



HADDINGTON HOUSE JOURNAL

An International Theological Journal

Volume 18

2016

ISSN 1929-3925

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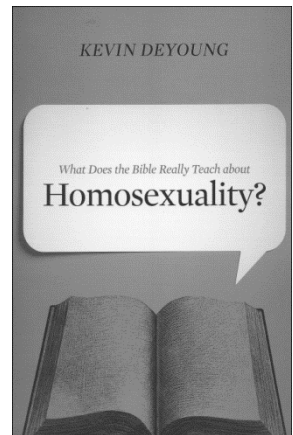
Applied Theology

***What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?* Kevin DeYoung. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015, 158 pp., paper. ISBN 978-1-4335-4937-3**

In his most recent book, Kevin DeYoung, Senior Pastor of University Reformed Church, East Lansing, Michigan, tackles an issue that has already divided families, churches, and communities – homosexuality. Even though “gay rights issues” have largely been fought for in the West, the increased interconnectedness of the global community has pushed this topic onto every inhabited continent of the world. Thus Christians everywhere must be informed and courageous in answering the question of DeYoung’s book: “What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?”

DeYoung has divided his book into two main parts. But before he tackles these divisions, he introduces the “big theme” of Scripture by answering the question, “What does the Bible teach about everything?” The author’s concern is that as we come to the topic of homosexuality and as we discuss this topic with others, we must be careful to place it within the framework of the whole Word of God that teaches us about the whole of our lives and indeed the whole of creation. This point is well taken and from the outset it is clear that DeYoung is the classic teacher; he starts at the beginning, lays a foundation, and incrementally works through this subject in a way that will be helpful to Christians and non-Christians alike.

Having laid this rudimentary foundation, the author then sets forth in Part 1 a biblical understanding of what the Bible has to say concerning homosexuality in particular. DeYoung explores five key passages and devotes one whole chapter to each passage. He begins with the creation of male and female in Genesis 1-2 and moves to Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19), then to Leviticus, Romans 1, and finally 1 Timothy 1. Readers who have wondered about some of these difficult passages will find each one clearly explained and will almost certainly feel more able to discuss and explain them to oth-



ers.

However, sometimes we are ready to explain scripture but less ready to answer objections to clear biblical teaching. Part 2 sets out to help us with common objections that many of us have faced already: “The Bible Hardly Ever Mentions Homosexuality”, “Not That Kind of Homosexuality”, “What About Gluttony and Divorce?”, “The Church is Supposed to Be a Place for Broken People”, “You’re On the Wrong Side of History”, “It’s Not Fair”, and “The God I worship is a God of Love”. DeYoung’s answers to each of these objections reveal his pastoral heart and experience. They are very measured and loving, but firm, with plenty of Scripture to show that these are not DeYoung’s thoughts; they are God’s thoughts explained to us by one of His servants.

The author has included three appendices in order to apply his theological arguments from Parts 1 and 2. The topics here include homosexual marriage, homosexual attraction, and the church’s mandate to respond biblically to homosexual temptation and sin. These topics are only introductory applications, and DeYoung offers further assistance by way of an annotated bibliography that is helpfully divided into reading levels. The Scripture index at the close of the book is most useful and the publisher, Crossway, has also kindly provided a link to download a free study guide for this book.

Perhaps the best way to interest readers in taking up a serious study of this book is to close with DeYoung’s own challenge:

We don’t get to pick the age we live in, and we don’t get to choose all the struggles we will face. Faithfulness is ours to choose; the shape of that faithfulness is God’s to determine. In our time, faithfulness means (among a thousand other things) a patiently winsome and carefully reasoned restating of the formerly obvious: homosexual behaviour is a sin. (p. 129)

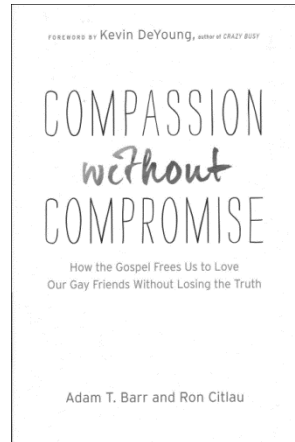
Reviewed by Nancy J. Whytock

***Compassion Without Compromise: How the Gospel Frees Us to Love Our Gay Friends Without Losing the Truth.* Adam T. Barr and Ron Citlau. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publications, 2014, 158 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-7642-1240-6**

