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Book Reviews

TE DEUM: THE CHURCH AND MUSIC. By Paul Westermeyer. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998. xiii +412 Pages. \$25.00.

Paul Westermeyer has taught the history and practice of the church's song at Elmhurst College, Yale Institute of Sacred Music, Trinity Seminary in Columbus, Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, Luther Seminary in St. Paul, and at St. Olaf College. *Te Deum: The Church and Music* brings the classroom of one of this country's most distinguished scholars and professors of church music to the reader. His goal in this book is "to provide a succinct introductory overview to church music from a historical and theological point of view." He does that and he does it very well.

For years I have been looking for such a textbook for the CTS course "Theology and Church Music." Books on church music usually cover specific historic periods, composers, musical forms, works, or issues, but do not attempt to look theologically at the whole checkered history of the church's music-making. *Te Deum* is different. It is the complete story written by a theologian/musician, a fact manifest on every page. A theological base pervades and helps the reader understand the "why" and the "what does this mean?" for a whole feast of topics. One is led to the theological roots and implications for the church in everything from Cluny to Olney, from Moody to Solesmes, from psalm tones to praise bands and beyond. Westermeyer speaks as scholar first and pastor second to these and literally hundreds of other music related topics.

Te Deum is a real buy at twenty-five dollars. The early church section, the time line, or the bibliography alone would be worth that. His writing on J. S. Bach does not rehearse what has been said many times before by others, but instead shows how Bach is the musical result of Luther. His extensive and insightful comparison of Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli on matters musical is priceless. His observations and cautions concerning today's worship tensions are especially astute. And all that he says is well documented with often half of a page of footnotes.

The whole church shares the gift of music, and Westermeyer writes here for that diverse readership. It is obvious that he wishes to be objective and treat all who have contributed to the picture with equal attention. That is why, for instance, chorales and Wesley hymns are given about the same number of pages. That is also why

perhaps no denomination will come away from his book completely satisfied.

Nevertheless, I encourage pastors to own a copy of this highly readable book. If you have ever wished that you had learned more while at the seminary about the church's singing and how this history and practice fit into our prayer life today, order the book. The church's *Te Deum* is past, present, and future, and it is a song that pastors need to understand.

Richard C. Resch

THE COMPLETE TIMOTHEUS VERINUS. By Valentin Ernst Loescher. Translated by James L. Langebartels and Robert J. Koester. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1998.

Northwestern Publishing is to be strongly commended for its publication of James Langebartels and Robert Koester's translation of Valentin Ernst Loescher's *Complete Timotheus Verinus*. In bringing this volume before the public, the long-silenced utterance of one aptly described as the "voice of Lutheran Orthodoxy against Pietism" (v) is finally allowed to ring out loudly in the English language.

Loescher's remarkably insightful analysis of Pietism captures the key elements of the movement, and demonstrates some of the basic ways in which Pietism challenges confessional Lutheranism. A listing of some of his topics reveals his insight. Pietism, writes Loescher, has "protected and defended people who publicly taught that the external water baptism is not the correct baptism" (83); "denies now and again that the Lord's Supper confers the forgiveness of sins" (84); "reproach[es] the evangelical Lutheran worship service as completely corrupt" (216); and has "maintained . . . that the 'private use today of confession and absolution is unscriptural'" (203). Last but not least, Loescher notes that Pietists "introduce the *quatenus* subscription to the symbolical books" and "ridicule and despise the theological systems up to this time" (215, 216). Beyond a mere description, though, Loescher reaches into the depths of Pietist thought and shows the essential manner in which it compromises biblical Christianity, that is, orthodox Lutheranism.

Loescher centers his critique of Pietism in its "indifferentism." The key to Pietism's perversion of the true Christian faith is its indifference to the content of that faith. In contrast to orthodox

Christianity, Pietism emphasizes the *fides quae* at the expense of the *fides qua*. From this erroneous starting point proceed all of the other confusions that characterize Pietism. Several examples will suffice. "The contempt for the means of grace really belongs to the pietistic indifferentism. They have such a low regard for the truths learned from God's word and for the means of grace established by God that, unless true piety is present at the same time, no matter how pure and clear such truths have been learned and grasped, they despise them and proclaim them to be a mere natural and dead letter work. They take away from these truths the power to convert and make holy, and in place of them substitute something mystical" (63). Regarding millennialism, he notes: "Wherever the zeal for piety has been misused and pushed without Christian discretion, millennialism has always broken out. By millennialism is meant not only the imagination of experience, but also the imagination of a very great essential change; they think that the kingdom of the cross (in which believers are tested) and the church militant in this life and on earth will cease. Further, millennialism teaches that another glorious kingdom of Jesus Christ must come, to which all the prophets and apostles, especially John (Rev. 20) point. They say that without millennialism, the Scriptures cannot be defended against unbelievers and mockers" (144).

