the “forgiveness of relationship,” not the “forgiveness of salvation.”

In a cogently argued biblical and theological analysis of the hyper-grace movement, Trevor Grizzle finds an unbalanced reaction to legalistic religion. Its proponents trace legalism to Luther and Calvin, who promulgated rigid rules of conduct for the Christian life. This reviewer might respond that the fundamental tenor of their respective theologies was anything but legalistic. Luther’s *simul iustus et peccator* embodied a robust affirmation that the Christian who struggles with sin is nonetheless justified in Christ. Calvin insisted that divine forgiveness precedes repentance and thus the Christian life, although beset at times by sin, is an eternally secure life in Christ.

Grizzle notes the claim of some hyper-grace teachers that the Old Testament was a religion of law, given to convict individuals of sin. But Jesus came to redeem sinners from the law, to free them to live under grace. Therefore, the law is unnecessary for the Christian life. Grizzle argues persuasively that law and grace are not, in fact, antinomies, that Jesus died to fulfill rather than abolish the law. Law is, he says, “the gift of grace” and thus a positive guide for the Christian life.

In the teaching of John Wesley, Henry Knight III finds a balanced presentation of the Christian life. While Wesley concurs with Calvin’s and Luther’s affirmation of justification by grace through faith, he further insists that God’s grace, enacted through the Holy Spirit, is fundamentally transformative, restoring the individual to the original “divine nature,” or image, which Adam possessed. This process of sanctification requires the cooperation of human free will with grace.

Joseph Prince, senior pastor of New Creation Church in Singapore, considered by many as a major voice of the hyper-grace movement, articulates his own position in the final contribution to this volume. Distinguishing between an old covenant of law and a new covenant of grace, Prince contends that, under the former, “God demands righteousness from sinfully bankrupt man,” but under the latter, “God provides righteousness as a gift.” Therefore, the Christian lives, not under law, but under grace.

Nevertheless, any purported grace that frees one to engage in a licentious lifestyle is a “counterfeit grace.” A person who is truly living under grace is living a holy life. “Under grace, when we experience the love of our Lord Jesus, we will end up fulfilling the law!” Prince insists. “Under true grace, we will end up being holy. Grace produces true holiness! . . . When the love of Jesus is in us, we can’t help but fulfill the law . . . . We lose the desire to commit adultery, to murder, to bear false witness, or to covet.”

Prince’s position on this matter accords with Calvin, who claimed that, while the sinner is put right with God *sola gratia*, through no work of his own, but solely by the unconditional grace of God, that sinner, once touched by the grace of God, will live a transformed life. In fact, a holy life is a “sign of election.” In Wesley’s day, some preachers severely distorted Calvin’s teaching and claimed that grace meant that it did not matter how they lived. In response, Wesley engaged in a robust insistence that sanctification is, in fact, a necessary qualification for heaven.

A volume such as this, addressing an issue of pressing significance for the church today, comprising such a diverse collection of scholars, all of them Spirit-empowered, is most welcome. It seems to this reviewer that such breadth embodies beautifully the wide-ranging, ecumenical, Spirit-empowered interchange that Oral Roberts envisioned for the university he founded.

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***Women in Pentecostal and Charismatic Ministry:  
Informing a Dialogue on Gender, Church, and Ministry.***

Edited by Margaret English de Alminana and Lois E. Olena. *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies*, 21. Leiden: Brill, 2017. xxii + 410 pp.

Editors Margaret English de Alminana and Lois E. Olena have gathered an outstanding selection of authors from various backgrounds to tackle multiple areas of a timely, but, until recently, often neglected topic. Alminana, Associate Professor at Southeastern University, and Olena, Associate Professor of Theology and Jewish Studies at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, certainly have first-hand experience of the cultures and situations their text addresses, as do the other authors. Their goal is to unpack the on-going struggle for female agency and voice in the church and to address the theological and cultural challenges women face within the androcentric Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement. By doing so, they hope to encourage a new way of thinking about the contributions and struggles of women in the movement. Each author reflects on the question, “How have women responded to a religious context that has depended upon their gifts yet, at the same time, has limited their voices and perspectives?” Their self-reflective approach offers critique of the movement and individuals where applicable, correction where necessary, and affirmation and praise where due.

The book is divided into four sections. The first deals with the biblical and historical roots of women’s role in leadership as seen through a Pentecostal lens. Melissa Archer, by examining New Testament texts with a Pentecostal hermeneutic, demonstrates support for women in all levels of ecclesial leadership, while Mimi Haddad contends that the Old Testament texts support an egalitarian way of thinking. Zachary Tackett surveys the role of women preachers within American Pentecostalism and finds that egalitarianism, based on an eschatological theology of the Spirit, although promised in the early years of the movement, was not truly carried out in praxis and was lost as the movement institutionalized.