As a vast array of homosexual “rights” are being legalized and legitimized in many countries around the world, Christians are being forced to find answers to questions that former generations did not even ask. How do we respond to relatives, co-workers, yes, even church members who have adopted a homosexual lifestyle? How do we show love without compromising the truth? In this book, Adam Barr and Ron Citlau have set out to answer some of these questions and to encourage Christians that a biblical response

is not only possible, it is imperative. Their underlying message is: don't panic!

Barr, Senior Pastor of Peace Church, near Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Citlau, senior pastor of Calvary Church, near Chicago, Illinois, have divided the book into chapters by using questions. At the end of each chapter there is a "take-away" paragraph in order to help the reader to grasp the main points. The chapter questions are ones that the authors feel many Christian, particularly in western countries, are asking today, such as: "How can a bunch of hypocrites cast the first stone?", "Why is sexual sin different from any other?", "How can homosexuals trust Christians?", "How should my church deal with this issue?", "Can the gospel transform someone's sexual orientation?", and "How can we navigate the issues of living in a gay world?"



While some of the chapters are helpful, the stated purpose of the book as being a resource for Christians as they respond to homosexuality in the culture is greatly overshadowed by the on-going use of illustrations from Pastor Citlau's past. Citlau was a practising homosexual, and we learn in great detail about his life before Christ. While the reader may rejoice, as all Christians do, in the marvelous grace of God to sinners, the details of Citlau's past and the use of himself for almost every example that is given in the book leaves the reader wondering if the book is really an autobiography rather than application from biblical teaching on the subject of homosexuality. Perhaps Pastor Citlau could have written his story as a separate book and Pastor Barr could have written a book about the practical responses to homosexuals that he has found to be most effective.

Speaking of effective responses, the authors' five simple applications from Colossians 4:2-6 are extremely helpful (pp. 117-118). In fact, from this point in the book on, the actual stated purpose of the book seems to come forth and the practical application of biblical truth that many Christians are seeking is there for us to read. There is a helpful appendix to explain the authors' viewpoint that the Bible is in fact the Word of God. The four points discussed are helpful, but perhaps the contents of the appendix would serve readers better if it were contained in the introduction. I doubt that many sceptics will make it to the back of the book.

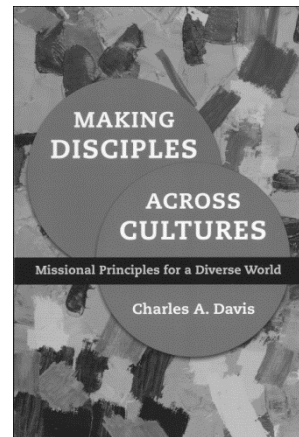
Barr and Citlau are to be commended for their courage in writing a book that clearly goes against the cultural norms of the West. They are to be even further commended as pastors, for it is obvious that standing for biblical truth in the area of homosexual behaviour is increasingly costly in many countries of the world. Kevin DeYoung, author of *What Does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?*, wrote the foreword to this book, and he says of Barr

and Citlau “above all, they are hopeful” (p. 10). It is certainly the overall theme of this book: don’t panic, be hopeful. Can you actually be “a compassionate, uncompromising witness in a culture that celebrates what the Bible censors?” (p.18). Barr and Citlau say in chorus, “Yes!”

Reviewed by Nancy Whytock

***Making Disciples Across Cultures: Missional Principles for a Diverse World.* Charles A. Davis. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2015, 236 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8308-3690-1**

Charles Davis presents a wonderful work on disciple making and emphasises the role that all members of the body of Christ should be playing in doing so. This is a challenging and yet compelling compilation, which all pastors and missiologists should read. There can be little doubt that Davis’ work presented in this book will inspire many a believer to practise the missional principles contained therein. Davis draws from many years’ experience in countries such as Chad, Pakistan, and Venezuela, and his reflections on real-life events make the writing come alive. Davis also employs a somewhat narrative style which makes the presentation easy to follow. Therefore, *Making Disciples Across Cultures* would be appealing to scholars and laity alike.