The translation reads quite well. What emerges from it is the portrait of a faithful, confessional Lutheran. We might go so far as to say that Loescher wears his heart on his sleeve. His willingness to share his emotions provides a different picture of orthodox Lutheranism than the caricature offered by the Pietists. Rather than simply being a hair-splitting exercise in academic theology, *Timotheus Verinus* is a pastoral plea for a return to a right understanding of and a proper balance between justification and sanctification in a context where Pietism had placed sanctification at the center of theology and thereby displaced Christ. From this displacement flowed the denial of sacramental grace, a minimizing of the Office of the Ministry, and an emphasis on faith as activity. What drives the enterprise for Loescher, then, is not simply "pure doctrine." Rather, Loescher makes it clear that no false dichotomy is to be made between doctrine and practice. Doctrine has a resultant practice and vice versa—evangelical substance results in evangelical worship, and vice versa.

For this, then, we can be thankful for the voice that Northwestern has helped to sound again, both for its positive program, as well as

for the warnings that it raises. As long as there are those who bifurcate substance and style, we will need to hear the faithful voice of Valentin Ernst Loescher, reminding us "from the beginning, the Church of Christ has seen the fanatical confusion mixed together with the unjustly-pushed seeking of piety, or hidden behind piety. Therefore it is necessary to faithfully admonish those who earnestly strive after piety in others to guard themselves against such easily traveled wrong ways. They ought to consider well that a good appearance is not everything; rather, everything, even the best appearing ways, is to be tested before the Lord and according to his word, lest one by and by fall into the enthusiastic maze. This is otherwise called Crypto-Enthusiasm, a slow but very dangerous evil, which spreads like gangrene. . ." (221).

Lawrence R. Rast Jr.

PRISON MEDITATIONS ON PSALMS 51 AND 31. By Girolamo Savonarola. Introduced, translated, and edited by John Patrick Donnelly. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1994.

With this volume, Marquette University Press introduces a new series entitled *Reformation Texts with Translation (1350-1650)*. The texts will be divided into Biblical Studies, Women of the Reformation, and Late Reformation. The editors hope to encourage the study of the original languages and provide a "help to acquire facility in reading Latin" (9). Although this reader has done some Latin translation, he found it a very valuable tool to improve his own ability to read postclassical Latin.

Though these works of Savonarola have not been printed in English in this century, they were popular with Luther who published them twice. It was in Milwaukee that one of the last English translations of Psalm 51 was printed. A trip to one of the large WELS congregations in downtown Milwaukee confronts the Sunday worshipper with a stained glass portrayal of Savonarola. Why was he important to these early German immigrants? Perhaps, the connection is in the devotional character of these writings.

Imprisoned and facing certain death, Savonarola, in his cell, sought to confess his sinfulness and his confidence in Christ. In the midst of Lent, he took up Psalm 51 to pray and confess his faith. He is "a soul calling God from the depths of personal tribulation" (18). There is no defense of himself or tirade against his opponents. Here the heart of

faith, burdened with the weight of sin, calls out for mercy. His own introduction to the prayer makes this clear: "I dare not raise my eyes to heaven, for I have sinned seriously against it. I find no refuge on earth, because I have been a scandal to it. What then shall I do? Shall I despair. Far be it. God is merciful, my Saviour is kind. God alone then is my refuge . . ." His prayer leads him back and forth in the Scriptures. Girolamo calls upon Christ the Good Samaritan, rejoices that he will hear the very same words offered to the thief at the cross, and pleads that he be looked upon with the mercy granted to Zacchaeus. He takes comfort in the Canaanite woman for he cries out day and night as she. As he comes to the end of the psalm, his prayer turns to the needs of the church, which he describes as small. "I beg you, Lord, what advantage is there in the damnation of so many thousands of people? Hell is filled, the church is daily emptied. "Arise! Why do you sleep, O Lord? Arise, and do not cast us off forever" [Ps 44:23]" (91).

This book is valuable reading for the parish pastor or the seminary student learning about preaching the word of God. The translation is well done and easy to read which makes it a good addition to a church or academic library.

Karl F. Fabrizio
Greendale, Wisconsin

THE THEOLOGY OF PAUL THE APOSTLE. By James D. G. Dunn. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998.

James Dunn undertook an admittedly herculean task when he penned this single volume theology of St. Paul. The study is, in many ways, the crowning achievement of Dunn's numerous years of scholarly writing and teaching on the letters of Paul.

