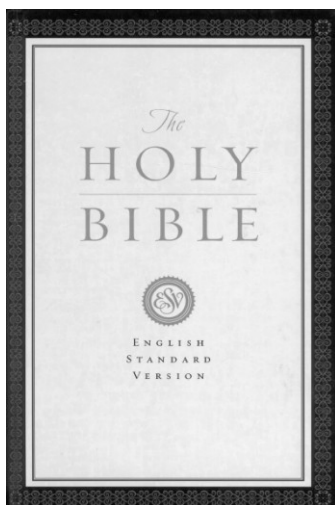


## Book Reviews

***The Holy Bible: English Standard Version.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers, 2001, 1328pp., hc and leather. \$39.30. (Price reflects casebound edition.) ISBN 1-58134-316-7**

The launching of the English Standard Version (ESV) in October of 2001 added to, what Peter J. Thussen calls, “the burgeoning Babel of Bibles”. Working from the 1971 text of the Revised Standard Version (RSV), a committee of over one hundred scholars committed to historic evangelical orthodoxy has closely examined and compared each word of the RSV with the original language texts to produce a version touted as “an essentially literal translation”. The translation team reads like a veritable “Who’s Who” of contemporary conservative evangelicalism.



## **Textual Basis**

The textual basis of the ESV differs little from that used by the New International Version (NIV) and the New American Standard Bible (NASB). The translators state that they have a high regard for the Masoretic text and reflect that text whenever possible in their translation. In exceptional, difficult cases, other sources are consulted and a divergence from the Masoretic text is made. It is interesting to note, then, that in Exodus 1:22 the translators opted to follow the Samaritan, Septuagint and Targum texts rather than the Masoretic text by inserting the words “to the Hebrews” following the phrase “Every son that is born. . .”. The NIV, on the other hand, translates the Masoretic text (as it does in Isaiah 15:9, compare with ESV), though noting the textual variations in its footnote. Normally, however, if there is divergence from the Masoretic text it is noted in the footnote. From my study the ESV does this more consistently than either the NIV (cf. Psalm 60:8) or the NASB (Judges 14:15).

The Greek text used for the New Testament rendering is eclectic based on the 1993 UBS text and *Novum Testamentum Graece*. As such you will find little differences in the choices made by the ESV, NIV, and NASB translators. The footnotes are extensive, providing a helpful compact textual critical apparatus in an English Bible version.

## **Translation Philosophy**

It is in its translation philosophy that the ESV purports to find a niche among faithful English translations. Eschewing the dynamic equivalence or “thought-for-thought” approach of some translations, the ESV tends to a “word-for-word” translation, what it calls, an “essentially literal” translation.

The ESV recognises that a word-for-word translation may be literally precise but comes at the cost of diminished readability. In language that is in vogue today in translation circles, it is a challenge to maintain both formal and functional equivalence. For many Christians the NASB, while employing a formal equivalence philosophy fails at making it functionally equivalent. So, the NASB, though accurately rendering the text (and therefore helpful for seminary students in their original

language classes while preparing for tests) is not the version of choice for personal and public reading for many Christians and churches.

The ESV translators, then, attempt to bridge the gap between formal and functional equivalence. They have done that very well, though at times there are some awkward renderings. One of the obstacles of the NIV has been its careless propensity to leave out conjunctions. For example, in Luke 9:23 Jesus issues a call to discipleship. He proceeds to defend that call with three statements beginning with the preposition *gar*. The NIV translates only the first *gar*. The ESV carefully translates each one. Similarly, in Hebrews 4:8 the ESV renders the Greek text more judiciously. The NIV has God speaking, at a later time, of another day. That is, “later” modifies the verb “have spoken”. The Greek has “later” modifying the noun day. Both the ESV and the NASB reflect that. The ESV’s commitment to a word-for-word translation is also evident in the utilisation of technical theological terms such as propitiation in Romans 3:25 and flesh for *sarx* in Romans 8:8. “Lord of hosts” is used in the Old Testament instead of the NIV’s “Lord Almighty” (cf. Isaiah 6:3). When reading the ESV the original text is transparent, making this an excellent version from which to study and preach.

The devotion to formal equivalence is not always evident however. In Revelation 10:11 John is spoken to by a plurality of persons rendered in the NASB as “And they said to me. . .”. While not negating the possibility that John was spoken to by more than one person the ESV (like the NIV) opts for “And I was told. . .”. In Genesis 50:23 the Hebrew has Joseph’s son Manasseh’s children born on Joseph’s knees. The ESV expresses that phrase as “were counted as Joseph’s own” though in the footnote it gives the Hebrew reading.

This devotion to word-for-word translation has, as mentioned above, led, in my opinion, to some unnecessary infelicities. For example, in Philippians 2:1-2 the “if” of verse 1 would be helpfully complemented by a “then” in verse 2. This would make it read more smoothly. Admittedly, my thinking regarding the degree to which the ESV’s functional equivalence has been successful is affected by my use of the NIV for the past

11 years. I imagine someone employing another version such as the New King James Version (NKJV) might find the ESV eminently readable.

In the climate of egalitarianism in which the Church finds itself the ESV is to be commended for its maintenance of biblical usage regarding gender. Where there is no counterpart for “man” in the original the ESV does not translate “man” and when people are meant for men (as in Genesis 4:26) people is employed in the translation. Unlike the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) which translates “brothers” in the NT as “brothers and sisters” the ESV retains a literal translation of *adelphoi* and places a recurring (and somewhat annoying because of its repetition) footnote stating that *adelphoi* may refer either to men or to both men and women who are siblings in God’s family. Similarly, *huioi* is mostly expressed as sons, not children, because of its meaning as a legal term in the adoption and inheritance laws of the first century Rome.

