

# Reviews



**REGARDING CHILDREN: A NEW PERSPECTIVE FOR CHILDHOOD AND FAMILIES**, by Herbert Anderson and Susan B. W. Johnson. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1994. Pp. 144.

This insightful volume is the third of five in the *Family Living in Pastoral Perspective* series published by Westminster/John Knox Press. This series is keyed to significant developmental points in the family life cycle, *Leaving Home* and *Becoming Married* being the first two. Herbert Anderson, editor and co-author of the series, has been a major contributor to pastoral studies from a family systems perspective. The authors' stated objective is:

to identify what children need, what families must provide for the sake of children, how families struggle with their childrearing tasks, and what society and the church must do to support families in their care of children...We need to understand why families and societies fail to provide what children need. (1)

Several broad assumptions are presented in the Introduction: that "our children are in trouble partly because adults disdain childhood" (1); that "we have fostered a *culture of indifference* toward our children" (2); and that "*children are people*" (2) and "*fully human although what is present in the child is yet to be realized*" (7; italics in original).

Chapters one ("Nothing Greater than a Child"), five ("It Takes a Village to Raise a Child"), and six ("The Church as a Sanctuary for Childhood") provide a spacious analysis of the state of childhood in America and attempt to show the linkage of family life with church and society. More on these chapters later.

The heart of this book is in chapters two, three, and four, wherein the authors describe and prescribe the traits of a healthy

family and a theological context for such a family. These are well crafted, systemically sound chapters that I would place in the hands of every parent, pastor, and director of Christian education.

Chapter Two is entitled "Children Change Things," a proverbial truth well known to every parent and sibling.

*The arrival of a child makes visible the fundamental paradox of autonomy in community that governs all family living. From the beginning the task of the family and other significant communities related to the child is to support the development of each unique self in a social context that is committed to maintaining its life together....When the paradox...is not maintained, children are the first to suffer. (31; italics in original)*

This, in fact, is the true thesis of this book as well as of the series as a whole, just as it is one of the primary insights of family systems theory. That the chapter, like the book, is rich in examples and quotations from families which accurately illustrate the thesis helps to keep the reader grounded in the real world of parenting. One section of the chapter dealing with the changes that children bring to a couple ends with this delightful and important piece of understatement: "Having a child is rewarding, watching a child grow is very satisfying, receiving the spontaneous love of a child is very fulfilling, but raising children cannot first of all be an exercise in self-interest" (41). In the present age of selfishness (inadequately labeled by others as "narcissistic"), this point cannot be repeated often enough.

Chapter Three, "What Are Families For?" is also filled with family wisdom and practical insight. What do children need to grow into healthy adults? A current interest in psychology and psychiatry is the category traditionally known as "personality"

or "character" which coincides with a renewed intellectual interest in virtue and morality. Anderson and Johnson do a fine job of filling in details of the family dynamics that contribute to personality development. If I were a parish pastor again, I would ask each baptismal parent and each confirmation parent to read if not memorize pages 51 through 68. Just as the theology of Martin Luther's *Small Catechism* must finally come to earth to be most meaningful, and just as children are drilled in this theology, just so should parents be made at least to attempt an understanding of the foundations of character development they are providing which will one day rise into the adult life and spirituality of their children.

Chapter Four, "Christian Themes for Family Living," begins with a reprise of D. W. Winnicott's concept of the "good enough family." This useful phrase has saved many a parent from the evils of perfectionism. Holding to their invocation of paradox, the authors state:

Our use of the "good enough" metaphor is meant not to foster complacency about family incompetence or destructiveness or undercut the necessity of norms. It is, rather, a reminder that when we stop expecting perfection, we may discover that more families are good enough after all. (70)

The "good enough" metaphor, by the way, has been adapted to rescue many a new pastor and many a new therapist from exhaustion. The chapter goes on to "A Theology for Family Living" (71-90). The emphasis here on the preposition "for" rather than "of" will please those who tire of efforts that try to use scripture and tradition to push parents beyond the "good enough." The authors' pointed use of "for" saves them from this excess and from baptizing family systems theory, while at the same time showing that the dynamics of family life and the development of children are of central concern to a life of faith. They also provide a fine script for a series of Sunday morning adult classes or even sermons.