Section two examines ministries of women who left a legacy within the movement. By investigating the experiences of Florence Crawford, Alminana demonstrates how the egalitarian ethos of early Pentecostalism was quickly abandoned when men were available and willing to continue the work begun by women, and that Crawford's true legacy has never been properly acknowledged. Jennifer Miskov presents Carrie Judd Montgomery as a woman who chose to work within patriarchal structures, and Amy Artman describes Kathryn Kuhlman as a powerful woman who created an extensive Christian media sphere yet failed to overtly challenge patriarchal structures or encourage other women to do so. Finally, Kate Bowler explores the complex world of the wives of prosperity preachers. Although at times living in the shadow of their famous husbands, these women were often the backbone of their ministries, and many came to establish their own authoritative positions after their husbands' passing.

Section three focuses on the work of women within the global Pentecostal movement. Denise Austin and Jacqueline Grey outline the significant roles women have played in the development of Australian Pentecostalism as influential, resilient, courageous, and creative leaders, teachers, and missionaries, while Linda Ambrose details the public life of Bernice Gerard, who not only challenged the boundaries placed on women but also advanced ecumenism within Pentecostal circles. Olena highlights the concept of the "Say Hello," ministry begun by Lynda Hausfeld, which uses hospitality as a means of engaging Muslim women throughout the world. Lastly, Beth Grant leads her readers in a discussion of the commodification and devaluation of women through pornography and sex trafficking, and offers a theology that establishes the value of female children and women based on their creation in the divine image.

Finally, section four addresses concerns unique to women in leadership positions within the movement. Loralie Crabtree and Joy Qualls present church planting as a viable, and in some ways, preferential option for women desiring leadership positions. Estrela Alexander uses liberation theology to explore how the church might respond appropriately to the struggles of women and other marginalized people within present Pentecostal-Charismatic ecclesial structures.

Next, Stephanie Nance and Ava Oleson flesh out a possible theology of co-gender ministry. Peter Althouse then closes with an analysis of the Christian healing ministry in terms of feminist and gender studies.

An outstanding feature of this collection is the editor's notes that precede each essay. Although Alminana has provided a thorough introduction to the text in its entirety, each chapter opens with an introduction that offers background information as well as the thesis and methodology of the essay. Rather than leaving the reader feeling as though there is no reason to read further, the introductions are enticing, and the insight astute. Readers are drawn in even before they have begun to read.

With such a variety of topics, it is difficult to imagine that anything has been left uncovered. Yet, the text has left me wondering about the voices of Latino, Asian, and Native American women in the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement. However, the editors do qualify in the introduction that the study is intended to be approached through a North American lens, with most of the authors being North American. Missing also are the voices of the women in the pew, who make up a large percentage of the movement, but whose voices are rarely heard. Perhaps there is no more marginalized group than this. However, this is what a good book does; it carries the reader's thoughts beyond the scope of the current text.

This book would benefit anyone wanting to gain a clearer understanding of the state of women in the Pentecostal-Charismatic realm. While ideal for university or seminary students, it should be of interest to clergy and laity as well, so that they might better understand the ongoing plight of women within the church. Pentecostal-Charismatic women will certainly encounter accounts that resonate with their own experiences. Alminana posits that the narrative of women in the Pentecostal-Charismatic story contains significant gaps, and she and Olena set out in this text to fill those gaps. Their efforts are most definitely successful.

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***The Split God: Pentecostalism and Critical Theory.*** By Nimi Wariboko. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2018. ix + 239 pp.

In *The Split God*, Nimi Wariboko treads where few dare by bringing Pentecostal thought into dialogue with critical theorists and continental philosophers, including Slavoj Žižek, Jacques Lacan, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Giorgio Agamben. Wariboko considers how these influential scholars can facilitate innovative reflection on Pentecostalism. Instead of employing academic Pentecostal theology, though, he presents case studies from everyday African Pentecostalism, situating the conversation around grassroots stories and experiences. In his analysis, Wariboko identifies four “splits” within everyday Pentecostal practice: the ontological split in the divine nature, preventing completeness in God; the split that creates incompleteness in existence; the split in the subjectivity of the Pentecostal believer, which is the divide “between the desires and nomos of this world and the spiritual world he or she hopes to inherit,” and the split between the noumenal and the phenomenal in the Pentecostal worldview (xv).