Since the NIV’s publishing of the complete Bible in 1978 there has consistently been frustration expressed by some Christians who are familiar with the original languages because of the NIV’s paraphrastic tendencies. For many the NIV was a welcome arrival after the RSV’s publication in 1952. For conservative Christians the RSV, though hailed as a great translation for the most part, suffered from a liberal bias and therefore could never be trusted fully. The *almah* matter of Isaiah 7:14, where *almah* was translated as “young woman” instead of “virgin”, guaranteed the RSV’s relative obscurity among evangelical Christians. The translators of the NIV held to the inerrancy of Scripture and sought to make clear the unity of the Testaments by, for example, capitalizing the anointed one in Psalm 2:2, seeing it as a reference to the Messiah, Jesus. Contrary to many fundamentalists, the NIV was an evangelical and faithful translation of God’s inerrant Word. Perhaps the ESV will satisfy conservative evangelicals who have long used the NIV but desired more commitment to a word-for-word translation. I believe the ESV has struck an adequate balance between faithfulness to the original texts and read-ability. It does appear to

be filling a niche. Over 200,000 copies have been sold since the ESV appeared a year ago.

The ESV is available in a variety of formats. Everything from the hardcover (casebound) edition to a genuine leather Thinline edition is obtainable. A pew edition can also be purchased. The cross references and concordance in the Classic Reference Bible are extensive. There are book introductions which are brief but helpful. A free CD-ROM, with the complete ESV text and a wide range of Bible resources, was included with all copies of the first two ESV editions published during the first year. Indicating the time in which we live, the ESV can also be accessed via the internet at [www.gncc.org/esv](http://www.gncc.org/esv). The ESV is published by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers which is a not-for-profit organization. This fact, in itself, might make the ESV attractive to many who are bothered by the thought of corporations exploiting God's Word, the revelation of his free grace in Jesus Christ, for excessive profits.

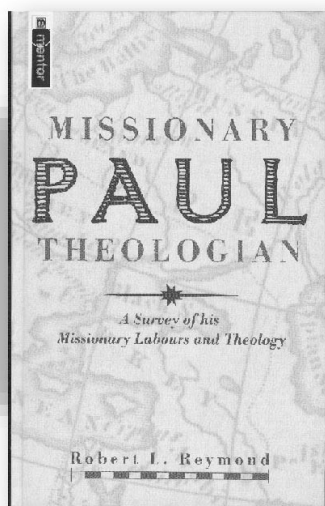
What will be the reception of the ESV? Will many churches opt for its use in corporate worship and recommend it to its members? For many who were concerned about the NIV the ESV might have arrived too late. The NKJV has enjoyed prominence among many conservative evangelicals even if they were not committed to its textual basis and though its rendering is somewhat stilted. At least conservative evangelicals can be confident that the ESV is a faithful rendering of the Word of God.

It is tempting to think that English Bible translation, from Wycliffe's work through Tyndale's, the Geneva, the Authorised, the American Standard, the RSV, the NIV, and a plethora of others, is a forward march to a more perfect Bible. If that thought were true the ESV might be another stop along the way – it is not the end point. The development of Bible translation continues, the ESV notwithstanding. For now, it seems to me that we remain in a situation where we must select, from the many viable possibilities, one that most adequately suits our particular purpose.

*Reviewed by John van Eyk, who since 1998 has been a Tutor of Haddington House, and since 1995 has been pastor of Riverside Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Cambridge, Ontario.*

***Paul, Missionary Theologian.* Robert L. Reymond.  
Fearn, Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2000, 636pp.,  
hc \$53.00. ISBN 18572-497-5**

Having spent time on the mission field in South Korea, Japan and Jamaica, Reymond wrote this book with, “the needs of mission agencies, missionaries, and missionary candidates in mind” (p.14). For this reason, from the outset Reymond clearly states that his volume on Paul was not written to provide the readership with just another scholarly commentary on the apostle. Instead, Reymond endeavours to submit, “such a portrait of the man and his ministry and say some things that most ‘Paul studies’ that are being made available to the Bible student today do not say.” (p.9). Reymond hopes to provide students and missionary candidates with a “biblical basis for becoming ‘world Christians’” declaring God’s law-free gospel (p.14).



This initial comment directs the reader’s attention to the significance of the preface for an essential understanding of not only the purpose of this book but also its design. Reymond’s approach is classically orthodox. He is particularly concerned to

portray Paul's missionary theology, which, he stresses, is derived entirely from Christ and rests firmly on His teaching. While denying a voice to the divergent views of those in line with F. C. Baur and of E. P. Sanders, Reymond takes, "Luke's Acts and Paul's letters as they stand" and seeks to present, "the biblical facts about this great pioneer missionary" (p.13).

Considering the topic, the 636 pages should not be viewed as copious but as appropriate for such a considerable undertaking. Depending on the subject and point being made, the writing style varies rather predictably between moderately readable to highly readable. Reymond does not hesitate to quote extensive portions of scholarly works yet he manages to temper this feature with his own insightful comments, critical evaluations and relevant applications. He demonstrates a keen ability to expound complex ideas in concise and plain language without losing the import of thought. The chapters contain ample helpings of Greek, enough to satiate the appetite of any so interested (a 'representative glossary' is included). The reasonably well-bound volume is divided into two parts. Part one examines Paul's Missionary Labours while part two delves into Paul's Missionary Theology.

