

Pentecostal Hermeneutics in the Late Modern World: Essays on the Condition of Our Interpretation. By L. William Oliverio, Jr. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2022. 252 pp.

Pentecostal Hermeneutics in the Late Modern World offers a welcome single location for reading many of the hermeneutical essays Oliverio has published across the academic world since 2009. These essays are compiled from journal articles and book entries that readers might otherwise miss. The book provides an excellent engagement with Oliverio's hermeneutical approach. The book is a welcomed critical assessment and engagement with other leading Pentecostal hermeneutical programs and trajectories. Here, Oliverio seeks to positively assess the different Pentecostal hermeneutical approaches rather than critique the approaches without any constructive criticism. In his words, "Pentecostal theological hermeneutics has been best when it is considered about authentic Pentecostal spirituality, robust interaction with the biblical text, contextual linguistic self-awareness, and an ecumenical orientation" (xiii). Further, the constructive nature of the essays points toward opportunities for future research and orientations within Pentecostal hermeneutics.

The twelve essays/chapters in this volume are divided into three parts: (Part one) Historical-Constructive Hermeneutics, (Part two) Ecumenical Hermeneutics, and (Part three) Interpretations of Pentecostal Hermeneutics. In the first section, his four chapters trace histories of interpretation within the Pentecostal community/ies as well as offering an introduction to his proposal for a "hermeneutical realism" (not identical to, but sharing similarities with, models of "critical realism") and this constructed via Pentecostal language and theological impulses (ch. 1). The second chapter includes Oliverio's introduction to a volume he previously edited (*Constructive Hermeneutics in Pentecostal Christianity*) wherein he proposes at least two broadening avenues emerging in Pentecostal hermeneutics: the vast and diverse makeup of "the global charismatic-Pentecostal or renewal tradition" and diversity of interdisciplinarity with Pentecostal hermeneutics (42). This leads nicely into chapter three on Pentecostal theological hermeneutics, which traces multiple developmental moves within Pentecostal theology and their loci as constructed by and toward Pentecostal theological hermeneutics. Chapter four finally takes up Oliverio's constructive philosophical-theological hermeneutical approach (in contrastive relation to proposed Pentecostal biblical hermeneutics) as intentionally shaped by the story of Pentecost and our place within such via the dialectic of the God of Scripture who is made known through the frailties and imperfections of our broken creatureliness (77–78).

Part two takes up the task of Pentecostal contributions to ecumenical hermeneutics. Chapter five offers ways in which the Pentecostal expression and

experience/s of “Spirit baptism” might bear ecumenical fruit for ecclesiastical discussions provided Pentecostals take cues at some level from the ecumenically attuned framing of Spirit baptism in the work of Frank Macchia. Chapter six furthers this ecumenical movement, noting some of the primary Pentecostal voices pointing in this direction: Amos Yong, Simon Chan, Christopher Stephenson, and Frank Macchia. The final two chapters of Part two take up the “affections” of Jonathan Edwards (ch. 7) and James K. A. Smith’s engagement with Charles Taylor’s “secular age” (ch. 8) as offering creative dialogue partners via Oliverio’s Pentecostal sensibilities.

Part three makes a significant contribution to the study of Amos Yong (chs. 9–11) by engaging with specific books by Yong as part of his developing program and trajectories in ecumenical Pentecostal hermeneutics. Here, Yong’s pneumatological imagination (as from a Trinitarian sourcing) and the “many tongues” of Pentecost approach to theological hermeneutics provide fertile soil for creative trajectories in Yong’s extensive and sustained project. The final chapter of Part three (and of the volume) critically discusses Craig Keener’s *Spirit Hermeneutics* as a welcome contribution to Pentecostal hermeneutics.

Oliverio’s proposal for an ecumenical Pentecostal hermeneutic as both broadly conciliar and critically constructive without abandoning Pentecostal impulses is a much-welcomed contribution to the broader field of both hermeneutics and the narrower contributions of Pentecostal hermeneutics. The conciliar nature of his proposal is not simply to embrace all approaches but one that seeks to hear the broader voices of the wider church and to do so in such a way as to take seriously their own hearings of Scripture. Too often, the adjective “Pentecostal” has been taken to mean something more akin to a schismatic and narrowly community-driven approach rather than (along a sort of Yong-ian orientation) a Pentecost-al approach that views all of the church as, in some fashion, taken up into this post-Pentecost hearing, while also demonstrating a clear articulation of the narrower “Pentecostal” ways of contributing to those broader hearings. Oliverio is not following the direct path of Yong but makes his way in dialogue with numerous critical, constructive, ecumenical Pentecostal scholars and their contributions (as noted earlier).

While readers may find many essays heavily philosophical in their hermeneutical approach, they bear treasures to those willing to spend time reflecting with Oliverio on their contents. This is where Oliverio’s commitment to philosophical-theological insights and investigations seeks more foundational aims than is often at play by scholars of biblical studies doing hermeneutical projects. One may contend that Oliverio’s insights strive to provide a more encompassing theological vision of hermeneutics *for* and *by* and *within* Pentecostalism (and none of these in their exclusivist senses) that carries conversations well beyond simply discussing biblical texts and engages the many ways Pentecostals construct their theologies and live *into* and

from them. It is hoped that many more will take up the challenges and trajectory of Oliverio going forward.

Finally, Oliverio may be one of the most careful and constructive readers of Amos Yong to date (with all deference to Christopher Stephenson as another potential candidate). This alone is invaluable in providing entrée into the diverse works of Yong with critical reflection and analysis that assists those who might seek to make sense of Yong's massive body of work and follow a methodological project from beginning to end (190–91). For Pentecostals (and others) to ignore the wide-ranging works of Amos Yong concerning Pentecostal hermeneutics (and theology) would be to miss one of the most significant constructive ecumenical voices of Pentecostalism globally in late modernity.

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