

deepest hurts of our life are like the demon in Mark 9:17—they are mute, they cannot reveal themselves to us, we have to search them out with prayer and fasting (Matt 17:21)."

This reviewer was somewhat disappointed with Guimond's book. Nevertheless, sufficient spiritual benefit was gained to make it worth the investment of time.

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Keener, Craig S. . . . *And Marries Another: Divorce and Remarriage in the Teaching of the New Testament* . . . Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991. 256 pages. \$9.95.

The much-debated issue of divorce and remarriage has long been a source of intellectual challenge for theologians, as well as a subject of pastoral concern for ministers, since it taps directly into the suffering and despair of thousands of church members. In dealing with this issue from the New Testament perspective, Keener's contribution is thus significant.

The complexity of the subject derives from the different interpretations of passages such as Matt 5:32; 19:1-12; 1 Cor 7, etc. H. Wayne House, editor of *Divorce and Remarriage* (InterVarsity Press, 1990), clearly presents the four major views on this matter: 1) no divorce and no remarriage, 2) divorce but no remarriage, 3) divorce and remarriage for adultery or desertion, and 4) divorce and remarriage under a variety of circumstances. After discussing the major issues presented by the different views, Keener sides with those who believe that the Bible teaches divorce and remarriage for adultery, desertion, and some other limited specific circumstances.

In his handling of the topic, Keener places a heavy emphasis on the aspect of cultural background. As a result, . . . *And Marries Another* is saturated with secondary sources. Over half of the book is dedicated to endnotes, appendixes, abbreviations, as well as a very rich bibliography, all contributing to making it an excellent source of historical information on the topic.

The basic discussion of this book focuses on two sayings of Jesus: Matt 5:32, Matt 19, and two passages of Paul: 1 Cor 7 and 1 Tim 3:2. Matthew is chosen over Mark and Luke because of its much-discussed exception clause, "except in the case of immorality." After discussing the different interpretations Keener concludes that too specific an interpretation is placed on the word "immorality":

This term implies any sort of sexual sin, except when the context designates a particular kind; and the context here fails to narrow the meaning of "immorality" down in any way. Immorality here is not just

premarital sex, nor is it just incest; it is any kind of sexual unfaithfulness to one's current spouse. Since the kind of unfaithfulness normally perpetrated by people already married is adultery, the kind of immorality that would most often be implied here is adultery. (31)

Keener goes on to argue that Matthew employs a term broader than adultery because he wishes his exception to permit more than the word itself specifies. Therefore, sexual sin within marriage need not be limited to a spouse's having intercourse with another person (32).

For Keener, the principal point is unmistakable: divorce is an evil to be avoided at all costs, but it is valid when the salvation of the marriage is impossible. If the latter is dissolved, only the sinned-against partner is free, and consequently his or her remarriage is permissible. "If the divorce is valid, so is the remarriage" (36, 44, 47, 105, 106). And for those in invalid remarriages, the present tense of the verb in Matt 19:9 need not imply continuous adultery during the entire period of cohabitation (48).

The discussion of Paul on the issue of divorce and remarriage follows the same consistency: divorce should be avoided in all normal circumstances, and the believer that is "not under bondage" (1 Cor 7:15) is free to remarry (61). The phrase "husband of one wife" (1 Tim 3:2-7) is not directed toward divorced and remarried men (102). Keener's hermeneutical approach to the Pauline writings is "not only to ask what Paul said in his situation, but also ask what he would therefore say in ours" (103). According to Keener, the main failure of modern interpreters who quote Paul is their general ignorance of issues the apostle was specifically addressing.

The author blends his theological approach with his pastoral concern, concluding that

Jesus' message to everyone is plain enough: to those contemplating divorce, don't; to those inclined to condemn without knowing the circumstances, don't; to those near a prospective Christian divorce, offer yourselves as humble agents of reconciliation and healing; to those who have repented and made restitution (insofar as possible) for a sinful choice, trust his forgiveness; to those upon whom dissolution of marriage forced itself without invitation, be healed by God's grace and dare to stand for your freedom in Christ, which no one has the authority to take away from you. (109)

Even though Keener's work is theological and historical in its approach to the subject, there is probably room to contemplate the scope of the problem in the Christian community through some figures and statistics, its socio-psychological dimensions, and the effects and moral implications for those who divorce and remarry. There is also need for more pastoral concern and practical applications, as Keener briefly points out in the final chapter. Indeed, the integration of some of these elements

may elevate this already excellent work to the status of a classic on the subject.

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Longfield, Bradley J. *The Presbyterian Controversy: Fundamentalists, Modernists, and Moderates*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991. 333 pp. \$34.50.

Bradley Longfield's work on the Presbyterian controversy enters into one of the most intensively studied aspects of 19th- and 20th-century American religion. Perhaps the most comprehensive study up to the present has been Lefferts A. Loetscher's *The Broadening Church: A Study of Theological Issues in the Presbyterian Church since 1869* (1954). Beyond Loetscher's contribution, however, there have been numerous books on the principal contestants and institutions related to the controversy. Beyond strictly Presbyterian concerns, the denomination's dynamic struggle has been chronicled from several perspectives in the rapidly growing literature on the rise of fundamentalism.

In spite of the crowded field on the topic, Longfield makes a major contribution to our understanding of the Presbyterian controversy. Perhaps, we should say, he made a contribution *because of* the many previous studies. Having thoroughly mastered the secondary, and a great deal of the primary literature on the topic, Longfield puts forth insights that both build upon and cut across the findings of previous research. Thus he greatly increases our understanding of a complex phenomenon.

Longfield's study is not merely a serious academic treatise, but a practical case study reinforcing Dean M. Kelley's conclusion in *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing* (1972), that one reason why mainstream churches, including Presbyterianism, have been losing large numbers of members since the 1960s is that they have lost their theological identity.

The Presbyterian Controversy validates Kelley's hypothesis from a historical perspective. Longfield points out that in its struggle to adjust to modernity, the Presbyterian Church opted for doctrinal pluralism in an effort to maintain institutional unity. That move, he postulates, has left the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. "devoid of a clear theological voice" (4). The pluralistic solution, while working for a time in encouraging unity and vitality, eventually "contributed to the current identity crisis of the church and helped to undermine the foundation of the church's mission to the world" (234).

Longfield approaches the issue through examining the views and motivations of the leadership of the Presbyterian Church in the 1920s and 1930s, on the assumption that "it is possible to see precisely what factors