In the first part, Reymond follows F. F. Bruce's, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free* and Martin Franzmann's *The Word of the Lord Grows*. This, Reymond explains, is because the chapters were originally lectures for seminary students at Covenant Theological Seminary. Bruce's and Franzmann's books were required reading for the course and the lectures were, "...used to assist my students in their reading of them." (pp.11-12). After chronologically outlining the relationship of Paul's letters to Luke's Acts, Reymond presents the life of Paul the Zealot Jew, his conversion and first evangelistic efforts followed by his 'five' missionary journeys and brief outlines of his letters.

Reymond holds to the South Galatian hypothesis/view. As well, "moving against the majority opinion of New Testament scholars," (p.11) he argues in favour of Pauline authorship of Hebrews. Reymond defends his position on a theological and historical basis (pp.257, 273). He includes useful chapters on the Jerusalem conference and the divine authority and canonicity of Paul's correspondence.



In this first section, Reymond deliberately stresses the importance of the fact that Paul, “was proclaiming the gospel which he had received, as he says, in and by his conversion experience itself – ‘by revelation from Jesus Christ’” and not something he had learned during his life in Judaism or from the original apostles (pp.68-69). Peter and the apostles’ recognition of the authenticity of the gospel Paul preached and the equivalence of his apostolic calling was essential (p.102). Even so, Reymond endeavours to show the basic continual unity between Paul and Peter over and against the view of C. K. Barrett (pp.192-193). It is significant that at junctures Reymond’s comments are based on the emphasis that Paul, “was simply fulfilling his own mission resolve ‘to know nothing among them but Jesus Christ and him crucified’” (p.164), and as a result the law-free gospel greatly advanced despite ardent opposition and many difficulties even within the congregations.

Part two presents Paul’s missionary theology which Reymond has chosen to treat separately rather than interspersing it among the commentary on Paul’s missionary journey and correspondence. Reymond proposes that, “central to Paul’s thought is the primacy of God’s sovereign divine grace as his grace comes to expression in the cross-work of the incarnate Christ in behalf of sinners” (p.308). This theme is reminiscent of his “A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith”. Having stated this Reymond refers to part two as a “‘mini’ systematic theology which takes into account Paul’s perception of the triune God’s gracious work of saving the elect and restoring the cosmos to its paradisaical state by the cross-work of Christ” (p.309). Reymond arranges his chapters according to the economical trinity (the triune God’s saving work), starting with sin and ending with Pauline eschatology. Reymond devotes a chapter each to justification and the “Christian and the Decalogue” defending the third use of the law.

Reymond’s approach is commendable. He does justice to the theology of Paul by placing Paul’s doctrine of justification within the proper context of God’s sovereignty. In the chapter on justification, Reymond draws attention to the increasingly many-sided threat to the orthodox reformed understanding of this doctrine. He takes issue not just with Rome but also with

evangelical ecumenicals such as D. G. Bloesch, N. T. Wright and with the 'new perspective' on Paul, critically evaluating E. P. Sanders' "covenantal nomism" (pp.429, 449, 452, 560-564). More attention, however, should have been devoted to E. P. Sanders' incorrect understanding of sin (pp.315-316), which impacts his entire view.

In general, Reymond capably reaches his goal. To demonstrate that *as Paul*, "we" should contend for the Word of truth, the entire counsel of God, and taking seriously God's sovereignty in salvation we should, *as Paul*, proclaim God's law-free gospel, justification by faith alone to the world (pp.557-584). However, Reymond seems to emphasize Paul the missionary at the expense of recognizing Paul's pastoral heart (eg. on p.499). This is unfortunate yet forgivable. What may be of greater concern is that Reymond writes with a presupposition about the nature of missions. His definition of missions is that of transnational and transcultural foreign missions. Nowhere does he even intimate that because the world has come to us in North America, the longstanding definition of missions must be substantially redefined to include "home missions". Ironically, the issues he has discussed are found in our own backyard.

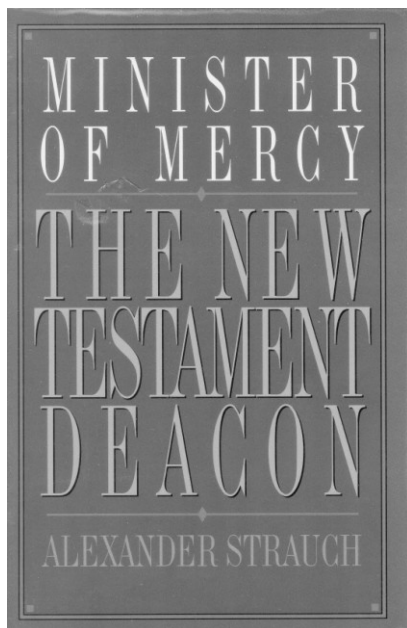
Pastors, missionary candidates, students and select laymen will appreciate and enjoy this volume for its faithful survey, informative insights into Paul's journeys and theology, and more importantly for its truly edifying and highly relevant applications.