To begin, Wariboko detects that lived-out Pentecostalism embraces a split God, making it “radical and nonorthodox” (xii). This unique feature, however, provides an advantageous position to engage with contemporary philosophy. Žižek, for example, challenges Christianity, arguing that “the ‘death of God’ compels human beings to face reality as an internally inconsistent and incomplete whole” (3). Yet Wariboko postulates that Pentecostalism overcomes this challenge. After all, its theology emerges out of daily social practices that directly reflect the “cracks and splits” inherent within reality as well as the split within God’s ontological nature. The divine is split, not whole, because God is always in relation with humanity through self-limitation. Because constantly relating, God is fluid and, in a sense, emerges from this relationship. Thus, Wariboko contends that Pentecostal theology fundamentally understands reality as inconsistent and incomplete. It is open to manifestations of the “expected unexpected” within the created order.

Wariboko also uses the day of Pentecost to argue that splits are basic to the nature of Pentecostal thought. Here he relates the expression of tongues to Lacan’s triad of imaginary, symbolic, and real. Pentecost brings together people from disparate places and languages, but it also creates divisions. Most notably, Pentecost conveys the split or divide within the Real—in this case God as “ontologically open”—as well as the divine-human divide, resulting from the ineffability of God’s essence. Wariboko argues that Pentecostals live with the gaps of the noumenal and

phenomenal realms, realizing that they cannot be entirely closed, while also attempting to pull back the veil of ignorance that separates the two.

Additionally, Wariboko acknowledges the influence of capitalism upon Pentecostal thought and practice. He claims, “The antifragility of late capitalism (finance capital) comes at the expense of the fragility of ethical citizens” (119). Pentecostals are not immune from these effects. They have been wooed and ensnared by capitalism, as evidenced in the rise of the prosperity gospel in the Global South and the struggles of immigrants in the West. To demonstrate, Wariboko studies African Pentecostal immigrants in New York City who view economics as both a physical and spiritual battle; accordingly, he argues that Pentecostal spirituality and worship may offer a way to resist capitalistic logic.

For Wariboko, worship as pure means is not directed toward an end; it is a “pure modality without end” (134). When worship attempts to serve a purpose, it becomes bastardized as a commodity. However, worship that is communion with the Holy Spirit lacks predetermined goals. It is an act of play whereby we are freed from the grasp of capitalism. We cannot attain to such worship intentionally and directly; instead, it must develop out of the failures of ordinary worship.

Finally, Wariboko argues that academic Pentecostal theology falls short in addressing the grassroots dimensions of its movement. In part, this deficiency stems from the focus of Pentecostal theology upon global and macro issues. Consequently, Wariboko proposes that theology must also be done from below, as it is lived out—what he calls microtheology. Wariboko examines prayer in Western Africa as well as practices adopted from African traditional religions to demonstrate how microtheology can “foster moral solidarity and trust” (193) across social contexts. For him, a robust theology must engage texts of various forms, including the “texts” of daily Pentecostal existence.

Admittedly, while reading *The Split God*, I sometimes failed to follow the connections of Wariboko’s arguments. Throughout the text he provided limited context for the arguments he employed from the various philosophers. I wonder whether additional context would have fleshed-out these arguments more effectively. However, I found Wariboko’s chapters on capitalism and worship as pure means to be quite provocative. I agree that authentic worship functions to free us from the grip of capitalism, but in my opinion, it must also be accompanied by political and social action. I predict Wariboko would agree, but his book predominantly omits these approaches. I would appreciate reading his reflections on social justice activism, especially what grassroots Pentecostalism can offer.

Concerning worship as pure means, I agree that it is the ideal form of worship, but question whether it is truly obtainable or merely theoretical. Is it more accurate to suggest that such a pure form of worship is the-out-there-encounter that we touch at moments, but always only fleetingly? Moreover, Wariboko argues that this kind of worship resists seeking ends, but at the same time, maintains that it is an encounter with the Spirit. Yet is this not an end in itself? Given human nature, can we completely free ourselves from relationships of exchange? Furthermore, are we able to remove ourselves from the personal and social attributes that hinder such worship? I contend that these characteristics, even when depraved, are what constitute us as persons and, thus, indispensable.

*The Split God* is certain to arouse discussion within Pentecostal circles and, on several points, will likely split scholars along conservative and progressive lines. For example, Wariboko's ontological claims about God possess strong resemblances to process theology and will probably find resistance among traditionally-leaning theologians. These contentious points, though, should not distract scholars from engaging Wariboko's arguments *in toto*. In my opinion, Wariboko's call to embrace microtheology is merited, especially given the diversity of the global Pentecostal movement and its embodied practices. Solely painting Pentecostalism with broad brush strokes will not suffice for effective theological reflection in the twenty-first century. Both macro and micro theological approaches are needed.

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***A Diagram of Fire: Miracles and Variation in an American Charismatic Movement.*** By Jon Bialecki. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017. 263 pp.

