

secularized persons are not consistently rational themselves if they dismiss theism as irrational only because it does not match the presuppositions of their own system.

The rational effectiveness of such an apology, however, does not appear so impressive when one realizes that the "rationality" of a system does not necessarily entail its "truth." Nash is aware of this fact when he correctly explains that "people have in the past behaved quite rationally with regard to beliefs that we know to be false" (p. 75). Additionally, naturalism is not shown to be either "irrational" or "false." Consequently, the issue regarding a rational basis for choosing between theism and naturalism as systems seems to reach a stalemate.

One wonders whether rational apologetics should argue for more than the rationality of theism as a system. An effective apologetics should include the "truth" dimension of the system. Nash fails at that point, yet his "comparison of ideological systems" approach to apologetics could prove to be fruitful if the issue of "truth" is integrated into that system. That would require Nash to develop his thinking from "faith and reason" to "faith and truth." According to this strategy, the opposite views to be considered must first be analyzed on the basis of their systematic presuppositions; second, be developed in their actual theoretical interpretation of reality as a whole; and, third, be compared regarding their "truth" on the basis of the verification of their theoretical claims on the meaning of reality with reality itself. Nash sets the stage for such a strategy in the first part of *Faith & Reason*, but fails to carry it to its ultimate consequence as it relates to the "truth" dimension of the controversy between systems. Such an approach would require not only a critical analysis of theism's presuppositions and components (including ontological, metaphysical, and epistemological structures), but also should include as "the opponent" more than just naturalism. Several different ideological systems that currently challenge not the rationality but the truthfulness of Christian theism should be considered. If followed, this approach could prove to be beneficial not only for apologetic purposes, but for a much needed self-criticism of theism as well.

Despite its deficiencies, Nash's book is helpful. Anyone interested in a clear introduction to the current state of rational apologetics in the Reformed tradition will benefit from Nash's *Faith & Reason*.

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Pinnock, Clark H., ed. *The Grace of God, the Will of Man: A Case for Arminianism*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989. xiv + 318 pp. Paperback, \$14.95.

Clark H. Pinnock was a Calvinistic evangelical until about 1970. Since then he has been on a pilgrimage from "Augustine to Arminius"—

an experience shared in chapter one of *The Grace of God*. The following chapters (2-15) constitute a symposium of essays on determinism versus free will by such scholars as Fritz Guy, I. Howard Marshall, Terry L. Miethe, Jack W. Cottrell, Richard Rice, William L. Craig, John E. Sanders, C. Stephen Evans, Randall G. Basinger, William G. Macdonald, William J. Abraham, Grant R. Osborne, Jerry L. Walls, and Bruce Reichenbach.

While the book's title includes the phrase "A Case for Arminianism," the authors, generally, do not subscribe to a thoroughgoing, classical Arminianism. Craig suggests a Calvinist-Arminian rapprochement, Abraham encourages Calvinists and Arminians to borrow lavishly from each other, and Osborne prefers a modified Arminian theology that balances sovereignty and responsibility. However, each author begins his chapter by refuting the Calvinist/determinist position on a given issue before contending for one that is free will.

Central to the issue of determinism is the question of God's sovereignty. How can God be sovereign unless His will, His knowledge, His justice, His love, and His grace be absolute? But piling absolute upon absolute results in serious paradox if not outright contradiction. Hence, Cottrell and Basinger call for a modified, biblical understanding of God's sovereign will because deterministic/absolute sovereign will leads to fatalism. Reichenbach, moreover, argues for true human freedom and moral responsibility (humans are more than mere animals) by denying the necessitarian view of divine sovereignty and asserting that man has genuine freedom to accept or reject God's offer of grace.

Critical, also, to the issue of determinism is the question of God's character. Can God, through His foreknowledge, elect some of His creatures to be damned and still be loving and just?

One way to deal with the divine attributes is to make one of them absolute and condition the others accordingly. This seems to be what happens when Guy considers the love of God. A loving God, as defined in the life and teachings of Jesus, would not will any of His creatures to be damned. But a loving God, by the same token, would not force any to be saved if they choose otherwise. Universalism may be attractive, but it is not biblical.

In discussing God's grace, Marshall and Miethe argue for a universal or unlimited atonement because the alternative is election in the sense that God elects some to be deprived of His grace—a position contrary to the clear witness of scripture, in which God makes appeals for all mankind to repent and be saved. Walls seeks to show how Wesley's conditional view of predestination and a modified divine-command theory avoid the charge that God is immoral and unjust.

But if the character of God is the Achilles heel for Calvinistic determinism, God's foreknowledge is the Achilles heel for Arminianism. Arminius himself did not know quite how to deal with the dilemma. The

prophetic element in scripture requires divine foreknowledge, yet absolute foreknowledge does deny human freedom.

Craig finds the solution in Molina's doctrine of middle knowledge, which is enjoying a current resurgence, but which must be somewhat suspect because of, among other considerations, the convoluted logic it requires. Rice rejects Molina's thesis ("if God's creatures have genuine freedom, which possible world is actualized depends on their decisions as well as on God's") in favor of a doctrine of divine foreknowledge which is inclusive except for the content of future free decisions. Concerning prophecy, however, Rice allows for "exceptional" acts of divine intervention. But, one might ask, does this call for "exceptional" divine judgment for those whose freedom has thus been violated? My sympathies, however, are with Rice's view. Would it be too much to say that God has selective foreknowledge? By insisting upon absolute divine foreknowledge do we deny Him freedom of choice in His sphere while requiring it for ourselves in ours?

Sanders makes a critical point with respect to the whole issue of divine determinism. He contends that our reading of the text of scripture is governed by "control beliefs." These are preconceptions about God that we begin with but which do not originate in scripture. This point is critical and needs further development. It seems obvious that the theology of Calvin, Luther, and others was controlled by beliefs about God that had their origin in Greek philosophy. There is a fundamental correlation between the idea of immutability and God as the unmoved mover. God is the source of all motion, therefore He cannot move. Since He cannot move, He cannot change. Hence with God there is no before or after, only an eternal present. The problem with all of this is that it is not scriptural, nor is it logically consistent (Rice—it denies God's omniscience), nor is it acceptable, given our present knowledge of the universe. What is changeless about God is His character. God is love.

The book's strength is also its weakness. Having been written by a number of authors, the insights, perspectives, and perceptions are enriching and broadening. But, quite naturally, it lacks an internal consistency. The writers do not agree on all points. Moreover, in arguing their case they are limited to one chapter. But, given their task, there is probably far less risk in not saying enough than in saying too much.

The book is not, and does not intend to be, the last word on the subject. But it is an extremely interesting and helpful source for those engaged in the pursuit of knowledge on a very important issue for all serious Christian scholars, especially at a time when the swing is away from Calvinistic determinism.