*Reviewed by Frank Z. Kovács who became a Tutor with Haddington House in the fall of 2002 and is pastor of the Reformed Hungarian Church (ARP) Toronto, Ontario.*

***The New Testament Deacon: The Church's Minister of Mercy.*  
Alexander Strauch.**

**Littleton, Colorado: Lewis and Roth, 1992, 191 pp., paper  
\$9.99 U.S. ISBN 0-936083-07-7**

Since there is such a dearth of contemporary writing on the office of the deacon it is always good to read new books on the subject. Thus, it is with pleasure that I read *The New Testament Deacon* by Alexander Strauch especially when I read these statements on the back cover of the book: "The deacon's ministry, therefore, is one that no Christ-centred, New Testament church can ever afford to neglect" and "Christians today must understand the absolute necessity for and vital importance of New Testament deacons to the local church..."



This book consists of four main sections with each having chapter divisions within. The four sections are: Dividing up the work: Word and Deed; A Two Office Church: Overseers and Deacons; The Qualifications for Deacons; and, The Importance

of Deacons in the Church. Strauch sets the tone with a helpful introductory essay “Facing the Issues” which, together with the endnotes, goes a long way to setting forth a contemporary understanding of where we are. That is, some churches with a diaconate operate more on the model of a corporation executive than as ministering servants, whereas others operate as building and property managers. In still others, deacons are “church factotums” (those who operate in virtually every area of church life). Thus, the challenge to learn again what the New Testament teaches on the diaconate and the four parts which follow are just that –“a biblical examination and exposition of all New Testament texts on deacons”. The book does not concern itself with the actual “implementation and operation of the diaconate” as Strauch has written a second book *The New Testament Deacon: Study Guide* in which practical ideas and suggestions are given. I suspect many would rather jump to this second book, but I would say that the subject matter of the first must take priority.

Strauch is a member of the Evangelical Theological Society and writes clearly from a perspective of one who upholds the inerrancy of the Scriptures. Though he does not claim to be a Presbyterian, he is friends of Presbyterians and reads from many in that tradition. He applauds Calvin who he views “made the most conscientious effort to restore the New Testament deacon” and [Strauch’s book] “is basically in agreement with Calvin’s sixteenth century reform of the church-deaconate” (p.163). Obviously the reader will pass judgment on such a statement. Overall I think Strauch is fair in this statement with one or two significant exceptions. It is interesting in his acknowledgments he thanks George W. Knight III whose *The Pastoral Epistles A Commentary on the Greek Text* is clearly a seminal work in this field. One can detect Knight’s influence upon Strauch’s book. Knight is a Presbyterian and Strauch a teacher and elder in a church or “Brethren Chapel” in Littleton, Colorado. The latter has been teaching there for thirty years and on occasion has also taught New Testament and Philosophy at Colorado Christian University. The Brethren movement of which Strauch is involved has many affinities with certain schools of Presbyterian

polity which stress two offices over three offices. However, Strauch's "brethrenism" is very much part of his polity and can be seen in this book. All readers need to be aware of this.

In Part One Strauch discusses the matters of the shepherds' priorities for word and prayer. Here he describes shepherding in the broad sense of pastor or elder. He walks us through the recent controversies in New Testament thought on whether or not Acts 6 is setting forth the office of the deacon and concludes that it is. His writing style is easy to follow and does not become overly technical for a lay person to follow in any of this controversy.

Part Two is a brief discussion on the two offices of overseer and deacon. We then come to the heart of the book, Part Three, "The Qualifications for Deacons" which takes over fifty pages. Here is one of the most orderly and edifying studies I have read to date on this subject. This section alone could constitute the basis for an adult bible class, a training workshop, or a retreat for several hours in a local church. Also, this section would be worthy of use in seminary classes on Presbyterian polity. There may not be universal agreement with all Strauch's conclusions, but he presents the clear conservative positions, in a readable fashion and with fairness.

I see three weaknesses in the work or its use. First, a chapter on the Old Testament and mercy as a background to the New Testament should have been included. I see this as a common fault in most discussions on diaconal mercy work, including many Reformed and Presbyterian authors. Second, it should be used next to the Presbyterian documents on the office of the deacon which are in our *Forms of Government*. This would give a fuller benefit of a greater corpus of material to supplement Strauch. Also, I reiterate that we must not ignore the fact that our polity as Presbyterians is not Brethren. Third, since the stress is clearly on the New Testament it could lead to imbalances by the readership if they are not aware of the fuller picture which means historical theology needs to be studied. A richer discussion on the applied theology of the diaconate historically in Reformed and Presbyterian circles should be incorporated by those using this work as a teaching resource.

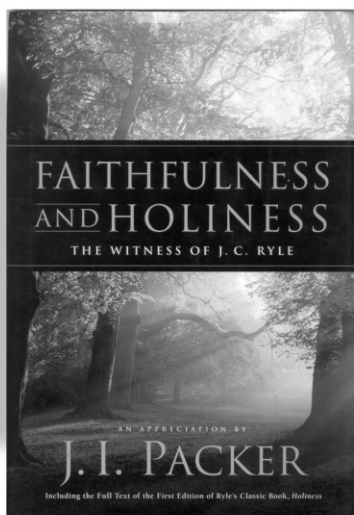
The work from my perspective is marred by this failure and a few brief endnotes did not satisfy me here. Strauch is aware of Owen, but the corpus is much fuller than that. With these three points acknowledged and easily overcome I am pleased to commend this work which is clearly the best work written on the New Testament deacon in a long time. It expands on many things lightly touched upon in Timothy Keller's *Ministries of Mercy* or Lester de Koster's book on deacons. Lewis and Roth have done a wonderful job in their publishing and I commend their series "Biblical Church Leadership From a New Testament Perspective" which lists twenty-four resources including eleven by Alexander Strauch. We look forward to reviewing more from this series in this *Journal* our first being *The New Testament Deacon the Church's Minister of Mercy*. Our readers will be interested to know that this book has already been translated into Korean and Spanish. I would like to know how it is received by Korean Presbyterians many of whom have had a rich ministry in this area. At present this book can only be ordered from the publishers in Colorado and thus I have included the price in US dollars.