In *A Diagram of Fire*, Jon Bialecki conducts an ethnographic study of the Vineyard, a leading North American charismatic group founded by John Wimber. As an anthropologist, Bialecki is interested in using secular anthropology to explore the Vineyard churches and compare them to other traditional Pentecostal and evangelical Christianities. His central thesis argues that the modalities of Vineyard's spirituality provide the necessary mechanism by which normative elements and variation combine to define the movement. Bialecki employs Gilles



Deleuze's concept of a "diagram" to illustrate the ways that variations within the Vineyard modalities serve simultaneously to constrain and allow novelty within the ethos of the movement.

Bailecki does an excellent job of reading the culture of Vineyard through the lens of a secular ethnographer without particularly engaging the validity of its distinctive religious claims. Instead, he adeptly identifies the dynamics of spirituality, practices, church size, and challenges that Vineyard culture has created. Because I am not a trained anthropologist, I found parts of his analysis difficult to follow. Yet his observations about the various beliefs, practices, and nuances of charismatic spirituality make it an enjoyable, albeit challenging, read.

In the Introduction, Bialecki lays out the landscape of the dilemma of anthropological studies of religion. He challenges the traditional idea that Christianity is universally "plastic" in the ways that it normalizes and orders itself. He recognizes that groups that welcome the various modalities of the Holy Spirit, such as the Pentecostal-Charismatic, in general, and Vineyard, in particular, are able to maintain a sense of stability while at the same time allowing for novelty. This ability is summed up in the concept of the "miracle." He states, "This book will suggest that the miracle is both the mechanism through which novelty is produced and the sieve used to strain and order novelty" (19). Though often weighted with methodological discussions, his introduction gives the sense of what he is trying to do and just enough of a historical picture of the group he is engaging.

In Chapters One and Two, Bialecki engages the aesthetics of a typical Vineyard worship service. He notes that Vineyard worship is characterized by various egalitarian aspects in which "everybody gets to play," including such features as casual dress, participatory worship, and democratized access to the Holy Spirit and the gifts. Particularly insightful are his observations about the "commodity aesthetics" of worship, in which the "commercially crafted" worship music, shared egalitarian practices, and overall sense of "too muchness" in worship drive people to both tears and joy. He further explores the tensions between organization and novelty expressed in governance structures, stewardship models, and even the marketing practices (including a detailed analysis of the fonts used!). Yet, for him, the purpose of such

commodities is more about encouraging adherence to identity with the organization than any sort of desire for profit (56).

In Chapter Three, Bialecki outlines his theory of Vineyard practices as a “diagram of fire.” What he means is that inherent in Vineyard’s charismatic theology are particular conflicting forces that provide both normative and disruptive potentialities in relation to traditional modes of Christianity. As opposed to traditional forms of Christianity that value order, the emphasis placed on the Holy Spirit allows for welcome disruptions to normative practices by introducing “surprise” elements such as God speaking or miracles taking place. These novel experiences create an environment that not only allows for the potential for change in the lives of believers, but encourages it. In Chapter Four, he demonstrates this through the common Vineyard practice of “hearing God’s voice.” Because divine communication is by nature external in origin, it typifies charismatic diagram. Hearing God’s voice can be both an active pursuit, as in the case of one seeking for answers in prayer, and a passive surprise, as in the surprise occurrences of the gift of prophecy (95–97). In this way, divine communication has the potential to be both according to the person’s will and contrary to it, all of which stimulates change.

In Chapter Five, the author details his experience as an uninitiated participant in Vineyard small groups, the place where much of the pedagogy pertaining to the diagram of the novel and the miracle takes place. It is particularly interesting to read his account of his experience of “receiving prayer” in these groups, noting the “self-conscious” feelings, awareness of the bodily sensations from tactile touch and other physical experiences of God’s presence (115). Through these experiences, he identified three differences in “language ideology” between classical Pentecostal and Vineyard modalities of God speaking: archaic versus contemporary grammar, ventriloquist versus elaborator, repetition and biblical language versus conversational speech events (124–126). This analysis leads him to identify a distinctive Vineyard model of divine speech pattern: invitation to speak, the description of the evidence of the speech, the gloss or unpacking of that image, and the qualification of the speech as subject to testing. In Chapters Six and Seven, he discusses how other practices such as speaking in

tongues, healing, and demonic deliverance also constitute attributes of the diagram of fire that serve to typify Vineyard spirituality. After these perceptive reflections, he concludes with some heavy anthropological reflections about how the Vineyard diagram informs the current understanding of religion.