Chapters five and six, "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child," and "The Church as a Sanctuary for Childhood" conclude the

book with broad points of social analysis and the life of the church that deserve study and attention. The "models of the relationship between family and society" (106ff.) and the "process of welcoming a child" (114ff.) are especially cogent and can be useful for discussion in pastors' groups. Yet, while they raise very important points, they absolutely scream for deeper analysis. Furthermore, the authors' assertions about the "culture of indifference" and the "child as fully human," along with their use of a universal "we" to represent American society are almost too general to be useful. I do not necessarily disagree with the statements, I only beg for more. Life and social process are more complicated than that. And, since Anderson and Johnson include a few paragraphs about children in worship, I also wish that they or someone would do a book on Lutheran worship as a very adult activity (one cynic I know went so far as to say "a depressed adult"). Lutheran worship struggles with the old knot of how to represent both the presence and the hiddenness of God, which is as confusing to adults as it may be for children.

As this is written, the 1994 national mid-term elections have just placed in power senators and congressfolk whom many, including myself, fear will reverse the progress made in the last sixty years in support of antidiscrimination, help for the poor, and aid to dependent children. My point in relation to the present book is that family life for the American underclass (a national family secret now openly discussed) is markedly different from that of middle-class suburban America. It is not that family systems theory does not apply, nor that Anderson and Johnson are mistaken in their interpretation and application. It is just that so much more needs to be said and suggested about families in the two Americas. My wife, a licensed psychologist, who works primarily with the poor and the minorities, has taught me much about family life with this population. It is markedly different from what I see in my middle-class practice of pastoral counseling.

These should not be distracting criticisms of this fine book. It will be very useful to parents, pastors, preachers, teachers, and social critics. It is not easy to bring together

heaven and earth. Anderson and Johnson have done a creditable job with a complex subject that will be of great benefit to the church.

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**GIVING BIRTH: RECLAIMING BIBLICAL METAPHOR FOR PASTORAL PRACTICE**, by Margaret L. Hammer. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1994. Pp. 176.

Tensions between more traditional views of God and feminist theology have recently been in the news. Two extremes are often represented. First, fear abounds that if we explore maternal metaphors for God, a congregation or gathering will go off the deep end and begin inadvertently to worship Canaanite fertility gods. The other extreme claims that none of the maternal expressions of God may be found in Christianity.

This book seeks to begin to build a bridge between these views. Margaret Hammer makes the case for the importance of a theology of birth. First, she points out that the church has a great deal to offer new and expectant parents: language for a miracle; a story in which the experience of childbirth is given context and meaning; healing and dignity for the person; wisdom and guidance in the midst of great change; and rituals to celebrate. The experience of birth is also a gift to the church, giving insight into God and the human condition.

The book is divided into three major sections. The first examines biblical perspectives on childbirth. The second section traces significant themes from church history. The final section considers birth in contemporary theology and ministry.

Hammer begins by exploring some of the bias in the biblical translation and theological understanding of Genesis 3:16. At issue is whether the labor of human procreation is a particular and painful punishment for women, and whether sin in the

world is women's responsibility. Hammer's conclusion that the text interprets distress in labor (and work) as punishment and a corollary to knowledge is not new, nor does she claim that it is. What is new and refreshing is her view of woman as one who realizes her deepest spiritual being and responsibility just at the point her creatureliness presses her the most, as she is in the throes of labor. This careful treatment typifies Hammer's positive and pragmatic work.

She highlights the maternal metaphors for God in the Old Testament and interprets them as God's creative intervention in peoples' lives and the vivid description of God's compassion. These themes continue in the New Testament in the extraordinary accounts of the births of Jesus and John, the woman in travail in Revelation, and the birth of the church in between. In an interesting discussion about Luke 2:24, "God raised him up, having loosed the birth pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it" (author's translation), she points out that God's travail, which she first identifies in the Old Testament, once again leads to new life, new hope, and a new people.

Hammer traces attitudes about sexuality and birth through church history. She tells how the practical witness of celibacy became prescriptive in the early church in Augustine's thought. She directs us to a "minor but persistent" medieval tradition that viewed Jesus as Mother and Sister as well as Brother and Sister, and tells about the developments that caused the church to hunt, try, and execute many midwives as witches. Finally, she shows how the reformation helped family-centered religion to reappear and viewed sexuality once again as a gift reflecting God's creative power.

Medical technology has ushered in yet another chapter in the lives of women, featuring a sense of miracle, distress, and spiritual crisis. Hammer gives practical suggestions for intentional ministry, including support for community caregivers and suggestions for public rites. The last chapter explores the implications of her biblical, theological, and historical discoveries.