*Reviewed by Jack C. Whytock*

***Faithfulness and Holiness The Witness of J.C. Ryle* .  
J.I.Packer .**

**Includes the full text of the first edition (1877) of Ryle's book *Holiness*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2002, 272pp., hc, \$29.99. ISBN 1-58134-358-2**

J.I. Packer's *Faithfulness and Holiness* is actually two books in one. The first section is an 88 page appreciation of Bishop John Charles Ryle (1816-1900). The second section of the book is the full text of the first edition of Ryle's book, *Holiness*.



Packer's appreciation on Ryle is twelve short chapters: A Great Man, A Great Victorian, A Great Sufferer, A Great Change, A Great Evangelical, A Great Puritan, A Great Agenda, A Great Preacher, A Great Legacy, and A Great Tradition. From the titles of the chapters it is quite obvious that Packer has a high regard for his fellow Anglican. Packer includes many of Ryle's own works and draws mostly from Ryle's autobiography entitled *A Self-Portrait* to pay tribute to Ryle. The book does not contain the events of Ryle's life written in chronological order; instead it is a character sketch of the Bishop "highlighting his quality and

stature as an English evangelical leader.” (p.9) Ryle stood for puritan truths in the days when they started to decline. Packer writes of Ryle:

Ryle honed his skills, but never changed his tune. While industrial, commercial, and educational development brought a new coolness and sophistication to England’s national culture, and while the Church of England struggled with a plethora of new emphasis, visions, tasks, and cross-currents of debate, Ryle remained the man that he had been before 1850. Thus, thought of as a mover and a shaker when he was young, he was widely written off as a dinosaur in his last years, and that understanding of him continues still. (pp.9-10)

His achievements, impact and universality made Ryle a well known name in Reformed circles. Ryle wrote in a punchy, Victorian style defending the Reformed Faith alongside fellow Victorian Charles Spurgeon. Packer leads us through the sufferings of Ryle; family bankruptcy at the age of twenty-five, his poverty, and deaths of his first and second wives. According to Packer, Ryle’s trials are what God used to mould the future Bishop into the man we know him as today. In this book we see Ryle’s agenda to evangelize England, purge the Church, unite Christians and of course to encourage holiness. We are informed also of Ryle’s faithful efforts as a preacher and as a Bishop in the Anglican Church. This book introduces us to Ryle, a spiritual-giant who stood his ground among his critics and left behind a great legacy. Packer summarizes:

I see him as a single-minded Christian communicator of profound biblical, theological, and pastoral wisdom, a man and a minister of giant personal stature and electric force of utterance that sympathetic readers still feel and I aim to present him as such. (p.11)

Packer’s fifth chapter on Ryle “A Great Evangelical” is a brilliant pithy essay which allows Ryle to speak for himself. Ryle is quoted at length here by Packer from *Knots Untied*



(Ryle's most popular book while alive). The depth and simplicity, characteristic of Ryle are at their best here:

...To the question 'what Evangelical Religion is?' the simplest answer I can give is to point out what appear to be its leading features ... The first leading feature in Evangelical Religion is the absolute supremacy it assigns to Holy Scripture, as the only rule of faith and practice... the second... the depth and prominence it assigns to the doctrine of human sinfulness and corruption... the third ... the paramount importance it attaches to the work and office of our Lord Jesus Christ,... We hold that an experimental knowledge of Christ crucified and interceding, is the very essence of Christianity... the fourth... the high place which it assigns to the inward work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of man... the fifth and last... is the importance which it attaches to the outward and visible work of the Holy Ghost in the life of man... (pp. 31-33)  
[italics inconsistent in text]

Now, reader, there is something to ponder!

The second section of the work is Ryle's book *Holiness*. Packer includes this work for three reasons: to show us Ryle's style of writing which is systematical and gradual build-up to make his point (to quote snippets of Ryle then does not do him justice); the whole work must be read to be properly understood; and *Holiness* lays out the truths of Christian sanctification, and though dated, is still relevant for the modern day Christian.

Ryle's reason for writing was to sow the seeds of a scriptural view of "holiness". The Bishop saw a lack of holiness in professing believers and was concerned that the "Higher Life Movement" was producing a shallow faith. To Ryle, holiness was being conformed to God's Son.

Holiness contains seven theologically rich chapters. For this review I will give a brief summary of each chapter.

1. Sin. The first chapter gives a biblical definition of sin. Sin, according to Ryle is not to be taken lightly. A false view of sin had lead to perfectionism, false piety, and lack of holiness in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
2. Sanctification. Here Ryle reveals its true nature, visible marks and clears the confusion between justification and sanctification.
3. Holiness. Ryle expounds what true holiness is, why it is needed and how it is attained.
4. The Fight. Christianity is a fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Ryle points out that a believer is to be known by his inward warfare and inward peace.
5. The Cost. In the fifth chapter Ryle explains the cost of being a Christian, the importance of counting the cost, and why counting the cost is needed.
6. Growth. Here we are shown biblically what growth is, the results of growth, the marks of growth and the way to grow.
7. Assurance. In the last chapter the reader learns that assurance is based on scripture (though Ryle is careful to articulate true believers may not have assurance) and how to know if one is saved.

