

appear to be colored more by his understanding of the Trinity than by the text itself. It seems, then, that his view that God's glory is the unifying center of the Bible is, perhaps, based more upon his theological presuppositions rather than upon the inductive data originating in the text.

In spite of its weaknesses, Fuller has made an evangelical contribution to the discussion of the unity of Scripture. Perhaps its lasting contribution may be the very call to attempt to engage in inductive study when dealing with Scripture and its attempt to emphasize the Bible's unity rather than its often-supposed disunity.

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Geisler, Norman L. and Ralph E. MacKenzie. *Roman Catholics and Evangelicals: Agreements and Differences*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995. 538 pp. Paper, \$24.99.

Norman Geisler and Ralph MacKenzie have coauthored a book which describes the theological agreements and differences between Roman Catholics and Evangelicals. But, let me add quickly that this is not a book to refuel the doctrinal controversies between the two traditions. Its purpose is quite the opposite. Though conscious of real doctrinal differences, the authors intend "to examine some of our common spiritual roots and see if we have any theological or moral bridges upon which we both can travel" (15).

Conspicuous for the writing of this book is the March 1994 document signed between Roman Catholics and Evangelicals, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together." Although the authors wait until the last appendix of the book to evaluate it, they articulate a positive and sincere doctrinal response in favor of this document. Even in their candid, and sometimes blunt, expositions of the doctrinal differences between the two traditions, they write with respect for and genuine pathos toward Roman Catholics. Their aim is obviously to present the doctrinal foundation on which these two groups of Christians can have a united voice "to fight the forces of evil in our society and our world" (357).

The twenty chapters are divided into three parts. Part one, "Areas of Doctrinal Agreement," presents eight doctrines shared by both traditions and based upon "the creeds and confessions and councils of the Christian church of the first five centuries" (17). The authors believe this doctrinal unity is essentially Augustinian. Thus both traditions agree on the doctrine of Revelation and an inspired and inerrant Scripture (chap. 1). They share the same basic orthodox view of God and the Trinity (chap. 2), of human beings (chap. 3), and of Christ (chap. 4). In chapter 5, the authors discuss the common core of Augustinian beliefs in the doctrine of salvation by grace. The agreements on the doctrine of the church center around its foundation, nature, and function (chap. 6), and those on ethics are rooted in the nature and will of God and his revelation to mankind (chap. 7). Finally, both share common views about personal and cosmic eschatology (chap. 8).

Part two includes eight chapters which deal with areas of doctrinal differences. These include the apocrypha (chap. 9), the infallible authority of

Scripture (chap. 10), the infallibility of the teaching magisterium of the church (chap. 11), the doctrine of justification by faith alone through Christ alone (chap. 12), the sacraments as a cause of grace (chap. 13), the visibility of the church and papal supremacy (chap. 14), mariology (chap. 15), and purgatory (chap. 16).

The third part is its culmination. Since Evangelicals and Roman Catholics have so much in common, as presented in part one, and, in spite of the significant doctrinal differences expounded upon in part two, the authors "believe that there are, nonetheless, many areas of common spiritual heritage and practical social and moral cooperation possible" (357). These areas include social action (chap. 17), educational goals (chap. 18), spiritual heritage (chap. 19), and evangelism (chap. 20).

The strengths of this book are obvious from the beginning. The authors, both Evangelicals, present to an Evangelical audience the official doctrinal beliefs of Roman Catholicism. This they skilfully do by referring to well-known Roman Catholic authorities whom they list in the footnote on p. 1. They also present a well-articulated and scholarly Protestant perspective on the same doctrines. Many Protestants will be surprised to learn of the Augustinian heritage of both traditions.

Some of the weaknesses are just as obvious. One occurs repeatedly in the section on agreements. While, for example, Geisler and MacKenzie attempt to show the Augustinian doctrinal agreement on salvation, they distance themselves for fear of sounding as if their understanding of salvation is too Catholic. They make sure their readers know that although there is an agreement on salvation by grace, there is in fact no agreement on how this salvation is granted to the individual. They even mention that Roman Catholics do not have the same understanding of salvation by grace as Protestants do (85-86). As these disclaimers are presented one begins to wonder to what extent there is a real doctrinal commonality between the two traditions. Are the authors so intently irenic that they stretch the doctrinal agreement? Such distancing occurs also in the chapters on the doctrines of revelation, human beings, ecclesiology, and eschatology.