In our biology we are both bound and blessed. This book reminds us once again

of the often biased biblical interpretation, historical hysteria, and theological silliness under which we have labored. At every turn, we have encountered extremes. In the midst of it, Hammer challenges us to struggle for balance. She achieves this to a great extent in her own treatment of the material. She carefully considers traditional biblical interpretations, provides historical perspective, and very intentionally pursues thoughtful treatment of even the most difficult texts, such as the text about women being saved by childbearing (1 Tim 2:15). As pastors and theologians, we wish to continue helping people connect with a merciful God, abundant in grace. Perhaps we may at some point strike some sort of balance. This book is a beginning.

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**HOLY THINGS: A LITURGICAL THEOLOGY**, by Gordon Lathrop. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993. Pp. 236.

Gordon Lathrop has given the church an exquisite gift. In a time when there is much casual and thoughtless disregard for liturgy in the attempt to attract customers, *Holy Things* returns us to the rich and historic foundations of Christian worship which have the depth and power to effect the transformation we long for in the church. While by no means antiquarian, Lathrop demonstrates the inexhaustible meaning embodied in the ancient *ordo* of worship. The juxtaposition of word and table, praise and beseeching, teaching and bath, within the cycle of weeks and years, lends an order to our days and grounds our lives in a lasting hope.

*Holy Things* is structured into three sections, each three chapters in length. The first section addresses what Lathrop calls "secondary" liturgical theology, that is, "written and spoken discourse that attempts to find words for the experience of the liturgy and to illuminate its structures, intending to enable a more profound participation in those structures by the members of the assembly" (6). In these chapters,

Lathrop uncovers the biblical pattern discernible in the liturgy and how this pattern took lasting shape in the historic *ordo*. References to the writings of patristic authors, particularly Justin Martyr, punctuate both these and later chapters. Special attention is also paid to the contributions of Luther to liturgical theology. The purpose of these chapters is not primarily to provide an historical account of the development of the liturgy, although they are thoroughly informed by such. Rather, the intent is to recover the peculiar understanding of God and God's activity to which the liturgy testifies.

The second section deals with "primary" liturgical theology, that is, "the communal meaning of the liturgy itself" (5). In these chapters, Lathrop elaborates the significance of the "things" set aside for sacred use in worship—a book, a loaf, wine, water for washing, and all of these amid an assembled people. Certain places, times, and people take on an aura of holiness when the *ordo* is placed in the service of God. Serious attention is devoted to how the assembly attains access to God through the holy things of worship through the power of the Spirit. An entire chapter is devoted to considering the meaning of sacrifice as it pertains to liturgical action.

The final section takes up the theme of "pastoral" liturgical theology. In these pages, Lathrop discusses how the form of the liturgy needs to be "broken" time and again in order for there to be renewal. In a chapter on "Liturgical Criticism," necessary and provocative questions are posed about effective conduct of the worship assembly. Lathrop here charges leaders of worship to carefully reflect upon practices which they may take for granted and offer reasons for their chosen procedure. Another chapter considers the function of leadership in the worship assembly with attention directed at the roles of both ordained and lay ministers. The final chapter places liturgy in relationship to society and argues for its power to restructure the world. Liturgy pokes holes in the status quo and so allows a fresh breeze to blow in, the wind of the Holy Spirit.

This is a beautiful book, powerfully written. The references to ancient authorities contribute well to the task of validating

historic liturgy. At the same time, Lathrop urges the reader to reflect deeply on the value of these ancient and time-tested rituals for the church today. His prose exudes an excitement for the liturgy that is contagious. It is because the ancient *ordo* can revive the church again today that we are served well by Lathrop's systematic unwrapping of its theology.

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**MANY MANSIONS: A CHRISTIAN'S ENCOUNTER WITH OTHER FAITHS,**  
by Harvey Cox. Boston: Beacon, 1992.  
Pp. 216.

It is almost a cliché now to observe that North Americans and others around the world are living in an increasingly pluralistic world. Nevertheless, it is a fact and it is forcing many Christians who never considered the issue of plurality to consider it now. No longer are the lines drawn between Lutherans and other protestants and Roman Catholics. In the town of 1500 people where I live, there are practitioners of Reicki and other "spiritualities" connected to the so called "New Age." Ten miles northeast is a Buddhist temple, and in yet another town eight miles to the south are followers of the Rev. Moon. This is rural Wisconsin. Of course it was both arrogance and ignorance for Christians ever to believe that we were alone here, but recent years have made that illusion impossible to sustain.