This book is recommended reading for all Christians. Those who have been blessed by Ryle's writings will especially enjoy Packer's appreciation of Ryle. Much can be learned from the life of this Christian. Those who have been facing trials will find strength from Ryle's sufferings. Packer uses the Bishop's hardships to teach us that God uses all things for the good of those who love Him. It was a brilliant idea of Packer to include the 1877 edition of Holiness to pay tribute to Ryle, as well as to show us that his writings were not obsolete in his day, nor are they obsolete for us today. As a layman in the church I would love to see this book used in an adult class or in a home group – what a great way for folks to meet Ryle and then take up Ryle's Expository Thoughts on the Gospels or his other devotional books.

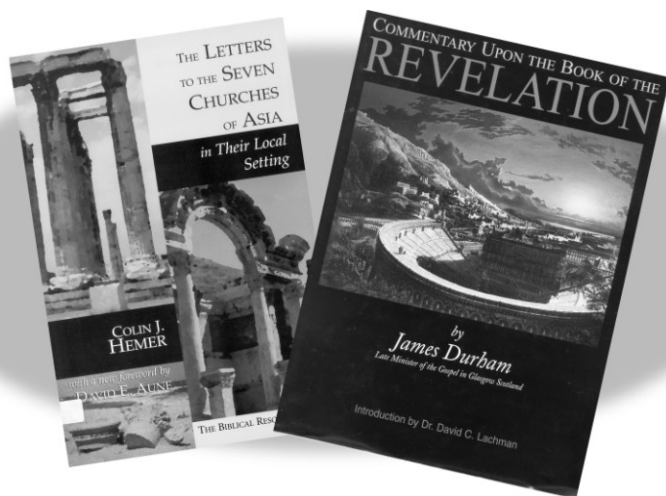
The book is attractively bound in hardback with an elegant dust cover. Packer has included notes not only to his twelve chapters but also notes to each of Ryle's chapters in Holiness. These together with general and scripture indices plus an extensive note of ten pages on faith and assurance and further "Extracts from Old Writers" makes this an invaluable resource. It is thirty dollars Canadian well spent.

*Reviewed by Charles (Charlie) P. Farrell a student of Haddington House in the Certificate of Christian Studies Vocational programme and an employee of Avis Canada. Charlie also serves as an active host to refugees and on his congregation's missions committee.*

## Book Notices

In *Book Notices* we inform readers about works which have been recently added to the Haddington House Library. Most entrants here are currently in print but on occasion we will include rare and valuable books we have acquired to which students and patrons may want to come and consult. *Book Notices* are made in keeping with our editorial policy to help our readers in the stewardship of their resources and time. Our *Journal* uses the standard abbreviation “hc” to denote hardcover. The International Standard Book Number (ISBN) has been included with all books.

## Bible Department



### *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting.*

**Colin J. Hemer, with a new foreword by David E. Aune, “The Biblical Resource Series”, original 1986. Grand Rapids and Livonia: Eerdmans and Dove, 2001, 338 pp., paper. ISBN 0-8028-4714-5**

“This modern classic by Colin Hemer explores the seven letters in the book of Revelation against the historical background of the churches to which they were addressed. Based on literary,

epigraphical, and archaeological sources and informed by Hemer's firsthand knowledge of the biblical sites, this superb study presents a clear picture of the New Testament world in the latter part of the first century and its significance for broader questions of church history." – back cover

"This work has perennial value and will continue to be consulted for years to come by those who want to wrestle with the complex problems presented by the text."

– David E. Aune, from the foreword

"One of the best contributions ever published on the letters of Revelation."

– Gerhard Maier in *Theologische Literaturzeitung*

Colin J. Hemer was a research fellow at Tyndale House in Cambridge, England. I had the pleasure of spending several meals with him in 1984 while at Tyndale. He was busy working on this work at that time and died shortly thereafter in 1987. I recall him saying how we need good evangelical geographers. This came out of conversations arising from my recently completed arts work where I had told him about the geography courses I had enjoyed. I was a very young and naive student at the time, likely still naive, and failed to appreciate at the time the position Hemer and F. F. Bruce stood. I will always remember his kind discussions and care he expressed and his encouragements. Aune's and Maier's words speak well on this book.

– J.C.W.

***A Commentary Upon the Book of the Revelation.***

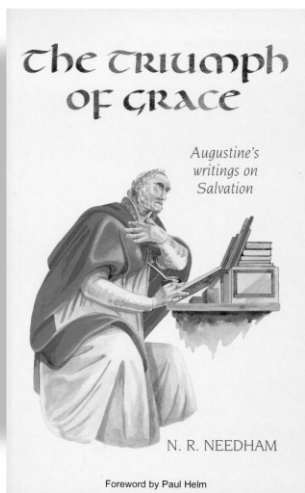
**James Durham. Introduction by David C. Lachman. Original 1658. Willow Street, Pennsylvania: Old Paths, 2000, 1001pp., hc. ISBN 0-8028-4714-5**

James Durham, a Covenanter minister, was known for his piety and great learning. Spurgeon described this commentary with these words, “After all that has been written, it would not be easy to find a more sensible and instructive work than this old-fashioned exposition. We cannot accept its interpretations of the mysteries, but the mystery of the gospel fills it with sweet savour.”