In his introduction, Davis describes the metaphor of a “cultural music mixer board”, which he uses throughout the book to great effect. Through this metaphor he explains how one should attempt to strike a balance between the *visible* and the *invisible* world, a balance between *knowledge* and *experience*, a balance between *teaching* and *interacting*, and so forth. The metaphor is skillfully employed as Davis attempts to explain what happens when one aspect is given more attention than another. For example, in his comparison between *teaching* and *interacting*, Davis states that “both are important, but if one or the other is too high or too low, the dynamic tension is lost and our capacity and effectiveness at making disciples is diminished”. Just as a sound technician would use a mixer board to enhance an artist’s music, so Davis uses this comparison to assist ministry leaders in their endeavours to make disciples.

Davis provides the reader with a working definition of a disciple (“one who moves closer to Jesus as a learner, follower and lover, together with other disciples”) and then he unpacks this further with what disciples should be doing as they learn, follow, and love Jesus in a life-long process. The chap-

ters are fairly short and each one ends with practical examples relating to the respective topics at hand. These examples from Davis' personal experience or from that of others with whom he has engaged, help to drive various points home. As I read each chapter and became aware of this pattern, I began to anticipate the stories that would follow and in a sense looked forward to reach that final section of each chapter. Thus his style of writing entices the reader to read on.

The range of examples and illustrations that Davis has employed in this work – from those of Allen, Bosch, Stott, Hirsch, and Hiebert to even Don Richardson's *Peace Child*, to the likes of *Anne of Green Gables* and *The Lord of the Rings* – all serve to shed clearer light on Davis' presentation. Besides his personal experience and his diverse illustrations, Davis includes, at the end of the book, study questions pertaining to each chapter (compiled by Dietrich Gruen), making *Making Disciples Across Cultures* a useful study resource too. I was personally challenged by his chapter on "Disciples hear and obey" (chapter 3), where he focuses on the relationship of *knowledge*, *experience*, and *obedience* – all three needing to be equally balanced as far as possible. Chapter 9 also provided a strong challenge for Christians to live "countercultural" lives, and Davis uses the examples of Jesus and of Paul to drive this point home.

If one has a heart for serving God and a passion for His mission, then *Making Disciples Across Cultures* is certainly a recommended read. I would not hesitate to encourage pastors, theologians, missiologists, and similar scholars to include this book in their respective libraries.

Reviewed by Rev. Wayne A. Grätz, communications officer and part-time lecturer/facilitator at Dumisani Theological Institute, King William's Town, Eastern Cape, South Africa.

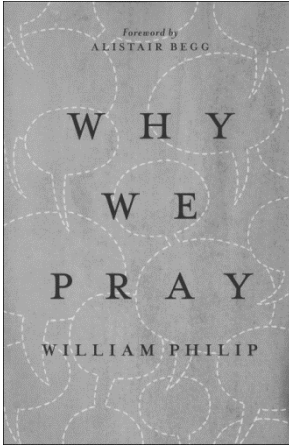


***Why We Pray.* William Philip. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015, 104 pp., paper. ISBN 978-1-4335-4286-2**

William Philip's small book *Why We Pray* is huge on biblical direction and encouragement to Christian prayer. Right at the beginning Philip makes an important clarification between the questions "Why do we pray?" and "Why *should* we pray?" Philip does not start with exhortations to prayer, but with explanations as to why prayer exists at all. Fundamentally the answer is God. To Philip, the nature of prayer is inseparably connected to the nature of God. A conviction that runs throughout this work is that "we learn most about prayer simply by learning about God" (p. 18). Therefore, the author answers the "Why do we pray?" question with four biblical truths about God. These four biblical truths form the chapter divisions of this book.

I will briefly summarize Philip's chapters to give you a taste of this book,

and then give a conclusion.