Harvey Cox's *Many Mansions: A Christian's Encounter with Other Faiths*, is a new edition of a work first published in 1988. Professor Cox endeavors to live and write in the real world of religious plurality that is quickly becoming "normal" even in such places as rural Wisconsin.

Two approaches to the religious other seem most common among Christians in my view. Many who belong to what is often described as the Christian right view non-Christians as objects of evangelism and potential conversion. They are to be prayed for and "won" for Christ. The zeal of this group of people can be impressive,

but too often their goal of converts overshadows the individuals whom Jesus called them to love.

Possibly even more offensive is a stance common among mainline Christians toward the "other." This is the attitude which seems to say, "They are who they are and we are who we are and as long as they don't bother us who cares." This is indifference masquerading as open-minded liberality. Overzealous proselytizing can at least be defended as a perverted response to Jesus' call to make disciples. There can be no support found in the gospel for indifference.

Professor Cox is aware of both of these pitfalls. His goal in *Many Mansions* is to engage the religious other, first because we inhabit this place with them, and second because the gospel calls us to engage them. He suggests that too often and for too long religious dialogue has taken place in conference halls and ivory towers where the issues are often academic and have little or no consequence for the lives of those practicing various religions. He states:

sometimes as I have sat in genteel—or even mildly acrimonious—gatherings of urbane representatives of different faith traditions, under the auspices of the World Council of Churches or the Center for the Study of the World Religions at Harvard, my mind has strayed from the conference room out to those jagged corners of the world where other confessors of these same faiths are killing or proselytizing—or just frigidly ignoring—each other. I have wondered at such moments whether the "dialogue" has not become a tedious exercise in preaching to the converted and I have secretly wished to bring some of those enthusiasts in. Deprived of the energy such particularists embody, a dialogue-among-the-urbane can, and sometimes does, deteriorate into a repetitious exchange of vacuities. It could end with a whimper. (3-4)

The rest of the book is an account of Cox's own encounters, not with the professionals of another faith, but with practitioners. A particularly poignant example of this dialogue in the midst of particulars is a story shared about a bus ride along the Jordan River. Cox, a Christian, rode with eight other passengers, all Jewish and from different parts of the world. Through the

course of their time together they developed friendship and trust. Many of the Jewish passengers were interested in learning about Jesus from the Christian theologian and, Cox says, many of them also shared opinions about Jesus with him.

Before reaching their hotel one of the Jewish passengers opined, "If Jews and Christians are trying to do the will of the same God, then we should be trying to increase the realm of freedom—because God has always favored the poor and insisted that how we treat the stranger in our midst is the real test." Cox continues

I told him I saw nothing to disagree with in this statement. But no sooner had those words left my lips than the bus suddenly slowed to a crawl and—as if to underline what my friend had just said about the strangers in our midst—we found ourselves grinding slowly through a gang of workers who were repairing the road. Suddenly all the conversations stopped. Everyone looked out at this crowd of laughing, perspiring men, whom we all knew were Palestinians. They stopped and stared back. No one—inside or outside—waved or smiled. (117)

Later he says:

When the conversation on the minibus finally started again it was subdued and sporadic. And it was about something else: cameras and film and how good it would feel to get to the inn. It was not about Palestinians or Israelis or Jews or Christians or Jesus. (119)

Cox is right about one thing. If Jesus is the incarnation of God, surely he is more concerned with the scene described above than with professional religious dialogue.

Throughout the book Cox shares stories of particular encounters like this one with adherents from most major religions. It could be argued that this book is short on theology and long on personal experience and conjecture, but that would miss the point.

It is not necessary to agree with Cox theologially to be moved by his desire to lay bare his faith in the midst of other religious people. How else can the gospel be shared? Paul wrote, "Power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9). Doesn't that in part mean that religious conversation

and evangelism must take place in an atmosphere of vulnerability? This is what Cox is suggesting.

I was moved by *Many Mansions*, not so much by its theological content but by its methodology for living as a Christian in this age when the religious other is literally our neighbor. Cox excels at seeing others not simply as objects for the proclamation of the gospel—and yet acknowledges that the gospel itself is "good news" which cannot help but be shared.