This commentary is based upon Durham’s Sunday morning lectures, before the morning service, somewhat akin to an adult bible class lecture. Unfortunately the publisher confuses it as “sermons” when it is not. It was included in the famous Scottish Expository Series which originated with David Dickson and comes recommended by Robert Baillie, Durham’s colleague in ministry and Professor of Divinity at Glasgow University. The work also contains about 25 additional essays which were theological essays and not part of the lecture series. Historicist in interpretation.

– J.C.W.

## Systematic Theology



***The Triumph of Grace: Augustine's Writings on Salvation.***  
**N. R. Needham. London: Grace, 2000, 304pp., paper. ISBN 0-946462-58-5**

“This book brings together choice quotations from Augustine on the theme of salvation. Here readers can sample for themselves what one of the masterminds of Christianity had to say about creation, the fall, original sin, free will, law and grace, incarnation and atonement, the new life in Christ, predestination, and the perseverance of the saints. It is a profound, radical and vital message that today’s Church desperately needs to hear again if she is to recover her spiritual and theological health.”

– back cover

“Why should an Evangelical learn theology from a 5<sup>th</sup> century African bishop who believed in baptismal regeneration? It is an interesting question. The answer is probably that this bishop knew more about God’s grace, both theologically and in his

spiritual experience, than almost any other Christian who has ever lived... Theologically speaking, Martin Luther and John Calvin saw themselves as doing little more than trying to restore true Augustinian doctrine and spiritual practice to the Church.”

– Needham

***The Biblical Doctrine of Infant Baptism.***

**Pierre Marcel. Trans. Philip Edgcumbe Hughes. original 1951. Seoul and New York: Westminster Publishing House, n.d., 256pp., paper. ISBN 0-227-6785-9**

“*The Biblical Doctrine of Infant Baptism* has established itself, since its first publication in English in 1953, as the authoritative treatment of a subject that is frequently discussed without a full understanding of its Biblical background. The virtue of Dr. Marcel’s book is that it treats of its highly complex subject within the broad context of the theology of justification and of grace without ever losing sight of the Biblical evidence. It is only when he has shown, after a careful study of both Old and New Testaments, the position of a child within the Covenant of Grace that he turns his attention to the specific subject of baptism. The author’s vindication of the doctrine of infant baptism is the more impressive because it does not rely upon archaeological or patristic evidence about the practice of the early Church – convincing as that evidence may be – but on the evidence of Scripture.”

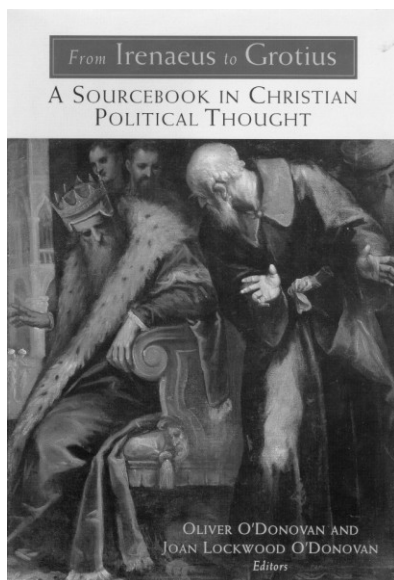
– back cover

“The late Dr. Pierre Marcel, minister of the French Reformed Church... prepared this study in the late 1940's in part to counteract the growing influence of Karl Barth and his followers. These had raised new questions about the legitimacy of the continuance of the household principle in the New Covenant, and consequently challenged the propriety of infant baptism. Marcel’s response went far beyond answering these objections... such that the final product... became an outstanding modern defense... Indeed, there is no better presentation.”

– Wm. Shishko



## **Historical Theology**



***From Irenaeus to Grotius A Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought 100-1625.***

**Editors Oliver O'Donovan and Joan Lockwood O'Donovan.  
Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999, 838pp., hc. ISBN 0-8028-3876-6**

I debated placing this under systematic theology and a strong case could be made for such as “political theology” is emerging in its own and is being related to ethics by some. However, I decided to place it under historical theology as it is arranged chronologically.

“The texts in this volume have been chosen to illustrate the use of Christian theological arguments in political discussion throughout the period when such arguments were commonplace. For a millennium and a half, from the patristic age to the early modern period, the themes of creation, fall, Christology, the church, and

eschatology, and the appeal to a wide range of Old and New Testament texts, dominated the way political discussion was conducted. This unique sourcebook provides access to this tradition of theo-political argument through primary texts representative of how Christian beliefs have fashioned Christian political ideals and practices...

Intended for anyone interested in the development of Christian political thought, this volume will be especially valuable to readers for whom the interaction of theology and politics is a live issue today..."

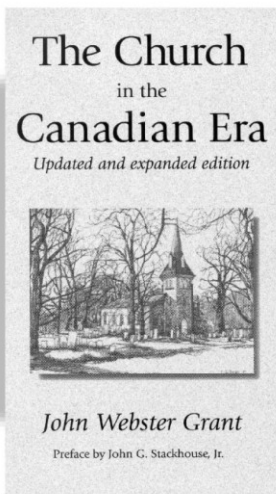
– dustjacket

“Destined to be the standard collection of its kind for the twenty-first century.”

–Cary J. Nederman

“The O’Donovans’ collection will become a classic.”