The last section and, more particularly, the last chapter on cooperation in evangelism, raise some concerns. The authors give, as a good example of cooperation, the Billy Graham crusades in which Roman Catholic clergy participate. Many Evangelicals do not agree with their conviction on this matter. Thus one may ask: as Evangelicals, for whom are Geisler and MacKenzie speaking? Clearly not all Evangelicals. Also, when the authors describe the goodwill of Roman Catholics who desire to unite with Evangelicals in social cooperation, do they have in mind only Roman Catholics in the United States? It is well known that where Roman Catholics are the predominant religious group such goodwill does not always exist.

The intent of this book is therefore felt to be clearly political. The authors long for a reformation of the social climate in the United States and perceive that cooperation between Evangelicals and Roman Catholics could possibly realize this objective (357). One way of arguing in favor of such cooperation is to show that there are some doctrinal agreements between the two traditions.

Although this book is to be commended for its scholarship, another weakness occurs when statements are made that some Roman Catholics agree with the Protestant understanding of a doctrine and yet no reference is given to support

such an affirmation (for examples, see pp. 196 and 216).

This work will appeal to those who are interested in ecumenical dialogue and the present state of relationships between Roman Catholics and Evangelicals. Geisler and MacKenzie have published an excellent work that will certainly have an impact on ecumenical trends in the United States. Yet one wonders if the two Jerusalem crosses at the top of every page will, in the end, convince Evangelicals and Roman Catholics that they have enough in common to become a political force for social change.

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Grenz, Stanley J. *Theology for the Community of God*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994. 560 pp. \$29.99.

In his book, *Theology for the Community of God*, Grenz breaks rank with traditional evangelical theology and engages in the kind of constructive, dialectical theology usually associated with mainstream liberal theology—while seeking to retain the declarative, authoritative voice that has marked evangelical theology in the past. This is a courageous undertaking. Unfortunately, I fear that Grenz has not succeeded. Nevertheless, I find his thesis provocative, despite the lack of logical rigor marshaled in its defense.

Based on a deductive logic of divine sovereignty, evangelical theologians have traditionally assumed that since God cannot lie, and Scripture is inspired by God, the Bible must be free of all error. On this understanding of authority, the theologian functions as a taxonomist and curator, whose primary duty it is to collect and organize the "facts" of Scripture. The difficulty with this position lies not only in the fact that the narrative-like structure of Scripture resists compartmentalization into neatly drawn boxes, but, as Grenz emphasizes, this "concordance" or "propositionalist" approach fails to give adequate attention to the fact that "by its very nature theology is a contextual discipline" (8).

But how can one speak with a declarative, evangelical "Thus saith the Lord!" if one allows that theological reflection arises out of particular biological, historical, and cultural contexts, all of which are open to distortion and sin? In a provocative thesis that reveals the author's indebtedness to Hegel by way of Wolfhart Pannenberg, Grenz proposes a relational, trinitarian theology which discovers in biblical faith God's program for bringing into being an emerging eschatological community of "reconciled people, living within a renewed creation, and enjoying the presence of their Redeemer" (30). In a word, because God is the trinity, a plurality in unity, life-in-community is the ontological ground of creaturely life (98). Despite appearances to the contrary, creation, insofar as it is the work of the triune God, is created for the enjoyment of its completion in God.

The logic of this affirmation goes something like this: Because God is love, God is self-giving. Because God is self-giving, God willingly creates the world. But, "precisely because creation is God's loving act, it is free, voluntary, and non-necessary" (133). As a trinity of love, God is already complete without creation. Thus, creation possesses an autonomy that is its own. Yet insofar as it is created in accordance with the very essence of God—trinitarian love—"this counterpart