Jon Bialecki has offered the Pentecostal-Charismatic community a gift in this study. His outsider perspective, offered with genuine curiosity and without judgment, gives those of us on the inside some new language and new trajectories by which to understand and evaluate our own tradition. This at times heady and often personally engaging study will make you think, reflect, and smile. Its value goes far beyond those interested in the Vineyard movement. I recommend it to anyone interested in exploring the modalities of charismatic spirituality particularly from a social science perspective.

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***New Ways of Being Pentecostal in Latin America.***

Edited by Martin Lindhardt. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016. vii + 249 pp.

Pentecostals and charismatics in Latin America are no longer neophytes in the region. The Spirit-empowered movement, which has demonstrated its staying power with Pentecostalism's over-a-century-long history and the Charismatic Movement's five decades, is more than an opiate to ease suffering or an escape from Latin American reality, although Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity has indeed empowered the poor and proven itself an option for the masses. As the movement has developed over time, however, significant changes in language, culture, theology, and demographics, to mention a few, have occurred. In this monograph, *New Ways of Being Pentecostal in Latin America*, Martin Lindhardt and the other social scientists point to this transformation in Latin American Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement over time.

In this volume Lindhardt highlights the religious pluralism and competition on the Latin American continent that has resulted in the diversification of Pentecostal Christianity. Because Pentecostals and charismatic Catholics have chosen to express their faith differently, divergent practices have emerged. While affirming earlier research as to the causes of the movement's growth and expansion in Latin America, the case studies in Lindhardt's monograph have a different aim and focus. The authors observe the various processes of religious transformation and how these have led Latin Americans to new ways of being Pentecostal. Such an undertaking hinges on a careful analysis of data and interpretation of the emerging shift in Latin American Pentecostalism.

Several of the developments identified in the monograph spring from (1) the tension between the "deinstitutionalization of Pentecostal religious life and the negotiation of individual Pentecostal identities," (2) the "increasing pluralization" of Pentecostal faith communities and "religious competition," (3) the emergence of "new generations of Pentecostals," and (4) an increasing engagement of Pentecostals in politics and civic affairs along with "partial revisions of classical church-world dualism" (viii–xi). Although the dozen contributors are social science experts (sociologists, anthropologists, and political scientists) of Latin America, only one is Latin American (Brazilian), two are North American, and the majority are European. More representation from the South would have given the work a more balanced view and voice from and for Latin America.

The book is comprised of eleven chapters along with an introduction by the editor Lindhardt and an afterword by David and Bernice Martin. The first part (chs. 1–5) makes the case for the effects pluralization and the religious economy have had on Latin American Pentecostalism. Andrew Chestnut provides a panoramic view of the region in chapter 1, while Stephen Hunt surveys the competition between Pentecostalism and Catholicism in Brazil. Jakob Egeris Thorsen presents the Pentecostalization of Catholicism in Guatemala, Lindhardt studies the mobility among the various Pentecostal churches in Chile, and Toomas Gross makes the case for religious competition in southern Mexico.

The next four chapters (6–9) highlight the surge of new generations of Latin American Pentecostals. George St. Clair in chapter 6 examines an established and traditional Brazilian Pentecostal group's transmission and reception of Pentecostalism by new generations. Lindhardt follows with a study of the reinterpretation of Chilean Pentecostalism as a youth religion, while Evguenia Fediakova observes how second-, third-, or fourth-generation Pentecostals in Chile have found new methods of practicing their faith. Then Henri Gooren compares and contrasts political engagement by one of the most Pentecostalized countries in South America (Chile) with one of the least Pentecostalized (Paraguay).

The final two chapters (10–11) explore social and political involvement in Guatemala and El Salvador (Virginia Garrard-Burnett) and Brazil (Maria das Dores Campos Machado). As stated in Lindhardt's introduction, "Taken together, the chapters comprehensively illustrate how Pentecostalism has transformed Latin America's religious field (including Catholicism) within recent decades and how it has itself been transformed along the way" (xxvii).

According to Lindhardt, several of the developments in the Spirit-empowered movement in Latin America presented by the authors of *New Ways of Being Pentecostal in Latin America* have been largely overlooked in Pentecostal-Charismatic scholarship (64). One example is the case of shifting church allegiances, which represents a notable change in Chilean Pentecostalism; yet, according to the ethnographical analysis in chapter 4, it is a phenomenon unobserved by scholars of the movement. Chileans and Latin Americans not only join Pentecostal churches but also frequently leave them either to join a different Pentecostal church or to return to secular or Catholic life. Moreover, fluidity in church allegiance and the aggressive rivalry between Pentecostal groups are "understudied phenomena" (67). Scholars apparently know why Latin Americans choose to become Pentecostal, but do not understand why they frequently switch membership from one Pentecostal group to another.

