

assume that "the dead sense no gap between death and the resurrection," insofar as time stops for the dead and eternity begins with the resurrection. But simply because one is surrounded and held fast in the love of the eternal God is not a reason to deduce that the righteous are conscious—especially if human beings are psychosomatic unities as Grenz claims.

In the end, this reviewer wonders whether evangelical scholars such as Grenz can retain their distinctive identity as evangelicals and engage in the dialectics of mainstream theology. I fear that the rules for engagement in mainstream theology inherently erode the authoritative foundation of evangelical faith, since mainstream theology is conducted in a public forum that prohibits all forms of special pleading for one's own case. Arguments stand or fall on the basis of their ability to withstand criticism, not on the basis of appeal to some established authority. Ostensibly, Grenz engages mainstream theology on its own terms, yet time and again he resorts to assertion, apologetics, and definitional solutions to make his claims. As a consequence, I fear that Grenz has introduced his evangelical readers to the set of problems that dominate mainstream theology—such as questions of cultural relativity, origins, the historicity of Jesus, human anthropology, and eschatological disconfirmation—without offering an adequate response from within evangelicalism to answer these problems. Still, insofar as *Theology for the Community of God* draws attention to the paradox of creating an authoritative/dialogical theology, it is crucial reading for any evangelical who is interested in the future of her or his tradition.

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Gustafson, David A. *Lutherans in Crisis: The Question of Identity in the American Republic*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993. 176 pp. Paper, \$15.00.

Mauss, Armand L. *The Angel and the Beehive: The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994. 296 pp. Cloth, \$29.95.

Every church in every age has had to face the challenge and threat of assimilation. Will it maintain its identity or assimilate to the larger culture? is the question forced upon it. That question was particularly urgent for minority groups in nineteenth-century America.

While the new nation had within it the drive for freedom, individualization, and social/religious pluralism, it also harbored the paradoxical drive for homogenization. The drive toward homogenization lay in part in the young nation's sense of millennial mission to the world. Written into the fabric of American institutions was the desire to "Americanize" those who were different or "too different" from the mainstream, whether the differences be those of language, ethnicity, or religion.

Protestantism of an evangelical sort lay at the heart of the nation's unofficial religious establishment. And those groups outside the Methodist/Puritan Protestant lineage felt subtle and not-so-subtle pressures to conform.

Two recent books from widely different religious groups have taken up this

theme. One group originates from outside the American context while the other is "homegrown." The first is the Lutheran community, which not only brought variations in language and culture with it from the old world, but also "foreign" ideas about religion and the church. The second group is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who, even though indigenous, had enough peculiar religious ideas to make the Mormons significantly different from mainline Protestant evangelicalism.

Both the Lutherans and the Mormons struggled with the tension between maintaining their unique identity and assimilation to the larger culture. The history of their struggles is important to all communions because the tension is not theirs alone. Even though the exact forms that the struggle took in those two churches may have been unique to their experience, there is much that can be learned from their experience by those outside their orientation.

David Gustafson's volume presents the Lutheran version of the assimilation/identity struggle. The American Lutheran controversy extended from 1849 to 1867, and Gustafson's study is the first complete account of this crucial aspect in the development of Lutheranism in the United States.

The struggle took place along four axes set forth by majority Protestantism: (1) a vehement anti-Catholicism, (2) a strong individualism that emphasized the right of private judgment in matters of biblical interpretation and doctrine, (3) the necessity of a personal conversion experience, and (4) a symbolic (Zwinglian) orientation toward the sacraments. The American party favored a Lutheranism tailored to the religious climate of the United States, while the confessional party (which arose in the middle of the nineteenth century as a counter movement to assimilation tendencies) sought to maintain traditional Lutheran perspectives and identity in the new nation.

Gustafson points out that while the confessional movement did much to arrest the drive toward assimilation, it did not settle the issue for all time. As he puts it, "any church that seeks to remain true to its history and confessions and yet respond to contemporary problems could have an identity crisis" (170). Thus the debate regarding the form Lutheranism should take in America is not finished, but that debate, argues *Lutherans in Crisis*, can learn much from the American Lutheran controversy of the mid-nineteenth century.

Armand L. Mauss in *The Angel and the Beehive* faces the same dynamic as did Gustafson, but he does so through a quantitative/sociological (rather than historical) methodology. Beyond differences in methodology, this book focuses on the twentieth century rather than the nineteenth.

Mauss points out that the Mormons have been an American success story as far as assimilation is concerned. By the middle of the twentieth century the Saints had largely achieved churchly respectability. But, contrary to theoretical predictions, the assimilation process has not continued apace in the second half of the century. To the contrary, claims Mauss, "in many ways the past few decades have witnessed an increasing reaction of the Mormons against their own successful assimilation, as though trying to recover some of the cultural tension and special identity associated with their earlier 'sect-like' history" (x). It is that surprising reactionary mentality that Mauss explores in his book.

Mauss sees in the reaction to undifferentiating assimilation a maturity for

Mormonism that was not present until recently. By defining the limits of assimilation as well as the minimal spiritual core of what it means to be Mormon, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is now ready to replicate the process on a world-wide basis.

The two books examined in this review are helpful to all those interested not only in the religious traditions that they treat, but, more importantly, in the dynamics of assimilation versus identity. Thus their insights are of value to students of both religious and secular culture.

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Hebblethwaite, Peter. *The Next Pope*. New York: HarperCollins, 1995. 186 pp. \$20.00.

In this behind-the-scenes look at the forces that will choose the successor of John Paul II and decide, to quite an extent, the future of the Roman Catholic Church, Peter Hebblethwaite reveals the intricate and often politicized process by which the college of cardinals will choose one of their own as the next pope.

As John Paul II, having survived an assassination attempt and serious illnesses, is in the eighteenth year of his pontificate, a billion Roman Catholics and millions of others around the world cannot help but wonder who will succeed the most-traveled and most widely-known Roman pontiff in history.

The pope himself has recently revised the way his successor will be elected. While faithful to a long-established tradition, he has fine-tuned papal election procedures that Pope Paul VI instituted in 1975. Among other things, John Paul II has ordered improved secrecy measures, secluding the cardinal electors to a new compound built specifically for the election. He has reasserted the controversial rule set in 1970 barring cardinals more than 80 years old from participating in the conclave. He has also reiterated a series of solemn oaths that those who attend papal elections must take, never to reveal any details of the proceedings. The Sistine Chapel, where the conclaves are held, will be swept for listening devices and recording instruments. Some voting procedures have been eliminated, reinforcing the secret ballot. The pope offered no explanation, however, as to why he decided to alter the rules governing a deadlocked conclave. If, after four balloting sessions and a two-thirds-plus-one majority, the cardinals have failed to elect a pope, they could abandon the procedure by a simple majority approval instead of a unanimous agreement. At that point, a new pontiff could be elected with a simple majority. This could have substantial effect on the next election.

An expert on Roman Catholic affairs, a papal biographer and confidant to some of his church's key leaders, Peter Hebblethwaite was probably the scholar best suited to analyze the new discipline and to reflect on the next papal conclave. He died December 18, 1994 while the book was being printed. One can only be sorry that he was unable to write a biography of the current pope as he did of both John XXIII and Paul VI.

This is a short book, but none of it is extraneous or repetitious. It is fascinating reading and, if I am not mistaken, nothing like it yet exists. With the keen eye of an expert historian, the author begins with a sketch of the conclave