–Nicholas Wolterstorff



***The Church in the Canadian Era (Updated and expanded edition).***

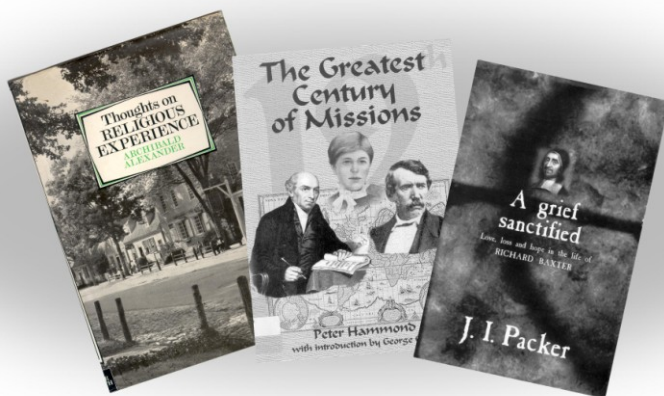
**John Webster Grant. original 1972. Vancouver, B.C.: Regent College Publishing, 1998, 274pp., paper. ISBN 1-57383-119-0**

“John Webster Grant’s *The Church in the Canadian Era* was originally published in 1972. It remains a classic and important text on the history of the Canadian churches since Confederation. This updated edition has been expanded to include a chapter on recent history as well as a new bibliographical survey...”

“What marked Grant’s work throughout his long and fruitful career—and shows up in good effect in this volume—was an admirable combination of indefatigable research in both primary and secondary sources, fluent writing, and fair-mindedness to every subject... It is with great satisfaction, then, that I commend this landmark of Canadian church history and, indeed, of Canadian history in general.”

—John G. Stackhouse, Jr.

## Applied Theology



### *Thoughts on Religious Experience.*

Archibald Alexander. original 1844. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1978, 338pp., paper.

ISBN 0-85151-757-9

“The nature of spiritual experience is probably both the most interesting and the most difficult subject in Christian literature: interesting because it concerns human life in all observable stages from childhood to death, and embraces all the emotions and behaviour possible in a man regenerated by the Holy Spirit; difficult because the adequate treatment of the subject makes immense demands upon an author. To trace accurately such experiences as conversion, sanctification and backsliding, as they appear in human consciousness, presupposes a sound biblical theology as well as a spirituality of mind and a pastoral knowledge broad enough to interpret all the varieties in type which occur.

Twenty years a pastor and preacher in a revival era, then forty years a professor at Princeton Theological Seminary

(commenced in 1812 when he was the sole instructor), Archibald Alexander brought to this volume the best wisdom of his life. From his own observations, and from case histories drawn from Christian biography, he follows his subject with the hand of a master. He was, in Dr. Theodore Woolsey's words, 'The Shakespeare of the Christian heart'. Primarily concerned with what ought to be the impress made upon the life by scriptural truths he has nothing of the vague devotionalism of the religious mystics. But within this biblical context a wide variety of experiences pass under review, along with a consideration of the practical problems involved in an understanding of the new-birth, Christian growth, spiritual conflict and kindred subjects.

This is a lucid and fascinating volume almost alone in the field which it covers." –dustjacket

***The Greatest Century of Missions.***

**Peter Hammond. Introduction by George Grant. Cape Town: Christian Liberty Books, 2002, 146pp., hc and paper. ISBN 0-9584549-2-2**

*"The Greatest Century of Missions* is a treasure trove of incredible adventures, inspiring exploits and unbelievable achievements of some of the most extra-ordinary people in the most momentous era of Christian advance. This book will be an invaluable resource for pastors and missionaries and a textbook for senior homeschoolers, Christian schools and Bible colleges. It should be required reading for prospective missionaries.

– back cover

"The nineteenth century missions movement... was a great era of Biblical faith. Appropriately, Dr. Peter Hammond beautifully captures this remarkable multi-faceted legacy in *The Greatest Century of Missions*. Not only does his fluid narrative make the individual missionaries come to life, he highlights their vision, their motivation, their theological faithfulness, and their long-term cultural impact.

“It is my prayer that as modern Christians read this much needed book, they will see the great pioneers, these culture-shapers, these soul-winners and nation-builders of the nineteenth century in an entirely new light—and that we will model our own twenty-first century efforts after theirs. I am convinced that if we do, we too will see a glorious transformation of men and nations.”

– from the Introduction by Dr. George Grant

- Excellent illustrations
- Contains questions for discussion on each chapter.
- Excellent for Sunday School classes, Christian Schools, Homeschoolers and ministers to give to their mission committees.

– J.C.W.

***A grief sanctified. Love, loss and hope in the life of Richard Baxter.***

**J. I. Packer. Leicester, England: Crossway Books, 1997, 208pp., paper. ISBN 1-85684-090-5**

“This is a book for Christian people about six of life’s realities—love, faith, death, grief, hope, and patience. Centrally it is about grief...”

– J. I. P.

“Bereavement becomes a supreme test of the quality of our faith,” writes Dr. Packer, and in our own times of grieving, he says, we need all the help we can get.

Margaret, the wife of Richard Baxter, died in June 1681 at the age of forty-five. Baxter, a prominent pastor and preacher, was heartbroken. Only weeks later he wrote a memoir of Margaret’s life and death. Edited by Dr. Packer, it forms the heart of this book.

In our own century, C. S. Lewis suffered a similar loss and wrote *A Grief Observed* shortly after the death of his wife, Joy. Dr. Packer treats us to an illuminating comparison between the two

bereavements and adds a wealth of his own wise reflection.”  
– back cover

Surely every pastor and ministering layman must consider this in  
applied theology. – J. C. W.