Studies on Pentecostalism in various parts of the world are more readily available today than in the past since the movement's globalization has captured scholars' attention. Though readers may initially be intrigued by the book's ontological title, the academic rigor

of the studies quickly attracts them to the scholarship on social mobility and the development of pluralism. Peter Berger's theory of the market metaphor from the 1960s is positively utilized by some of the scholars in *New Ways of Being Pentecostal in Latin America* to describe the qualities of the Pentecostal Movement that explain its expansion. Yet, these same scholars are cautious in applying the market metaphor too literally as they strive to avoid oversimplification. Beyond stating the obvious—that Latin American Pentecostalism is a growth phenomenon as earlier research has concluded—this book assesses important transformations of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Latin America in recent years, thereby helping to advance the study of global Pentecostalism and increasing awareness of the changes the movement has undergone in recent decades.

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***The Old Testament in Theology and Teaching: Essays in Honor of Kay Fountain.*** Edited by Teresa Chai and Dave Johnson. Baguio City, Philippines: Asia Pacific Theological Seminary Press, 2018. 192 pp.

*K*ay Fountain is a pastor, leader, and scholar who has focused her ministry in Asia Pacific. The festschrift is written by Fountain's current and former students and colleagues, including a chapter by Tim Bulkely, her Ph.D. mentor. Each essay focuses on either her life and ministry or her passion for connecting the exegesis of Old Testament scriptures with Pentecostal leadership in the Pacific Asian context.

The book begins with three essays about Fountain and her background, the need for pastor-scholars within the Pacific Asian context, and the importance of her archaeological research at Tel Burna. In the first chapter, Adeline C. Ladera describes Fountain as a Spirit-filled person, pastor, innovator, scholar, and leader. From her humble beginnings in New Zealand, Fountain pursued higher education,

planted a church, and became a senior pastor and the academic dean of Asia Pacific Theological Seminary. The second chapter on “Asian Theological Education” by Tham Wan Yee provides a pastoral and theological perspective on the need for more pastor-theologians within the Pacific Asian context, a perspective that reflects Fountain’s passion for helping Asian students become pastor-educators in their own respective contexts. The third chapter by Itzhaq Shai, Chris McKinney, Benjamin Yang, and Deborah Cassuto concerns Fountain’s archaeological research at Tel Burna in the Judean Shephalah.

Chapters four through ten focus on exegetical interpretations of Old Testament texts as applied to leadership in Pentecostal contexts. Tim Bulkeley and Jacqueline Gray present their understandings of the book of Esther in their respective essays, which was also the emphasis of Fountain’s doctoral dissertation. Bulkeley argues that modern adaptations to conform the story of Esther to current conventional gender roles may prompt readers to miss Esther’s struggles, wisdom, and courage within the constraints imposed on her by her historical-cultural context. To address this conundrum, he suggests that an awareness of the constraints in which Esther lived should prompt empathy in the reader of her story. Gray views the book of Esther as a story of how one who was marginalized, socially exiled, and powerless emerged to serve in a position of power where she became a peer of those in authority, a leader within her community, and a person of great influence for the justice of her people. Her story, then, became an example of what the Jewish Diaspora hopes for and how Pentecostals today should go about bringing restoration and transformation within their respective communities.

Dave Johnson approaches the story of Gideon in Judges 6 as Gideon himself may have understood it within his historical-cultural and anthropological context, and then connects the story with the broader Asian context since issues such as animism, monotheism, honor and shame, patron-client relationship, and social status are prominent in both contexts. Although Gideon was a person of low social status, God raised him up to be a valiant warrior. Because of Gideon’s obedience, Yahweh brought about victory through him, restoring, at least for a time, God’s honor among the people.

Wonsuk Ma looks at the emergence and tragic ending of the leadership of Samson and Saul. He suggests that while the Spirit first affected the inner being of Samson in Judges 13:24–25 and Saul in 1 Samuel 10:6–7 and 9 at the beginning of their respective careers, the effect of the Spirit's presence in subsequent experiences was contingent upon their human response to the Spirit because character and ethical formation are a joint work of divinity and humanity. Samson's and Saul's later failures to respond to the Spirit with the resulting lack of character helps to explain their tragic endings.

Lian Sian Mung differentiates between the charismatic and non-charismatic roles of the Spirit in Isaiah 11:1–5. In arguing that the hoped-for descendant of David would be charismatically empowered by the Spirit of God with wisdom and understanding (v. 2) to carry out the non-charismatic tasks of judging the poor with righteousness and deciding with equity for the oppressed of the land (v. 4), and that he would be charismatically endowed with the spirit of counsel and might (v. 2) to do the non-charismatic task of slaying the wicked, Mung proposes the new David as one empowered by the Spirit of Yahweh to serve as his agent to establish a righteous community, with the non-charismatic fear of Yahweh (vv. 2–3) enabling him to demonstrate faithfulness to Yahweh (v. 5).