Chapter 1: “We Pray Because God is a Speaking God”. Essentially this chapter is a redemptive-historical presentation of God’s creative and gospel work in relation to God’s attribute of speech. As God spoke our world into existence for His glory, so He spoke with mankind, covenanting and fellowshiping with them in the Garden. However, man fell into sin, and Philip relates how in sin man stopped answering God – he stopped praying. But God would not stop speaking with us. In a masterful stroke, Philip shows a glorious truth of God’s gospel when he writes, “The whole story of the gospel is of a God who, from the very beginning, determined that he would say these words, ‘I want you to come back in’” (p. 34). God in Jesus Christ is the Word of God, sent for us so we could be redeemed and again pray. Prayer then is a fruit of redemptive history

Chapter 2: “We Pray Because We Are Sons of God”. As believers we call God our heavenly Father because we are in union with Christ and adopted into God’s family through the Spirit. Consequently, as Philip brings out, God will hear His family’s prayers. Philip brings this assurance by driving the reader to the doctrines of Christ’s humanity, union with Christ, and adoption. For six pages Philip lucidly describes the amazing prayer life of Christ. Of course he anticipates the reader’s response, “*I’m not Jesus! I can’t pray as Jesus can*” (p. 49). Philip’s answer is “yes, you can” if you are a believer. From Galatians 4:3-7 he shows that being in Christ brings the “legal transfer of sonship from one father to another” (p. 51). In Christ, God becomes our Father, even as He is Christ’s Father, and as He hears Christ so He hears us.

Chapter 3: “We Pray Because God Is a Sovereign God”. After asserting Scripture’s truths of God’s sovereignty and human responsibility, Philip explains what he calls “the logic of God’s sovereignty in prayer” (p. 73). Just as God sovereignly saves us in His Son, joining us to His kingdom purposes, so God calls Christians to pray to God to fulfill His kingdom purposes. God wants us to think His thoughts after Him and do our part to bring in the Kingdom of His Son (p. 80). Doing our part includes prayer.

Chapter 4: “We Pray Because We Have the Spirit of God”. Christians pray because they have the Person of the Spirit dwelling in them. Only the Spirit can make us “pray-ers,” writes Philip (p. 87). Quoting John 15:7 and Romans 8:26-27, Philip shows it is God’s Spirit who enables us to pray in Jesus’ name and to pray with real faith and feeling through his saving witness in our hearts (p. 92). God’s Spirit makes our prayers real to us because He uses His Word in our lives. Philip brings out that the Spirit is our Helper who comes alongside of us to help us, not only in sanctification, but also in pray-

er. Christians can pray in the Spirit (Eph 6:17-18). That is, they will be led by God to pray according to the directives of Scripture.

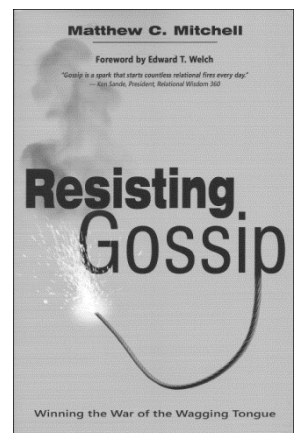
Though this is a short book, I highly recommend it for two reasons. First, Philip shows that the blessing of a Christian prayer life is a reality due to God's gospel. Initially preached as sermons for his congregation at the Tron Church of Glasgow, Scotland, Philip's chapters retain a gospel centre. This is why this small book on such a huge topic does such a great job in spurring us on to prayer with God. After all, a Christian does not just say his or her prayers; a Christian is a praying person, a person in relationship with God in the gospel of Christ. Quoting his father, Philip writes, "It's not so much *what* we pray but *what we are* when we pray that matters" (p. 36). Secondly, Philip is keen to give Christians direction in what they ask for in prayer. In chapters 3 and 4, he explains that God sovereignly leads us to pray prayers according to God's will to advance His Kingdom. We can bring our personal needs to Him, but prayer ultimately is His calling on our lives so the pattern should be the Lord's Prayer. This is a refreshing reminder in our self-focused age which has lassoed prayer as a self-activity.

