

benefit from Him. This view is held as opposed to the other two "wider-hope" views of universal evangelism before death and universal evangelization at or after death.

Sanders has done his homework, and as a source/reference work the volume is valuable. The reader will find a rich field for follow-up study and analysis. The author's analysis of the various viewpoints is fair-minded and honest. One gets the feeling that the writer does not desire to pigeonhole anyone into theological slots fitting his purpose, but simply attempts to show where the various writers stand and why.

While some universalists will undoubtedly read and interact with Sanders, I suspect his main audience (and chief challengers) will be restrictivist evangelicals. Sanders' main aim seems to be to move such restrictivists to his inclusivist "wider-hope" position.

The biggest barrier to such a move is the question of motivation for mission. If missions are not vital to the salvation of non-Christians, why the urgent thrust to reach the unreached? Hundreds (yea thousands) of missionaries have left home and culture because they believed their mission was crucial to the salvation of those they ministered to. Unfortunately, Sanders deals only briefly with this issue (283-286). If he wants to "convert" evangelical restrictivists to his view, he needs to deal with this aspect in depth.

Non-evangelicals will probably wish Sanders had broadened his scope. Questions related to religious pluralism are arising with increasing frequency and intensity and can be ignored only at the risk of irrelevancy. What are the implications of his inclusivism for Christianity's relationship with other religions? What of conflicting truth claims? It would have been helpful if Sanders had, at least, sketched some broad outlines suggesting where his approach would lead in answer to these issues. Readers seeking answers to such questions could begin by consulting two other recent books: *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* by Lesslie Newbigin, and *Dissonant Voices: Religious Pluralism and the Question of Truth* by Harold Netland, both published by Eerdmans.

While we may have wished for more, what Sanders has given us is extremely valuable. The book should be the starting point for many interesting, hopefully helpful, and certainly heated discussions of Christian mission.

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Wright, N. T. *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992. 316 pp. \$25.95.

This volume presents fourteen unpublished studies on the themes of Christ and the Law in Paul. Through these the author expounds his

conviction that covenant theology, usually neglected in the current debate, is one of the main clues for understanding Paul. Wright's argument is that Paul's theology consists mainly in "the redefinition, by means of christology and pneumatology of the key Jewish doctrines of monotheism and election" (1) within the framework of his own thought patterns, both as a Pharisee and as a Christian.

In Part One, ("Adam, Israel and the Messiah," etc.) the author proposes an interpretation of 1 Cor 15:20-57 and Rom 5:12-21 on the basis of Jewish apocalypics: God's purposes for the human race are fulfilled in Israel, "the last Adam," through the Messiah, who incarnates his people and becomes the source of new life for humanity (35-39). This incorporative notion of the Messiah as the one in whom the people of God are summed up (41), is for Wright a major category within Pauline theology ("*Christos* as 'Messiah' in Paul: Philemon 6", 41-55). It helps to explain how Jesus' perfect obedience undoes the disobedience of Adam (Phil 2:5-11), making unnecessary any gnostic or Philonic speculations about an *Ürmensch* or Primal man (95) or about the pre-existence of a human being (against Dunn et al.).

From the perspective of what he calls "christological monotheism" Wright interpretes 1 Cor 8 and Col 1:15-20, without appealing to gnosticism (against Käsemann, etc.) or to any particular branch of Jewish Wisdom literature (against Aletti) or other (misguided!) *religions-geschichtliche* parallels: he finds a more satisfactory answer (building on R. Hossley and Morna Hooker) in Paul's Christian reading of the *Shema* and Jewish monotheistic confessions, in which "the Creator is the Redeemer, because of his faithfulness to the covenant" (109).

What stands out in Wright's analysis is his evaluation of Paul's theological context. Rather than doing total exegesis of some *locus classicus*, he jumps to stimulating synthesis—often through imaginative insights—intended to show the internal coherence of some Pauline (apparently contradictory) key texts.

In Part Two, the author applies his exegesis to some Pauline controversial statements on the Law. Thus, the clue of Gal 3 would not be those problems with which existentialist theologians have wrestled ("achievement," "accomplishment," etc.), nor those traditional in Protestantism ("legalism," "nomism," "self-righteousness," etc.), but corporate Christology. Since the Messiah is the representative of Israel, the promises to Abraham are realized in his being able at the same time, "to take on himself Israel's curse and exhaust it" (151). Thus, the death of Jesus inaugurates the new covenant, in which the Law is at the same time vindicated and interiorized, relativized and reaffirmed. The twin topics of Wright's study—Christ and the Law—reach their richest joint expression in Romans 10:4: The Messiah is the climax of the covenant (244). Jesus takes on the role of Torah, as the charter of the people of God and as the final revelation of God himself (266). This allows a more positive view of the Torah (even in its negative functions). In the new covenant (fulfilled

by the work of the Spirit), the Law retains its function of demarcating the people of God (214), even if the new badge of membership is faith (156).

Many other areas of debate in Pauline theology are affected by the arguments and conclusions advanced by Wright: the idea of Messiahship as "incorporative" (258); the definition of *dikaïosune* as "covenant membership"; the translation of Rom 8:3 as "sin-offering" (214); the revision of Rom 7 and 8 *not* from the viewpoint of "man under the law," but of "the law under man;" the reading of Romans as a treatise on the nature of the people of God rather than a book about individual salvation; the important place given to *story* in Pauline theology; etc.

Wright makes a good point when he claims that the need of announcing to the world that the promises to Abraham have come true in Jesus Christ explains Paul's missionary concerns better than Räisänen's "half-suppressed working of his own psyche" or Watson's "sociological agenda for which theology was a mere pretext" (174).

Less convincing are chap. 7 ("Curse and Covenant: Galatians 3:10-14") and chap. 9 ("Reflected Glory: 2 Cor 3"). The narrative analysis of Rom 8:1-11 on the model of R. B. Hays contributes little, and chap. 12 ("Echoes of Cain in Romans 7") is an exegetical *tour de force* unnecessary there.

All in all, Wright's work remains highly significant. Although not everything is yet demonstrated, his provocative approach seems more central to Paul than some "classical" hermeneutics proposed by others.

The volume also includes an excellent bibliography (268-287) and three useful indexes (288-316).

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