Tim Meadowcroft argues that the experiences of Daniel and his three friends emphasize the critical need for the people of God to participate in the wisdom and life of God. The divine wisdom in both the court tales and the visions in the latter part of the book of Daniel suggest that the call to be wise, ethical, and discerning in the midst of suffering and uncertainty draws on the reality that God's wisdom is available to humanity, even when the temporal outcome of a given situation is uncertain.

Teresa Chai concludes this festschrift by summarizing the relationship between pedagogy and mission in the Law, Historical Books, Poetic and Wisdom Literature, and the Prophets. She argues that the Old Testament repeatedly portrays Gentiles and Gentile nations as objects of God's salvation and care and as welcomed citizens within his kingdom, and, accordingly, concludes that the New Testament's Great Commission finds its basis in the Old Testament.



This festschrift will appeal to those who desire to connect Old Testament exegesis and interpretation with practical leadership, especially in relation to Pentecostal and Pacific Asian contexts. In similar yet different ways, each chapter suggests that God can take common people and empower them to become leaders, which is of foundational importance to Kay Fountain, who was born a “common” little girl in New Zealand yet eventually became a minister, educator, church planter, leader, and administrator.

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***Spiritual Identity and Spirit Empowered Life: Discover Your Identity in God’s Family, Purpose in God’s Call, and Power in God’s Spirit.*** By Thomson K. Mathew. Kottayam, Kerala, India: Goodnews Books, 2017. xxvi + 224 pp.

Thomson K. Mathew, recently retired Professor of Pastoral Care and former Dean of the College of Theology and Ministry at Oral Roberts University, has written a truly inspirational and motivational book, whose purpose he clearly states: “I want every follower of Jesus to know that a Christian is one who has been born again into a new identity” (xix). True to its purpose, this book offers ample biblical support and encouragement to Christians to discover their identity, who they are as members of God’s family (part 1), what their purpose in life is as they discern and respond to God’s call (part 2), and what power is available to them by God’s Spirit to be who God made them to be and to do what God has called them to do (part 3).

Mathew has identified three dimensions of the Spirit-empowered Christian life: identity, purpose, and power. The identity of a Christian (chs. 1–5) is rooted firmly in being a child of God, adopted—by divine decree—into God’s family. This makes a Christian a citizen of God’s kingdom as well as a “whole person by faith.” The purpose of every Christian (chs. 6–10) is found in recognizing God’s call and obeying it

by serving, healing, leading, and bearing hope to those who lack a sense of belonging or for whom hope is flagging. The power (chs. 11–15) of Christians is found in recognizing that it is the Spirit of God who has adopted them into the family of God, and as children of God, receiving the gifts, blessing, and empowerment of God's Spirit to realize fully who they are in Christ and to lean into what God has called them to do.

Written to be read either on its own or as part of a fifteen-week study, the book includes a chapter for each week. Each chapter concludes with study questions for further contemplation and discussion. All the chapters make good use of Scripture, biblical stories, and anecdotes to support the central theme. This is, in fact, one of Mathew's strengths: storytelling. He uses stories from each era of his life to highlight and demonstrate the principle he wishes to elucidate in each chapter. These stories have a way of making his writing personal, warm, and real.

Of special significance is Mathew's use of Scripture. He begins each chapter with a pertinent passage that serves as an advanced organizer for the text to follow. In addition, he has a way of stringing scriptural admonitions and promises together to maximize the impact of the biblical truth central to one's identity, purpose, and power.

The book is action oriented, practical, and pastoral. It reminds those who are already Christians of what God has for them. For those who do not know Christ, the book serves as a great invitation into a wonderful global family. Most chapters use at least some bolded first sentences to introduce a more detailed outline of the point made in that particular chapter. These headings pull the reader along with anticipation, deeper into the material. Furthermore, the book provides some resources as footnotes for those who may want to read more about a particular topic. This book is easy to read, yet has an impact beyond its appearance.

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***Christian Morality in Ghanaian Pentecostalism: A Theological Analysis of Virtue Theory as a Framework for Integrating Christian and Akan Moral Schemes.***

By Lord Abraham Elorm-Donkor. Foreword by Allan Anderson. Oxford, UK. Regnum Press, 2017. xix + 227 pp.

