

Meier's attempt to reconstruct the historical Jesus thus rests on no very firm foundation and produces no assured results. Those who want solid information on the historical Jesus are far better off turning to Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, no matter how "naïve" it might be to do so.

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Primus, John H. *Holy Time: Moderate Puritanism and the Sabbath*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1989. viii + 184 pp. Hardcover, \$24.95; paperback, \$16.95.

Since the 1960s there has been a flurry of new interest in the phenomenon of English Sabbatarianism. Articles by Patrick Collinson, Herbert Richardson, Winton Solberg, Richard Greaves, and books by James T. Dennison, Kenneth L. Parker, witness to this. John H. Primus describes his contribution to this discussion as "a re-examination of the relationship between the emerging Puritan movement and the phenomenon of Sabbatarianism" in order to shed "additional light on the complex dynamics of the sixteenth-century Church of England" (vii). In his research he responds to current discussions and especially to Parker, who has "reopened the fundamental question of the origin of Sabbatarianism and its relationship to Puritanism" (2, 3).

Holy Time is not intended exclusively for specialists in Tudor Puritanism. For this reason, Primus includes very helpful contextual and explanatory paragraphs on events already known to experts (vii).

Part 1 is a brief historical sketch that highlights certain emphases which Parker tends to overlook. Chap. 1 describes the high Sabbath views in England already evident in the early Reformation. By the end of the sixteenth century "Sabbatarianism had become the linchpin in the Puritan program for more complete reform in England" (17), with one of its distinguishing characteristics being "the divine appointment of Sunday as the new day of rest" (20).

Primus makes a unique contribution in chap. 2 by discussing the unpublished papers of the important Dedham debate in the 1580s which demonstrate a lively controversy on the Sabbath. Central to the debate was a serious conflict about whether Sunday became the New Testament Sabbath by divine authority or by tradition.

The author then shifts in chap. 3 to a discussion of a "Cambridge circle" of theologians who advocated Sunday absolutism during the latter part of the sixteenth century. Primus describes them as "moderate Puritans" who appealed to the authority of the apostles or of Christ for the change of the day of worship from the seventh to the first, accepted the

fourth commandment as morally binding, insisted that Sunday was the Christian Sabbath of the New Testament, and that the church had no authority to change the day of worship.

In chap. 4 Primus describes the anti-Sabbatarian reaction. Sabbatarians insisted that the change of the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first came about by divine authority. Anti-Sabbatarians, on the other hand, pointed out that the change was solely a matter of church tradition, involving the freedom of the church to establish ceremonies, holy days, and other worship practices (94).

Part 2 consists of four topical essays about various facets of English Sabbatarianism. The first analyzes how Sabbatarianism functioned within its theological context. The second examines the legitimacy of the Sabbatarian claim that the continental reformers supported their views. The third, which investigates Sabbatarian theology itself, focuses on creation, resurrection, and sanctification as providing answers to the most hotly disputed aspects of Sabbatarianism: the institution, alteration, and celebration of the Sabbath. The final essay focuses on the central role of the Sabbath in the Puritan vision of a more fully reformed church, "a church purified of all Roman Catholic vestiges, one modeled after the early New Testament Church" (166). This vision for further reform was seen especially through the preaching of the Word, with the Sabbath as a way to bring people into the churches where the Word was proclaimed.

Primus uses the term "Sabbatarianism" as it was usually employed in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, not referring to worship on Saturday. He favors Greaves's definition as the most balanced and comprehensive. Sabbatarianism includes "the moral nature of the fourth commandment, Sunday absolutism, and strict Sabbath observance" (11).

Primus agrees with Parker that Sabbatarianism was not an exclusively Puritan innovation. However, he disagrees that "Puritan Sabbatarianism" was essentially the fraudulent invention of later Anglican propaganda. He argues that Sabbatarianism was a well-developed position in its own right and that by the seventeenth century it was intimately related to the Puritan movement (13).

Primus gives a persuasive presentation of the Sabbatarians' selective use of the writings of continental reformers. In spite of their attempts to rid the Church of England from every unscriptural Roman Catholic doctrine and practice, moderate Puritans had no objections to using their opponents' arguments on Sunday sacredness. Nicholas Bound, for example, would refer to the decrees of the Roman Catholic councils of Turin and Paris for support of Sunday absolutism.

Perhaps Primus's attitude to religious minorities could have been less biased. For example, he associates those advocating worshiping on the seventh-day Sabbath with "extreme Sabbatarianism" (94) and describes

them as a "radical fringe of Saturday Sabbatarians," who "carried fourth commandment literalism to the extreme" (8).

Holy Time is a defense of the Sabbatarianism of "moderate Puritanism." This "was not a radical movement with a hidden revolutionary agenda spawned by frustrated Presbyterians but was an honest, well-meaning effort on the part of moderates basically loyal to church and state to bring about spiritual and moral improvement in the lives of the people and hence to the nation." On the other hand, Primus criticizes anti-Sabbatarianism as "an unnecessarily harsh response to this moderate movement. It was a reactionary move to the right, a deeper and more conservative retrenchment into conformity rather than reformation" (98). Anti-Sabbatarianism, he feels, drove Sabbatarianism into the Puritan camp and was equally responsible for the increasing polarization of English Protestantism in the seventeenth century" (99).

Primus gives the Sabbatarians' arguments in favor of Sunday worship: Sunday was the Resurrection day, the apostles' day of worship, the Lord's day, the first day of creation, the first day of manna, the day of Jesus' baptism, the day the five thousand were fed, and the day of Pentecost. However, clear NT support for these arguments is lacking and one looks in vain for a NT command that supports the Sunday absolutism of English Sabbatarianism. Therefore, one should not be surprised if readers would concur with the judgment of anti-Sabbatarian Thomas Rogers, that "the Lord's day is not enjoined by God's commandment but by an human civil and ecclesiastical constitution" (86, 87). In the absence of any New Testament injunction it seems that Primus is unduly harsh in his criticism of the opposition against Sunday absolutism.

In spite of its weaknesses, the book makes an important contribution to the understanding of the Puritan experience. It is required reading for anyone with an interest in the Sabbath-Sunday question.

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Prioreschi, P. *Primitive and Ancient Medicine*. A History of Medicine, 1. Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991. xix + 642 pp. n.p.

One can only admire the breadth of coverage which P. Prioreschi has attempted in his book entitled *Primitive and Ancient Medicine*. The indefatigable author has, indeed, canvassed what is known about the elements and practice of medicine in the ancient world of China, India, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia, Israel, and the pre-Columbian Americas. Inevitably, the endeavor turns out to be too vast for one author to encompass. Thus, the strength of this work, i.e., its nature as a broad survey, also leads to its weakness in omissions, generalizations, and lack