

5-1-1997

Systematic theology: biblical, historical, and evangelical, v 2

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Recommended Citation

Muller, Richard A. (1997) "Systematic theology: biblical, historical, and evangelical, v 2," *Consensus*: Vol. 23 : Iss. 1 , Article 10.
Available at: <http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol23/iss1/10>

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as a fatalistic determinism—but at the same time he did assume that the infection was inescapable. Sorry, Professor Guthrie, “You *do* got to.”

Yet another example of the utter absence from this volume of competent research and, indeed, of appreciation of the richness of the Christian tradition, is its brief denunciation of Anselm and the “satisfaction theory” of atonement as “unbiblical”. This view must be unbiblical, Guthrie avers, because Scripture never uses the word “satisfaction” (p. 258). (Of course, this very same problem—the failure of Scripture to use a term—does not prevent Guthrie from advocating his own version of the doctrine of the Trinity.) After offering a caricature of Anselm’s teaching—as if it rested on the assumption that “Jesus came” to “change God’s mind”—a view of God’s nature entirely foreign to Anselm—Guthrie appeals to Calvin as the author of an alternative position. Once again, Calvin: “Christ allowed himself to be condemned...to make *satisfaction* for our redemption” and again, “Christ was offered to the Father in death as an expiatory sacrifice that when he discharged all *satisfaction* through his sacrifice, we might cease to be afraid of God’s wrath” (*Institutes*, II.xvi.5, 6). If Anselm’s theory is unbiblical because of its use of the term “satisfaction”, so too is Calvin’s. Guthrie ought not to appeal to Calvin for support. And if the concept identified by both Anselm and Calvin by the term “satisfaction” is a biblical concept (an assumption held nearly universally by the Reformers, the Reformed confessions, and the orthodox Protestant tradition), then Guthrie is neither biblical nor Reformed.

The preceding paragraphs do not, perhaps, constitute a politically correct review. But it is also the case that, with the publication of every review of a textbook, the intellectual, religious, and spiritual formation of young minds is at stake. A polite or consciously innocuous review of a poorly done book may contribute to the perpetuation of error, incompetence, or inanity. This reviewer will not accept that burden.

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Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical, Evangelical. Volume II

James Leo Garrett
Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995
x + 872 pp. \$45.00

In this second and final volume of his *Systematic Theology*, Professor James Leo Garrett of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary completes his highly instructive journey through all of the traditional topics of

theological system. Volume one (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990) offered prolegomena followed by chapters on "Revelation and the Bible", "God the Holy and Loving Father; the Trinity", "Creation, Providence and Suprahuman Beings", "Humankind and Sin", and "The Person of Jesus Christ". Volume two presents the topics of "The Work of Jesus Christ", "The Holy Spirit", "Becoming a Christian and Christian Life", "The Church", and "The Last Things". This second volume lives up to Garrett's promise to provide the outlines of a theology that rests on biblical and historical foundations without intrusion of a particular philosophical perspective. As in the first volume, the author has literally "done his homework" in the review and assimilation of a vast array of sources, ranging from the biblical text itself, to commentaries and essays on aspects of biblical theology, to classic treatises on theology from the patristic period down to modern times, to contemporary historical and theological works bearing on the various topics of theological system, to standard theological systems of this century.

One of the characteristics of Garrett's system that needs especially to be noted is its balanced, judicious, and nearly invariably objective presentation of materials. While holding true to the teachings of his own Baptist faith, Garrett so carefully and judiciously presents alternatives—notably doctrines concerning sacraments as means of grace, infant baptism, and diverse eschatological perspectives—that teachers and students from other confessional and denominational positions will find his work instructive. Some may find this broad and irenic approach problematic: it is at once the strength and the weakness of Garrett's system that he states all views so clearly and in their best light, leaving much of the burden of the disputative or assertive task to the professor in the classroom. This breadth and care to state all positions is perhaps most evident in Garrett's discussion of eschatology, specifically, of various millennial views. The strengths and weaknesses of all positions are noted and the conclusion looks, just a bit wistfully, toward the possibility that some as yet unidentified "key" might be found to formulate an "amalgam" that "would utilize the strengths or the four major existing views" (II, p. 769).

The two volumes serve well as a broadly evangelical or traditional Protestant dogmatics which would, presumably, be supplemented with more strictly confessional materials. They can function, moreover, as a basic seminary text or, indeed, as a guide to the neophyte instructor who stands in need of bibliographical support and analysis of a wide series of basic issues in his or her first core course preparation.

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