

Gonzalez, Justo L. and Catherine G. *Liberation Preaching*. Preacher's Library. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1980. 127 pp. Paperback, \$4.95.

This small book is one that challenges the preacher not only professionally, but also intellectually. It is especially designed for preachers who are white, middle (to upper) class and North American. These preachers, the authors contend, really stand more in need of liberation than do their female, minority, or third-world counterparts.

The first chapter itself is, in my opinion, worth the price of the book. In contrast to many publications by and about liberation theologians that can be difficult and confusing for the newcomer to the field, this one gives a good, informative, and easily grasped introduction to the topic. In this chapter, the reader is also introduced to the concept of "ideological suspicion," which concept then serves as a methodology throughout the remainder of the volume. "Ideological suspicion" comes about as we recognize our own historical-cultural captivity, and as we realize that all other interpreters, and even the writers of Scripture, experienced a "captivity" that is at once similar and yet uniquely their own.

Chaps. 2 and 3 offer specific aids for hearing the text of Scripture and for interpreting it. Especially noteworthy is these authors' funeral eulogy for "Lone-Ranger Bible Study"—a private-study style which, according to the authors, is particularly common in the West. This "privateness," they feel, can be individual, cultural, or national, and it can even be historical. The Apostle Paul held that Scripture, and all theology, should be understood together with all of God's people. Moreover, since the church is a "global city" of "fellow-citizens," it becomes imperative for the church to seek to understand Scripture completely and globally, benefiting from the inter-cultural exchange which affords continually increasing insight into the meaning of the Word. And beyond this, there is also the fact that the Scriptures were actually written as a part of a community, and thus are best appreciated when read aloud in community. The authors point out that if the Third World has anything to teach the West, the lesson will relate to the necessity for community, both in our approach to the world and in our approach to the Scriptures. In these same chapters, the authors also attempt to demonstrate how "ideological suspicion" may be directed toward lectionaries, commentaries, etc.; and they introduce the reader, as well, to a number of new and important sources from Christians of the Third World.

The need for a book such as *Liberation Preaching* is augmented by the increasing cultural diversity in many North-American Christian congregations, especially in the urban and educational centers. Preachers who are not aware of this diversity may miss or even offend significant portions

of their audiences. Perhaps even more important is the need for the speaker to become aware of his or her own historical and cultural backgrounds, which serve as a foundation for interpreting Scripture and even for the choice of Scripture for interpretation.

The book ends with a chapter on "The Liberating Process." This attempts to tie together the various elements brought to attention. The authors conclude that there is "only one liberation" and therefore "only one oppression," "only one Victor" and "only one Enemy" (pp. 109-110). The victory, they point out, "is the Lord's" and "the powers of oppression which he has defeated and is defeating are in the final analysis only one" (*ibid.*).

For those who seek a "how-to" book, *Liberation Preaching* will probably be a disappointment, for it is not a manual on style, method, or technique. Rather, its aim is to provide a broadened perspective—a world-view—which the authors hope will lead white middle-class pastors in North America to recognize their own cultural and economic oppression and commence emancipation from it—and then, in turn, to incorporate this liberation into their preaching perspective and sermonic content. For readers who desire information on the mechanics of liberation preaching, the authors have included a concise, but well selected, bibliography (pp. 119-120) that provides, at least, examples of the style practiced by liberation writers.

Battle Ground, Washington 98604

BRUCE CAMPBELL MOYER

Kubo, Sakae, and Specht, Walter F. *So Many Versions?: Twentieth-century English Versions of the Bible*. Revised and enlarged edition. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1983. 401 pp. Paperback, \$9.95.

This revised and enlarged edition of *So Many Versions?* by Sakae Kubo and Walter F. Specht is a most welcome publication. Indeed, the first edition is, in my view, the best treatment of the topic that was available when it appeared in 1975, and this enlarged edition manifests the same high quality of analysis and discussion. (For a review of the first edition, by D. Malcolm Maxwell, see *AUSS* 15 [1977]: 80-81.)

In the eight years between the appearance of these two editions (1975-83), there has been a further surge in the production of English Bible translations, as well as completion of OT sections of versions whose NTs had already appeared by 1975. In fact, this second edition of *So Many Versions?* has incorporated so much additional material that it has an increase of more than 60 percent in its number of pages (now 401 compared