Viewing Romans as the mature Paul's theological magnum opus, Dunn utilizes the progression and outline therein as a paradigm for his exposition of the Apostle's theology. The chapters address the following broad subjects: God and Humankind, Humankind under Indictment, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Beginning of Salvation, the Process of Salvation, the Church, and How Should Believers Live? Areas of theology not explicitly referenced in Romans (e.g., the Lord's Supper) are not given short shrift but included and expounded under the appropriate chapter heading. The happy result

is a book which at least attempts to address every major and most minor aspects of Paul's apostolic preaching.

A strength of the book is Dunn's sustained balance between an exegetical dissection of holy writ and a systematic exposition of the text. Exegesis is not reduced to footnotes, nor does the book read like a typical biblical commentary. Another positive feature is Dunn's aggressive interaction with other studies on matters related to Paul. The reader is given a virtual compendium of current Pauline scholarship since Dunn not only expresses his own convictions but also skillfully weaves the views of others into his own argumentation.

A foundational flaw and weakness of the book, however, is Dunn's rejection of Ephesians and the Pastoral Epistles as belonging to the genuine writings of the Apostle Paul. The effect of such canonical rejection is most evident in Dunn's views on the meaning of the phrase "works of the law" and the place of formal, ministerial offices in the congregations Paul established. The epistles Dunn regards as non-Pauline often contradict or undermine his exegetical arguments.

Dunn's study is indeed monumental. Especially as it serves as a revealing barometer of the current state of scholarship on Pauline literature, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* invites and deserves serious perusal by students of the New Testament.

Chad L. Bird
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THE FOOLISHNESS OF PEACHING: PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL AGAINST THE WISDOM OF THE WORLD. By Robert Farrar Capon. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998.

Robert Farrar Capon, an Episcopal priest, has been a prolific author for many decades. His numerous books have explored theology, cooking, and preaching. The contents of his most current book were delivered as lectures on preaching at Seabury-Western Seminary.

Capon writes clearly, and well. One doesn't have his published bibliography without writing skill. His humor is enjoyable, although I think some expletives could have been deleted from this book.

The second part of the work outlines Capon's suggestions concerning sermon preparation. Suggestions for use of the computer in the sermon writing task are helpful. I also appreciated Capon's insistence on serious thinking about the meaning of the sermon text, plus his advocacy of the importance of prayer in the preparation of sermons. Capon recommends preaching from the lectionary. Like Martin Luther, he also enjoins the preacher to say what needs saying, and then to sit down.

Lutherans of our Synod will not be much impressed with the first part of the book. Here Capon outlines the theology to be presented in the preaching task. Initially, I was impressed with Capon's focus on the central importance of the death of Christ. Indeed, he even gets around to saying that Jesus' resurrection is important, too! Although what he means by "resurrection" is not entirely clear to me.

He seems to operate with a Neo-Orthodox view of Scripture, with a "soul-sleep" view of death from which one awakens at the Judgment. Apparently, there is no immediate entry of the soul into Heaven in his view.

While he does not employ the term, Capon teaches an objective justification of mankind, achieved in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The theological problem for Lutherans is that he appears to teach that Jesus has saved everyone, whether they believe it or not. Faith in Christ is, therefore, unimportant and unnecessary. This is at best an overemphasis on general justification, and at worst Universalism. I was not impressed.

The sermon writing suggestions may make the book worth reading. The theology will not impress Lutheran readers. In a universalistic theology preaching is foolishness. For if all are saved, anyway, why bother?

Gary C. Genzen
Leesburg, Florida

WHAT ABOUT CREMATION? - A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE.
By John J. Davis. Winona Lake, Indiana: Pinegrove Publishing,
1998

John J. Davis, Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew at Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, Indiana, has provided parish pastors with an excellent study on the topic of cremation. The book

is based on a thorough study of the history of cremation in the Biblical, ancient, and modern world. Davis also provides a thorough review of what Scripture has to say. In this way his book does, indeed, provide a Christian perspective about cremation.

In twenty-eight years as a parish pastor, I have been asked to officiate at relatively few cremations. However, I have noticed that the frequency of cremations, even among Christians, has been increasing. After a recent move to a parish in Florida, a state where cremation is more common, I am being more regularly faced with the question: Is cremation permissible for a deceased believer? Davis points out that the number of cremations in America is increasing rapidly, primarily for economic reasons. On that basis, I suspect this book will prove useful to most pastors as they face the questions that families have about cremation.

In his review of the Bible, Davis points out that there are only two cremations mentioned in the Old Testament that are more favorably reported. There are no cremations reported in the New Testament. Therefore, on the basis of history, the Biblical text, and a review of modern cremation practices and abuses, Davis concludes that burial, interment or inhumation is preferable for deceased Christians. Although Davis is quick to admit that the Bible nowhere commands burial, nor prohibits cremation. The volume concludes with a chapter dealing with some needed reforms and advice concerning funeral practices.