The criticism most likely to be heard is that Cox has less confidence than one would want in the power of the gospel to transform. It is almost as if he would be surprised if in dialogue with a person of another faith, he would find that person wanting to adopt his. That criticism is fair, but it does not change Cox's valuable modeling of a Christian living gently and sincerely in the midst of others who are unlike him. As the world gets smaller around all of us, we could do much worse than follow this example of honest caring conversation with our neighbors.

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**ENCOUNTERING THE WEST: CHRISTIANITY AND THE GLOBAL CULTURAL PROCESS: THE AFRICAN DIMENSION**, by Lamin Sanneh. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993. Pp. 286.

The distinguished, internationally recognized African scholar and Yale missiologist and historian, Professor Lamin Sanneh, broke new ground in his first major work, *West African Christianity: The Religious Impact*. He did it again in his second major work, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*. Now, in this his third major work, he has done it yet again.

As a professional historian and Christian apologist he is concerned with setting the Christian missionary record straight, giving primary consideration to the *receptors*, their frame of reference, and their interpretive reception of the message.

Central to all of his writing is the attention he gives to missionary efforts in trans-

lating (an activity broadly construed and applied) the Bible into local languages and the massive impact those efforts have had—and continue to have—not only on those who received the message (and continue to receive it), but also on those who brought it (and continue to bring it) as well. He contends that it is a complex, mutually transforming process of immense significance to all concerned. So he writes toward the end of his book:

It is impossible in the field to embark on learning the mother tongue for the purpose of reproducing in it the greatest of texts without opening at the same time channels of mutual transformation in the deeper cultural hinterland of both recipient and transmitter. It would consequently be hard to indicate how anything else has done more to induce changes in the forms of Western Christianity itself than the feedback effects, the “tacit dimension,” of translating the Scriptures into non-Western languages. (239)

Throughout, he argues consistently and persuasively that in the dynamic mutuality of this give and take the Christian faith finally neither destroys nor distorts the local culture but rather gives it new life. Thus he comments:

Thanks to their encounter with the West, these societies have the possibility of transcending themselves in a way that the West in its unyielding cultural self-righteousness has shown signs of failing to do. (232)

As one of today’s great missionaries to the west he writes with a note of sarcasm and an underlying concern not only for intellectual honesty but also for clear, unadulterated Christian witness in the public sector:

It is important, in view of such historical paradox, not to allow the claim to stand of non-Western cultures being prelapsarian specimens of primordial purity and innocence which a herpetoid West proceeded to despoil with projects of exploitation, subterfuge and subjugation, though we must oppose Western exploitation without supporting such primordial innocence. At any rate such a claim is unflattering to these cultures, for it leaves them stranded in romantic isolation. The claim also caricatures the West and re-

moves it from any impartial historical scrutiny. Some such claim is the unspoken operative rationale of Western scholars who would rescind any well-worn intellectual category if it carries a whiff of Christian influence, though such scholars are less critical with non-Christian traditions. That approach dissolves Christian particularity. Besides, such a procedure, when applied, or anticipated, in other religions, would be unacceptable intrusion. Self-criticism must be distinguished from self-distrust. (232)

If you are at all interested in the issues surrounding the encounter of religion and culture, the gospel as public truth, and the communication of the gospel in today’s world, this is an important book for you.

It is not easy reading. Professor Sanneh’s erudition and mastery of the material is abundantly evident throughout the book. You might find his use of the English language alternately delightful, intellectually challenging, or perhaps even daunting. However that might be, his well researched, documented, and carefully developed argument is clear and consistent. It strikes at the very core of the prevailing relativist cultural and religious attitudes and assumptions of the west and does so effectively.

David Tracy, Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago, writes of this book: “It is rare that a work can change one’s mind on a major issue. This fine and persuasive work does just that” (fly leaf).

It could very well do the same for you.

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**BEYOND CHARITY: REFORMATION INITIATIVES FOR THE POOR**, by Carter Lindberg. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993. Pp. 248.

While reflecting on the merger that was to form the “new” Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the late Joseph Sittler observed that the doctrine of sanctification of the merging bodies was “almost exclusively private and cultic.” As a result, Sittler anticipated that the proposed ELCA

would need to rethink sanctification as the task of Christians—who are also citizens in a democratic national context.

Carter Lindberg's book is a seminal start in that rethinking process. After years of teaching a seminar, "Church Care of the Poor," at Boston University, and chairing another seminar, "Luther on Property and Poverty," at the Seventh International Congress for Luther Research at Oslo, Norway, in 1988, Lindberg here shares the results of some twenty-plus years of massive research and meticulous documentation of these themes.