Reviewed by Henry Bartsch.

***Resisting Gossip: Winning the War of the Wagging Tongue.*
Matthew C. Mitchell. Fort Washington, PA: CLC Publications,
2013, 191 pp., paper. ISBN 978-1-61958-076-3**

Matthew Mitchell, pastor at Lanse Evangelical Free Church in Lanse, Pennsylvania, has tackled an age-old problem that modern technology has regrettably enhanced – gossip. The sub-title of the book gives a succinct description of the gossip problem: "Winning the war of the wagging tongue". Mitchell has divided his work into four parts and has helpfully used alliteration to distinguish them: recognizing, resisting, responding to, and regretting gossip. Each part contains two or three chapters and each chapter is divided into sub-headings that clearly reveal the outline of the material. At the end of each chapter, there are questions for group discussion.

The first part, recognizing gossip, is obviously foundational to the rest of the book. Here Mitchell sets forth a basic definition of gossip: "Sinful gossip is bearing bad news behind someone's back out of a bad heart" (p. 23). Each phrase of this definition is unpacked, and the author points out that having more and more ways to communicate quickly with others (telephone, email, Twitter, Facebook, etc.) only increases this incredible temptation to gossip.



However, Mitchell, an experienced pastor, does not leave the reader in despair but reminds us of Paul's words to the Corinthians, "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man" (1 Cor. 10:13). The author concludes his introduction to the topic of gossip with these words: "Although it is not easy, it is possible to win against sinful gossip" (p. 31). This hopeful word sets the stage for the remainder of the book.

The second and third parts of the book form an offensive/defensive unit; that is, offensively fighting against gossip and defensively preparing to respond in a godly fashion when made the subject of gossip. Concerning the subject of resisting gossip, Rev. Mitchell looks at the problem we have of rushing into judgments, of judging matters that are none of our business, and of judging to be unkind and unloving. He then moves on to discuss ways that we can guard our listening and our speaking so as to proactively resist gossip when we are tempted. These offensive measures are then balanced by the defensive measures we need when we find ourselves to be the victims of the gossip of others. Here the author challenges us with two Christ-like defences: trusting God with our reputation and seeking to love our enemies. Anyone who is sincerely desiring to grow in holiness will be blessed and challenged by these chapters.

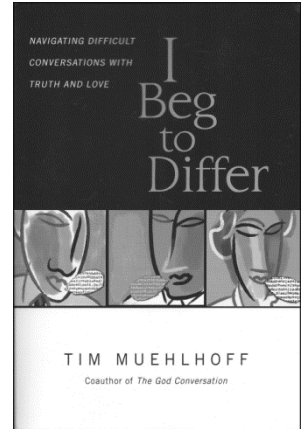
The final part is sadly, but predictably, regretting gossip. Rev. Mitchell provides much pastoral care here to those who have yielded to the temptation of gossip and are now grieving over their sin. In light of this chapter, it is not surprising that the author has included a bonus chapter for pastors on how to deal with gossip both proactively and reactively in an effort to maintain unity and the bonds of peace in a local fellowship. Again, this section contains questions for church leadership teams to discuss.

As one who has been both a pastor's daughter and a pastor's wife throughout my life, I have seen and experienced the destructive power of gossip within the church. I commend Rev. Mitchell for his hard work in producing this book. I believe its primary use would be in small groups and agree that it is a topic that should be tackled in local congregations on a regular basis, as gossip seems to be like burning coals that are easily blown into flame and must be doused at regular intervals. Perhaps one of the primary ways that the world will "know we are Christians by our love" is the manner by which we speak of and listen to one another in the body of Christ. Matthew Mitchell certainly challenges us to examine our tongues and our ears for Jesus' sake.

Reviewed by Nancy Whytock

***I Beg to Differ: Navigating Difficult Conversations with Truth and Love.* Tim Muehlhoff. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2014, 224 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8308-4416-6**

The author of this book is professor of communication at Biola University in California, one of America's larger Christian universities. This book emerged out of his lectures for a senior communication course he taught at Biola. *I Beg to Differ* is organised around three main sections: understanding communication, organising a conversation, and putting it into practice. The author works from two main agendas – what the Scriptures teach us about communication and what we can learn from theories in communication. He combines these two platforms with personal stories and examples as well as case studies and surveys to make for an interesting and non-abstract study.