The book is well-written, and is easily read at a sitting. It could well serve as a guide for a church study concerning burial or cremation. It would make an excellent adjunct text in pastoral theology classes. Frankly, it is an important book about a topic that will increasingly challenge pastors. I highly recommend it.

Gary C. Genzen
Leesburg, Florida

THE SEMITIC BACKGROUND OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.
Combined Edition of *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* and *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays*.
By Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S. J. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997.

In the latter half of this century the Church and those who fill her pulpits have benefitted greatly from numerous archaeological

discoveries in Israel and surrounding lands that have illuminated the New Testament Scriptures. The Dead Sea Scrolls from Qumran, the best known of these, comprises but a portion of these texts, which have supplied insights into the first-century world of the eastern Mediterranean. Written in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic—especially the latter three—these texts are highly diverse in literary genre. Religious writings, personal and official letters, legal contracts, and funeral inscriptions are numbered among them. The literature bears witness to a social and religious culture marked by everything but uniformity, in which a cacophony of disparate ideological voices filled the air. It was among these that the voice of Truth Incarnate began to speak.

Joseph A Fitzmyer, in the combined edition of two of his former works, provides a helpful discussion of how some of these various texts confirm traditional interpretations of New Testament passages, and, most importantly, how they improve our understanding of controverted or obscure passages of Holy Writ. The Parable of the Unjust Steward (Luke 16), Son of David and Melchizedek traditions, and the meaning of the κύριος title as applied to Jesus are examples of the subjects addressed.

By those who are called weekly to enter the world of first century Palestine and then to let the inspired texts of that period and place speak to congregants of this time and place, these collected essays of Fitzmyer are well worth study and perusal.

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Books Received

Anderson, Ray S. *The Soul of Ministry: Forming Leaders for God's People*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1997. viii + 269 Pages. Paper.

Behe, Michael J. *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*. New York: Touchstone Books, 1998. xii + 307 Pages. Paper. \$13.00.

Brueggemann, Walter; and Stroup, George W., editors. *Many Voices, One God: Being Faithful in a Pluralistic World*. In Honor of Shirley Guthrie. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1998. ix + 202 Pages. Paper.

Buchrucker, Armin-Ernst. *Frauenpfarramt und Feministische Theologie*. Zahrenholzer Reihe, Heft 18. Östingen: Verlag der Lutherischen Buchhandlung, 1995. 70 Pages. Paper.

Carrell, Peter R. *Jesus and the Angels: Angelology and the Christology of the Apocalypse of John*. Society for New Testament Studies, Monograph Series 95. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997. xxii + 270 Pages. Cloth.

Christo, Gus George, translator. *St. John Chrysostom: On Repentance and Alms Giving*. The Fathers of the Church, volume 96. Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1998. xviii + 159 Pages. Cloth. \$27.95.

Davis, John J. *What About Cremation? A Christian Perspective*. Winona Lake, Indiana: Pinegrove Publishing, 1998. 128 Pages. Paper. \$7.95.

Duffy, Eamon. *Saints & Sinners: A History of the Popes*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997. ix + 326 Pages. Cloth.

Erickson, Millard J. *Postmodernizing the Faith: Evangelical Responses to the Challenge of Postmodernism*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998. 163 Pages. Paper.

Farmer, Craig S. *The Gospel of John in the Sixteenth Century: The Johannine Exegesis of Wolfgang Musculus*. Oxford Studies in Historical Theology. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. xii + 250 Pages. Cloth. \$49.95.

Frend, William H. C. *The Archaeology of Early Christianity: A History*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996. xix + 412 Pages. Paper.

Friesen, Abraham. *Erasmus, the Anabaptists, and the Great Commission*. Grand Rapids/Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans, 1998. xi + 196 Pages. Paper.

Garrett, Susan R. *The Temptations of Jesus in Mark's Gospel*. Grand Rapids/Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998. x + 212 Pages. Paper. \$20.00.

Gieschen, Charles A. *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents & Early Evidence*. Arbeiten zur Geschichte des Antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums, XLII. Leiden/Boston/Köln: E. J. Brill, 1998. xvi + 403 Pages. Cloth. \$103.00.

Gonzalez, Justo L. *Church History: An Essential Guide*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996. 95 Pages. Paper.

Hall, David D., editor. *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997. xiii + 254 Pages. Paper. \$14.95.

Hooker, Morna D. *Beginnings: Keys that Open the Gospels*. xiv + 97 Pages. Paper.

Osborn, Eric. *Tertullian: First Theologian of the West*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997. xxi + 285 Pages. Cloth.