Building on Gerhard Uhlhorn's comprehensive three-volume history of Christian charity published a century ago, Lindberg's study is in two parts. First, he seeks "to provide a comprehensive and systematic presentation of the church's contributions to the development of social welfare in the early modern period, 1300 to 1600" (4), and second, to offer some selected translations of primary texts that will illustrate such contributions.

While his approach is not that of the social historian, nevertheless Lindberg is acutely sensitive to the importance of social, economic, and political factors, especially as they are used in "legislative and administrative praxis" (6).

But Lindberg's deeper concern with the early modern period centers on intellectual history. Thus, his presupposition is that "ideas have their own power to influence events" (4). In particular, he agrees with the sociologist Robert Wuthnow that Luther, like the other reformers, "created, as it were, a discursive field in which to bring together in imaginative ways the practical realities of institutional life on the one hand and the ideals evident in Scripture on the other" (5). Throughout the book, therefore, special attention is paid to "theological" ideas, and how those ideas became the basis for "structural and systemic social changes" (2).

Accordingly, Lindberg begins (ch. 1) by showing how Augustine's distinction between "charity" and "cupidity" provided a theological "endorsement of poverty as the favored status for the Christian life" (24). When this view was then taken up by the monastic movement, the ideology of pov-

erty became a theological construct that made charity a condition of salvation.

Moreover, as the population began to shift more and more toward urban centers, with the concomitant shift from a gift to a money economy, increasingly the distinction was made between "the worthy" and the "unworthy poor" (47). These developments led to a "communalization" (i.e., confraternities, hospitals, etc.) and "secularization" of charity. In this emerging complicated story, the church and its theology "increasingly became less effective in and even a hindrance to the poor's welfare" (66).

Up to this point, the underlying religious motivation for charity was personal salvation—a calculated "price of passage" from earthly to heavenly existence in a kind of grand "bookkeeping of the beyond" (92). Thus, building on the critique of charity by the humanists, and the dynamics of urban research in scholars like A. G. Dickens and Bernd Moeller, Lindberg now shows (ch. 2) how Luther raised a potent biblical challenge to the reigning "covenantal" theology of the times, and the personal uncertainty that was its inevitable byproduct.

With his focus on justification by grace through faith, Luther thus relocated the certainty of salvation in "God's testament" not human works (96). This new theological assessment found early expression in treatises like "The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods" (1519) and "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation" (1520).

In these treatises, as Lindberg reads them, are to be found not only theological ideas but also legislative proposals (i.e. the "common chest" concept in the 1519 treatise), which ultimately were tested in the Wittenberg Order of 1522 and the Leisnig Ordinance of 1523. Moreover, when these treatises are combined with Luther's emerging understanding of ecclesia as "community" (99), his view of work not as punishment but as service to God and the neighbor—all flowing from worship (108), and his instrumental view of property, that is, as a gift to be properly used (111), Luther's broader influence on concrete legislative efforts begins to emerge.

Thus, Lindberg surveys (ch. 3) the Evangelical Church Orders of a variety of Saxon cities that sought to implement Luther's work in concrete legislation: Altenburg, Nuremberg, Strasbourg, and Hamburg—together with Roman Catholic and Anabaptist reactions. These church orders serve (ch. 4), therefore, as "indispensable resource(s) for evaluating the social effect of Reformation theology" (161).

At the same time, Lindberg carefully notes that a scholarly edition of these orders was not begun until the turn of this century. Further, when this fact is coupled with Troeltsch's interpretation of Luther as a "conservative ethicist who separated public and private morality" (161), a view which was subsequently taken up and passed on by Reinhold Niebuhr in his condemnation of Luther's "quietistic tendencies" and "defeatism" (161), a received interpretation of Luther develops which

Lindberg thinks needs to be rigorously re-examined (162).

While Lindberg explicitly acknowledges that Luther's economic and social programs "are not directly translatable to the present" (167), he does think that Luther's starting point—*sacra doctrina*, scripture—does serve as a "salutary reminder" to contemporary theologians and social advocates in the churches of "the indispensable theological foundation for social ethics" (167). Thus Lindberg hopes that his study of Luther's writings about economics demonstrates that Luther's point of departure "by no means excludes but rather demands social analysis from the midst of life" (168)—precisely the hard theological work that Sittler saw our times demanding.

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