In his foundational first section, Muehlhoff includes chapters which remind us of the power of words, the causes of verbal dams rupturing, the management of emotions amidst disagreement, and the place of the spiritual disciplines. I was surprised to see this last point being included but was very encouraged that it was, as it creates a spiritual tone for the subject of good communication. The author sees spiritual disciplines as the “power to resolve conflict”. (One inconsistency here, it should read Donald Whitney, not David Whitney, p.67).

The section on organising a conversation is most helpful and is the heart of the book. Here we learn about the steps in conversation: listening, gaining understanding, finding common ground, reciprocation (the sowing and reaping principle), and cultivating a person-centred communication. There is much here for study in these chapters and the wonderful thing about this book is the recaps at the end of every chapter. In one or two pages the author recaps the whole chapter with subheadings. This will make for a good textbook for college communication courses or small group studies, as one cannot help but get the content of each chapter. Muehlhoff is a clear writer and communicator.

The final section presents three case studies: marital disputes about finances, disagreements over religions in the workplace, and teens and excessive use of video games. These are personal and the names of the characters given, we assume, are changed or fictitious. Each case study seems very real and plausible. I do think this section of the book needs elaboration with more case studies. For example, there are many congregational disputes which could have been included as further case studies. The focus of the book ap-

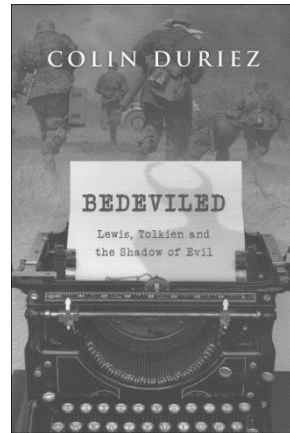
appears to not relate sufficiently to congregational life but focuses more on home and work. *I Beg to Differ* is good, as far as it goes, but the reality is that church life needs to be examined and applied as a more integral part of the book. There seems to be a disconnect between the foreword by Gregg Ten Elshof, which opens with the first paragraph talking about the call to unity in the local church in Corinth and Ephesus. That thread is not woven through sufficiently in this book.

Overall one will find this to be a helpful book on communication. As one would assume, many Proverbs are brought forward to bear on the subject. Also, some of the theories and surveys were helpful to consider and appear to provide quantitative data for common sense assumptions. The author tries not to overload the reader with a lot of technical communication theory jargon; when he does, he carefully defines the meaning. A drawback for global readers may be the many references to the American presidency. A wider use of illustrations would be more inviting to a global audience.

Reviewed by Jack C. Whytock

***Bedeveled: Lewis, Tolkien and the Shadow of Evil.* Colin Duriez. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015, 235 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8308-3417-4**

With all the scholarship that has gone into the study of Lewis, Tolkien and the other Inklings whose work has been so influential to modern Christian thought, it may seem excessive that yet another book about their work should be written. We know that Lewis and Tolkien were masters of literature in both their fiction and their non-fiction. Woven deeply into their writings is a fusion of faith, grace, and virtue. They wrote out of a fierce love for God and the world he made, and we can go back to them again and again to see their mastery, and more importantly, the wisdom in their aims.



The author of this particular study of Lewis and Tolkien is well versed in the writings of these prolific thinkers. Duriez's previous books include *The C.S. Lewis Encyclopedia* and *The Inklings Handbook*. He is also a recipient of the Clyde S. Kilby award for his research on the Inklings.