In this volume Lord Abraham Elorm-Donkor re-presents his theological analysis of Ghanaian Christianity in relation to Akan moral patterns, which originally appeared in his University of Manchester doctoral dissertation in 2011. Recalling his own Akan spirituality, the author observes that in the practice of Ghanaian Pentecostalism are many discrepancies between what is preached and taught in some African churches and the moral lives that African Christians actually live in society. He brings together his observations of African traditional religion and African Christianity in relation to the concepts of Deliverance Theology, Virtue Theory, and Wesley's moral theology to explore a possible solution to the separation of spirituality from morality in Ghanaian Pentecostalism, a situation that, he says, calls for theological action (6).

In Chapter 1, Elorm-Donkor explores the Pentecostal concept of Deliverance Theology, which focuses on the power of the Holy Spirit (38) and the way Ghanaian Pentecostals have appropriated it. According to the author, Ghanaian Pentecostals have tended to limit such spiritual deliverance to the localized meaning of the Akan religion practice, which sees such power primarily as a means for meeting existential needs rather than as a way to character formation and inner moral transformation. The way Ghanaian Pentecostals have appropriated Deliverance Theology into African Christianity has created a theological crisis resulting in the division between spirituality and morality (6). Thus Deliverance Theology has become a problem rather than a solution for Ghanaian Christian moral thought and practice (45).

Chapter 2 presents how Deliverance Theology has contributed to the lack of social morality in Ghanaian Pentecostals rather than helping to overcome it. According to Elorm-Donkor, "Akans believe that evil comes from two sources: the supernatural forces (deities when they are

offended, witches, and evil spirits) and human actions” and they also believe that “it is human action that triggers the evil that proceeds from the spiritual realm” (56). Deliverance Theology as appropriated by the Akans, however, “gives much more power to spirit beings than it gives human beings over human action” (47), apparently because of human reluctance to accept responsibility for their actions (56) and preference for blaming evil spirits for immoral behavior (176). The result is “an epistemological crisis,” which occurs “whenever a tradition is no longer able to offer its adherents satisfying answers to their moral questions” (50). Arguably, this crisis has occurred in Ghanaian Pentecostalism because the Deliverance Theology has not been appropriately integrated into the Christian African worldview.

In Chapter 3, Elorm-Donkor presents Virtue Theory as a tool to assess whether a particular worldview enables people to live according to their moral ideal. The author looks at virtue ethics as a more suitable model than deliverance philosophy for contextualizing Christian ethics into African Christianity (67). He examines the moral traditions in Western theology; philosophical perspectives on the concept of character, including aspects of the practice of virtue such as community, personal responsibility, and moral law; and methodological approaches (81–86). He also considers the value of narratives that portray virtuous character and have the ability to touch the heart as a means of communicating moral truth. Such stories provide an explanation for the virtuous life that encourages character development and embodies the truth that is the norm in the community (93). The focus is primarily on character, the central motif of both Akan and Christian traditions (67).

In chapter 4, the author studies the Akan traditions to see how they might help the Akan people to conform to accepted moral beliefs and norms. The purpose is to understand the Akan traditional scheme and to consider whether their worldview can help the Pentecostal Akans to acquire morality successfully (95).

In the fifth chapter, Elorm-Donkor asserts that the moral theology of John Wesley offers a framework that can help Ghanaian believers to live according to the moral ideal of Christian truth (129). One of the distinctives of Wesley’s theology is his doctrine of sanctification. Elorm-Donkor states that in selecting Wesleyan theology he does not intend to

imply that only Wesley's rendition of the Christian truth is authentic; rather his choice is a personal preference based on the historic relationship of Pentecostalism with the Holiness tradition.

Chapter 6 contains a comparison of the Akan and Christian traditions in an attempt to show where the Akan moral scheme needs transformation (167). The Akan tradition does not acknowledge the inherent weakness of humans for knowing and doing what is good and right, whereas Christianity teaches that in creating human beings, God gave them the capacity to exercise their will and choose to do the good, although admittedly it was weakened by the Fall (168). The shaping of people's character in the Akan scheme can be transformed by the introduction of Jesus (190). In the Wesleyan scheme, Jesus is the paradigm, or the model, of character for all those who believe in him while the Holy Spirit is the enabler of the gifts (the charismata) and the virtues necessary for the Christian moral life (194).

This volume, though at times repetitious and detailed, provides significant insight into the historical and theological developments affecting independent indigenous Ghanaian Pentecostalism and Christianity throughout Africa. Elorm-Donkor has argued convincingly that African traditional religion and a misappropriation of Deliverance Theology have had a detrimental influence on the moral attitude of African Christians. It is time for theologians to reflect on this crisis—which until now has not been reflected upon seriously—and to find a way to integrate spirituality and morality in African Christianity. The message that the Holy Spirit has the power to transform the moral character of human beings and conform them to the image of Christ can serve as an empathetic intervention into modern African Christianity.

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