who consulted exorcists were cut off from the community, and the exorcists themselves were to be stoned to death" (512).

The author's humanistic approach to ancient Israel's health laws is evident in his treatment of the dietary legislation. For instance, Prioreschi holds that the laws of clean and unclean meats were not given for health reasons because the Israelites could not have associated the eating of pork with the symptoms of trichinosis, since these appeared only several weeks after ingesting the pork (519). And this is, according to Prioreschi, too late for a cause-and-effect association. Prioreschi's argumentation, however, seems to overlook another more important cause-and-effect association: that of a God who would have revealed these laws for the good of His people.

Also, Prioreschi's discussion of motives for these laws is foreshortened in terms of the literature on this subject. At least nine different reasons for these laws have been suggested, but only two are addressed. His ultimate reason for rejecting the health motivation of dietary laws borders somewhat on the bizarre theologically. "The strongest argument, however, against the interpretation of those laws as public health measures is a theological one: if God was responsible for health and disease, if he alone decided who was sick and who was not, what would have been the sense of taking measures that would have interfered with his will? To a certain extent it would even have been blasphemous." (520) Prioreschi's perspective here sounds more like a caricature than a characterization of the relationship between health and disease in the Bible and resembles more the fatalism of Hinduism or Buddhism.

A final point about the book has to do with its concluding chapter. The latter does attempt to sum up the accomplishments of ancient medicine; but the following exaltation of the Greeks as the scientific pioneers who led to better medicine, although true to facts, is somewhat distracting. This type of evaluation really belongs as the introduction to volume 2 of the series, rather than as a conclusion to volume one. Indeed, the ancient world should have been allowed to stand on its own merits in its own terms.

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Richey, Russell E. *Early American Methodism.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991. xix + 137 pp. $25.00.

In line with its title, *Early American Methodism* treats the denomination's history between 1770 and 1810 in what Richey admits "is self-consciously a revisionist endeavor" (xi). The volume's six essays center

on issues of continuity and change throughout the period. In particular, Richey rejects the common belief that Methodism underwent its single and most important change in 1784 at the time of organization.

The highpoint of the book, and in many ways the justification for its publication, lies in its analysis of Methodism's use of language. Richey identifies a taxonomy of four Methodist languages. The first was the evangelical vernacular of religious experience that the denomination shared with other pietistic groups. This language was richly biblical and highly evocative. Thus a preacher who had "found great freedom" might preach in such a way as to "melt" hearts and "knit" believers together in "love." This idiom was the language of pulpit, journal, and publication, yet it never became part of the Methodist canon.

Methodism's second language spoke of such things as "classes," "societies," "circuits," and "holiness." This language derived from the Wesleys, and did much to shape early Methodism. The Wesleyan idiom was generally highly compatible with the evangelical vernacular, even though at times there were tensions between them.

Methodism's third language was that of the episcopacy, which came from the Church of England via John Wesley. Such terms as "deacon," "elder," and "bishop" are included. The episcopal language was the language of formal church organization and sacraments. While it found natural use in official documents, Richey points out, it proved difficult to integrate with the first two languages.

American Methodism's fourth language came into prominence somewhat later as the language of republicanism. It uplifted such terminology as "liberty" and "free citizens." As such, it found more use among those schismatic Methodists who fought the episcopal system than it did among the Methodist leadership, even though by the mid-nineteenth century it was being used increasingly by mainline Methodism.

Richey demonstrates how these four languages both enriched Methodism and created difficulties. Those difficulties arose when church leaders or members misunderstood each other because they were speaking in different idioms.

On the whole, *Early American Methodism* best illustrates the use of Methodist idioms in terms of the evangelical vernacular and Wesleyan languages. Of special value and insight in that usage are chapters 1, 2, and 5, which explore the multifaceted implications of such terms as "community," "fraternity," "order," "quarterly meeting," "camp meeting," and "conference" as a means of grace. Running across those verbal explorations are the strands of continuity that forms a second aspect of the book's organizational format.

Early American Methodism's most serious weakness is that it reads more like a series of related but somewhat disconnected essays than a carefully-constructed book. As such, it suffers from more than minimal

redundancy and what appear to be discontinuities and unevenness in both thought and style. A reader gets the impression that its various chapters form preliminary investigations of its several topics.

If that is the case, I look forward to a better-integrated and more fully developed treatment of earliest American Methodism that widens the beachhead established in this volume. In his four-fold linguistic taxonomy, Richey has developed the tools for such an undertaking. Meanwhile, that taxonomy should prove helpful to historical investigators in other traditions who can use similar methods to enrich our understanding of other denominations.

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Windham, Neal. *New Testament Greek for Preachers and Teachers: Five Areas of Application*. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1991. 247 pp. Cloth, $39.50; paperback, $19.50.

Windham calls his work "a book about exegesis and, to a lesser degree, exposition" (2). He intends for this book to be used as a reference manual—in addition to other books—by those who have already studied basic Greek. The work assumes some proficiency in translation and "at least a casual acquaintance with general hermeneutical principles" (2).

New Testament Greek for Preachers and Teachers covers five areas or building blocks, as Windham calls them: textual criticism, morphology, word study, syntax, and discourse. To the first, he dedicates two chapters; to each of the others, one. Each chapter ends with a conclusion, practical problems, and a short but well-chosen bibliography.

The first three appendices contain textual criticism information: lists of manuscripts, versions, and church fathers, with their locations. Two brief appendices deal with roots and affixes. The final appendix contains a list of writers and writings frequently cited in the lexica. Author, subject, and Scripture index complete the book.

In the first chapter on textual criticism, Windham presents the basics of the discipline: why it is needed, what the sources are, the kinds of errors found. In the second chapter he explains the procedures of textual criticism, giving three examples from 1 John. He concludes that pastors need to use textual criticism responsibly and present it in an interesting, informative fashion in their sermons.

Windham maintains that "exegesis begins with morphology" (65). Roots, prefixes, and suffixes are explored by means of examples. The reader is instructed to pay attention to different kinds of nouns: those that suggest process, result, type of person, or abstraction. The information