In this study, Duriez opens up the work of these prolific scholars with the goal of discussing their view of evil; what they thought it to be, how they sought to depict it in their fiction, and their ultimate hope of it being overcome one day. His angle is interesting because he seeks to learn from two prominent Christian authors who experienced evil on a scale that was un-

precedented up to that time in history. As young men in the First World War and older men in the Second World War, they turned to their faith to answer the darkness falling upon their nation. As the author states early on in the book, “Lewis had lived through World War I and experienced trench warfare on its front line in France. Some of Lewis’s most popular writings on the forces of evil and goodness came into existence in the second global war, with its even more advanced modern weapons of terror” (p. 23).

While most of the book focuses heavily on the work of C.S. Lewis, Duriez does take some time to discuss the importance of Tolkien’s work in regard to his treatment of evil in fiction and non-fiction. A recurring theme that comes up between points is the close friendship of Lewis and Tolkien and how this itself was a bond forged against evil. Duriez explains that the high value that Lewis placed on friendship was because of the emergence from the self that such a relationship necessitates:

Lewis took a classical view of friendship that owed much to the philosopher Aristotle, which he looked at in the light of his Christian understanding, seeing it as the “school of virtue”. Properly lived out, friendship could open one’s eyes to previously unseen aspects of reality. In our modern times – in the new post-Christian West and its sphere of influence – friendship can function in a restorative way, bringing us back into contact with lost reality, drawing us out of ourselves. (p. 171)

It is apparent from works like *The Screwtape Letters*, and other more subtle examples in the characters Lewis created for his other stories, that he knew evil to be a consuming force that draws an individual into an obsession with his or her own self and away from a love for others. Duriez picks this trope out again and again as he walks through all of Lewis’s major works.

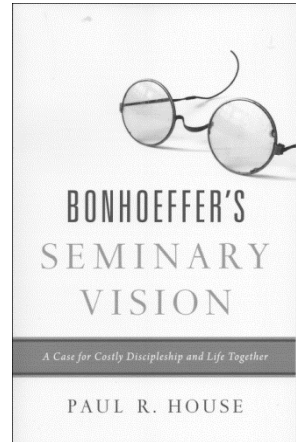
While there may be nothing “groundbreaking” or particularly exciting about the release of yet another study of the two most famous members of the Inklings, this book is worth reading. Duriez concisely sums up Lewis and Tolkien’s beloved works and clearly identifies their themes. This makes the book a logical point of entry or companion for anyone studying these writers. Apart from offering a survey of two writers whom you would benefit richly from knowing well (if you don’t already), he also gives the reader some weighty truths to consider as he explores thinkers who made it their life’s aim to shine the light of Christ on a world in which there is undeniable darkness, both within and without.

Reviewed by Andrew M. Whytock. Andrew has a B.A. in creative writing from Cornerstone University, Grand Rapids, Michigan.



***Bonhoeffer's Seminary Vision: A Case for Costly Discipleship and Life Together.* Paul R. House. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015, 207 pp., paper. ISBN 978-1-4335-4544-3**

There are very few books which one can recommend that are must reads for those involved in theological education, but Paul House's book, *Bonhoeffer's Seminary Vision*, is certainly one of them. It will likely remain such for some time. Bonhoeffer is usually remembered as one of the martyrs of the 20th century and so a statue was placed in a niche of the west towers' facade of Westminster Abbey, London in the row of 20th-century martyrs. Bonhoeffer is also remembered for his contributions in the fields of ethics and ecclesiology. However, what are generally ignored are his contributions and profound thoughts on theological education. Hence this is a most unique book.



House begins with an engaging personal preface. He briefly chronicles his own life-story with Bonhoeffer, beginning with a 1970s class at Wheaton College, where he was introduced to Bonhoeffer's *Cost of Discipleship* through a course with Tom Padgett. Later at seminary he took another course where more Bonhoeffer books were studied. However, in each course it was also the professor who presented the course in a very incarnational teaching manner that embodied what Bonhoeffer was actually saying. The journey continued with House teaching in theological seminaries, and there he continued to interact with Bonhoeffer studies. House does not see himself as a Bonhoeffer specialist, but he has spent many decades clearly rambling his way around the life and world and thought of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, perhaps much more a specialist than he humbly admits. House calls himself "a Bonhoeffer reader seeking biblical-theological understanding of my vocation for the sake of the church, the body of Christ" (p.16).

