

200 B.C. through Dante's *Paradiso* in the fourteenth century. Beyond that, Russell has generally limited himself to Christian insights and has only minimally dealt with the constructions of Judaism and Islam. The thought of Eastern and animistic religions has been avoided altogether. Those delimitations are quite understandable and defensible, but the volume could have been made richer by cross-cultural comparison and especially contrasts, even if the cross-cultural aspects were kept to a minimum.

The key to Russell's treatment of his topic is his understanding of "metaphorical ontology." "Metaphorical ontology," he writes, "is the use of figures of speech to go beyond science, history, and poetry to indicate the deepest, divine, heavenly reality" (8). Russell argues that the literalistic language of science and history cannot capture the depth and complexity of heavenly realities. There are other ways of looking at things beyond those thought of as modern. Traditional Christian and Jewish thinkers realized that metaphor expressed a deeper insight into reality than could be expressed in the pedestrian language of science and history. Russell suggests that the facts of eternity can only be approximated through metaphor, since they soar beyond human imagination and reason.

A History of Heaven's subtitle, *The Singing Silence*, highlights both the fact of human limitation and the metaphorical ontology to which writers on the topic were driven in their desire to express the inexpressible. But even metaphor can't really do the job of enabling people to fully understand heaven. The depth of the topic extends even beyond the flight of metaphor. As a result, suggests Russell, the metaphors continued to become richer and more complex through Dante's masterpiece, the discussion of which provides the crescendo on which the book ends.

A History of Heaven is a genuine contribution to a neglected field. Readers can look forward with anticipation to further treatment of the topic as Russell expands the beachhead established by this work.

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Ryken, Leland. *Redeeming the Time: A Christian Approach to Work and Leisure*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995. 301 pp. \$17.99.

Contemporary views and attitudes toward work and leisure are affected by false values of consumerism, materialism, and the idolatry of eternal youth. The historical currents of modernization, urbanization, and technologization have helped to bring great pressures, even upon Christians, to accept false values. For many Christians, work is treated as a curse, except where it produces wealth, and leisure is approached with guilt. These negative attitudes to work and leisure are the reasons why Leland Ryken wrote *Redeeming the Time*. It is a most significant work and one of the boldest attempts of the late twentieth century to seek the rehabilitation of work and leisure while encouraging Christians to contribute to the process of their rehabilitation.

It is Ryken's view that while contemporary secular authors have published

a plethora of studies on work and leisure as separate issues, there is a need for Christians to reflect on these themes conjointly. In the early twentieth century, Richard C. Cabot (1914) made an excellent attempt to bring the two themes together in his book, *What Men Live By: Work, Play, Love, Worship*. However, he was not comprehensive in his study due to his attendance to multiple themes.

Ryken's arguments are skillfully developed from the beginning, where he seeks to rehabilitate the words "work" and "leisure." He notes, for example, that "work is a means of providing for life's needs and wants." It is "a means of production," a means for human achievement, psychological satisfaction, and of service. On the other hand, leisure is seen as moments in life when one is not doing something or moments when one is doing something for entertainment, playing, or resting. The function of leisure is for "rest, relaxation, enjoyment and physical and psychic health. It allows people to receive the distinctly human values, to build relationships, to strengthen family bonds and to put themselves in touch with the world and nature." But Ryken argues further that, in history, the pendulum concerning attitudes of work and leisure has swung to extremes, while inadequate solutions have been presented to correct the extremes, thus leaving us in great confusion today.

In addition to the earlier described sources of misconception concerning work and leisure, Ryken argues that Greek dualistic philosophy has through their teaching influenced some Christians, leading them to asceticism or overwork. Other issues that form the foundation for the distortion of work are the Enlightenment which encouraged humanism, the ethic of self-interest, idealization of nature, secularization of religious life, the world's success syndrome, information overload, and calendar and clock domination.

In the ethic of self-interest, people are trying to get too much out of work and thus have found the consequences of fatigue, isolation, powerlessness, the loss of the sense of vocation, loss of a devotional life, and a poor quality of leisure.

As a correction of the confusion in the areas of work and leisure, Ryken advocates a new focus on the creative activity of God. Ryken notes that God both works and finds time for leisure. Work is a part of the Christian calling and the reality is that work has been given to us by God to lead us to salvation.

In my opinion this is a critical text which seeks to understand the ethics of work, leisure, and related themes. While it is not a highly technical work, it is, however, a warm, inspirational book for laypersons.

Ryken states that "the biblical Sabbath leaves no doubt about the need for work and rest in our lives" (286). However, he appears to ignore the biblical command to keep the seventh day holy while suggesting that any day within the week may be designated as time for exemption from work. Such minimalization of a rhythm within the order of creation has created much of the misunderstanding concerning work and leisure which it is Ryken's purpose to transform.

Ryken has made a significant endeavor to show how to transform work and leisure into a real model of Christian stewardship. The book will achieve its intended purpose if it is read and applied to one's life.