The first two chapters, "Bonhoeffer's Path to Seminary Ministry" and "Bonhoeffer and His Seminaries", are contextual chapters which allow one to gain real insight into Bonhoeffer before turning to the actual writings of Bonhoeffer. These will deepen one's understanding of the situation of the Confessing Church in Germany in the 1930s and also Bonhoeffer's vision for what he hoped to see occur in its seminaries. House begins chapter 2 with this first sentence: "Bonhoeffer engaged in university-based theological education before he began his seminary work" (p. 31). This highlights the fact that we are on a journey of discovery of different models in theological education in Germany at this time. I did wish that House had unpacked this more

concerning the university-based model so that readers will have a clearer insight here.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine Bonhoeffer's now classic books, *The Cost of Discipleship* and *Life Together*, respectively setting forth the theme and context of what Bonhoeffer was trying to achieve with the seminaries of the Confessing Church through the lens of these books. Many will greatly benefit here to discover the context for these two books, let alone the clear application for all seminary leaders and instructors. House summarises here repeatedly the vision of these seminaries' and their six-month programmes: "the seminary was expected to provide them [students] with fellowship, accountability in daily spiritual disciplines, further Biblical studies, pastoral care skills, and preaching opportunities" (p. 45). Yes, the students used Kittel extensively; but they also walked, recreated, mediated, sang, prayed, were silent, went preaching, worshipped, and ate together. By the end of these chapters, House has given us a clear impression of this seminary programme and also some of the tensions which were there. I will never again read *The Cost of Discipleship* or *Life Together* without thinking of House's statements about these books. In *The Cost of Discipleship* "a theology of the seminary's mission, the seminary's recruitment of faculty, the seminary's recruitment of students, and the seminary's goals for its graduates" (p. 100) is set forth. Likewise, *Life Together* sets forth that extension of a patterned life in the seminary reflecting a theology which embodies the Christian community (p. 101) and seminary as "a time for students to learn how to lead a faithful Christian community" (p.105).

After the analysis of the two books by Bonhoeffer, House turns to the theme of perseverance and the training of seminarians. Again he sets this forth through the context of the situation in Germany at that time. The applications are clear for the spiritual formation of seminarians who are called to live under the cross of Jesus Christ in faithfulness to the Lord. House concludes this chapter with three challenges for incarnational seminary work today. First, to not forget alumni (p. 179) – his thoughts are very perceptive on this point. Next, to persevere amidst many up-hill struggles to stay the course, and, finally to be "a visible testimony of the importance of ministerial preparation as one of the acts of Christ's body" (p. 180). House loves the term "incarnational seminary". His final chapter is an exploration of applications of what it could mean today to be an incarnational seminary. There is much here to ponder.

House has written a book which will be surprising for some readers. Bonhoeffer has not been seen by many as a theological educational reformer and visionary so this book is a welcome corrective. However, there are two points to note. First, readers must bear in mind that, like many studies on Bonhoeffer, this book does not explore in-depth the development of the systematic theological dogma of Bonhoeffer. House, a past president of the Evangelical Theological Society, does not make the biblical dogmatic formu-

lations of Bonhoeffer the theme of this book as a precise theological study. Bonhoeffer is not easy to categorise. Second, the other fact to bear in mind is that this book does not explore the theological educational context in Germany with any depth. This fact could create some false conclusions by some as to what this word “seminary” actually means in the book in distinction to the university-based system. Readers should be careful to keep these two points in view.

I reiterate, anyone involved in theological education should read this book. Yes, House will upset some as he holds back no punches as to what he thinks of distance theological education as generally non-incarnational. However, that is not the only theological educational model that can fail incarnationally. Some will find much of what is said in this book as non-applicable to the role of a theological institution and hence quickly dismiss the thesis presented here. This in itself raises serious questions as to who or what is really driving the theological educational agenda and establishing the models? Are we listening to the right sources for direction? This book could serve as an excellent catalyst for a faculty retreat and board retreat. Buy a few copies for senior-level administrators, give them out and take it from there.

Reviewed by Jack C. Whytock