

Finegan spends an extensive amount of time on the patriarchs and the Exodus. While this is not chronology in the strictest sense of the word, it is a "working through" of the history of these periods from the alternate chronologies that have been proposed. In these sections, Finegan considers all kinds of historical evidence, including archaeology, and his discussions are up to date at the time of writing. He opts for a low date for the patriarchs, which puts Joseph in the Hyksos period and synchronizes with his low date for the Exodus in the 13th century B.C. under the 19th Dynasty. This reviewer has favored the higher date for the Exodus, in the 15th century B.C. under the 18th Dynasty (cf. "Exodus, date of" in the revised edition of the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*).

A full discussion of the chronology of the Judges does not appear in this volume. After a consideration of the principles by which the chronology of the monarchy is to be worked out, Finegan gives the chronology of the united monarchy and the end of the divided monarchy. For the divided monarchy as a whole, he follows the chronology of Thiele as modified by McFall (261). Even though the coverage of OT chronology is uneven, it is a welcome addition.

Finegan's discussion of the priestly courses (130-134) is preparatory for his new discussion of the priestly course of Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist (275-278). Following Beckwith's use of the priestly courses, Finegan puts Zechariah on duty in the temple from November 10 through 17—the time when the forthcoming birth of John was announced to him.

In an appendix (405-407), Finegan discusses the computerized chronology of Eugene Faulstich. Computers obviously are a great boon to chronological studies, but they are still dependent upon the presuppositions of those who program data into them. For that reason Finegan does not incorporate Faulstich's results into the body of his book, but reserves it for this appendix.

The first edition of this work provided a major contribution to chronological studies as they affect biblical interpretation. The additions to the revised edition have only enhanced the positions that this work occupies. Finegan deals fairly with the data and presents alternate schemes of interpretation side by side in his text. This is only fitting, since we cannot yet reach absolute dates for many biblical events. In many cases, we must remain content with a relative chronology. The extensive discussion of detail in this work is recommended to anyone with a deep interest in biblical chronology.

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Gonzalez, Justo L. *Church History: An Essential Guide*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996. 95 pp. \$14.95.

Noll, Mark A. *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997. 335 pp. \$17.99.

These books represent alternative approaches to the challenge of compressing 2,000 years of Christian history into a single compact volume. Beyond that commonality, the two works use sharply contrasting strategies to reach quite

different goals. Gonzalez, whose two-volume *Story of Christianity* and three-volume *History of Christian Thought* are widely known and used, takes the approach of condensation by generalization. Each of his nine chapters summarizes the major trends of one of the chronological subdivisions of church history. Noll, who has also authored or edited numerous works in Christian history and related fields, has selected twelve pivotal events in church history (plus a cluster of "Further Turning Points of the Twentieth Century" that comprise chap. 13). Each of the "Turning Points" becomes a window into an entire epoch of causes and consequences.

Both books offer an innovative organizational format. Gonzalez precedes chapter 1 with a twelve-page Overview that gives from four to nine paragraphs on each of his chronological divisions of church history (1-The Ancient Church, 2-The Christian Empire, 3-The Early Middle Ages, 4-The High Point of the Middle Ages, 5-The Late Middle Ages, 6-Conquest and Reformation, 7-The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, 8-The Nineteenth Century, and 9-The Twentieth Century and the End of Modernity). Each sentence of the Overview reappears in the corresponding chapter, now italicized as a topic sentence. These italicized topic sentences scattered through the chapter, show that the Overview is actually a precise supercondensation of the chapters, and immediately suggest the value of this book for memorization. Each of the chapters closes with a list of seven well-known sources for further reading.

In contrast with the precise condensation that characterizes Gonzalez's *Essential Guide*, Noll's *Turning Points* uses defining events as entrees into the exposition and interpretation of issues in church history. The twelve "turning points" he selects to epitomize twenty centuries of church history are the Fall of Jerusalem, the Council of Nicaea, the Council of Chalcedon, Benedict's Rule, the Coronation of Charlemagne, the Great Schism, the Diet of Worms, the English Act of Supremacy, the Founding of the Jesuits, the Conversion of the Wesleys, the French Revolution, and the Edinburgh Missionary Conference. Among the "Further Turning Points of the Twentieth Century," he treats the rise and spread of Pentecostalism, the Second Vatican Council, new visibility for women, Bible translation, and the survival of the Church under Communism.

Within each chapter, Noll moves with ease over the whole range of his field. For example, Chapter 6, "Division between East and West: The Great Schism (1054)" (129-150), opens with a detailed description of the immediate conflict that culminated in Cardinal Humbert's expedition to Constantinople and the bull of excommunication against the Eastern churches. In subsequent sections of the chapter, Noll expounds the Schism's historical roots going back as far as the year 96, the development of Eastern Orthodox Christianity subsequent to the Schism (from the sack of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade to the spiritual conquest of Russia), and finally, Orthodoxy in the twentieth century. The discussion is rich, studded with perceptive insights. The back-and-forth movement from the focal "turning point" back to historical precedents, and forward to historical and theological consequences, uncovers connections that create a web of meaning that is very satisfying. Depth is not sacrificed for brevity. For a very readable 315 pages of text, Noll includes a surprising breadth of historical movement and theological and biographical detail.

Noll's perspective is ecumenical Protestant. He treats both strengths and

weaknesses of Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Protestantism with studied equality and evenhanded fairness. Some Protestants may be surprised to discover the degree of affirmation given to some institutions such as monasticism or the Society of Jesus.

Additional features include opening each chapter with a hymn taken from the period under consideration, and closing each chapter with a notable prayer from the period. The text is illustrated with halftone pictures, and supplemented by tinted sidebars (boxed selections from primary sources referred to in the text). Footnotes to the main text, endnotes to the boxes, twelve to fourteen bibliographic references for further reading at the end of each chapter, and a comprehensive index complete the volume.

Although these books are similar in being shorter than most church history texts, one of them is three times shorter than the other. Consequently, despite some surface similarities, these two books carry sharply different job descriptions. The extreme compactness and precise organization of Gonzalez's *Essential Guide* make it an excellent tool for rapid review, but a little dull for a basic text. The juicy details, pictures, and quote boxes will be found in the author's *Story of Christianity*, from which *Essential Guide* was condensed. Nevertheless, some will find *Essential Guide* ideal as a compact precis of church history for comprehensive-exam preparation, or as a supplemental textbook for period courses to remedy the lack of a previous survey course. On the other hand, many teachers will find Noll's *Turning Points* an excellent textbook for a one-semester or one-quarter survey course. Its structure, repeatedly looking backward and then forward from a given event, makes fascinating reading and effectively establishes cause-and-effect connections, while its size is still moderate for a survey text.

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Gunter, W. Stephen, Scott J. Jones, Ted A. Campbell, Rebekah L. Miles, and Randy L. Maddox. *Wesley and the Quadrilateral: Renewing the Conversation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997. 174 pp. Paper, \$19.95.

The expression "Quadrilateral" was originally coined by the late Albert C. Outler (dean of twentieth-century Wesleyan studies) as a way of identifying the manner in which Wesley utilized Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience in theological discourse and spiritual nurture. The concept has been enthusiastically embraced by many and stringently critiqued by others.

While the subject has drawn persistent scholarly attention over the last twenty years from such notables as Thomas C. Oden, William Abraham, John Cobb, Randy Maddox, Ted Campbell, Scott Jones, and Donald A. D. Thorsen, this volume represents the first book-length treatment of the subject since Thorsen's *The Wesleyan Quadrilateral* (Grand Rapids: Frances Asbury Press [originally an imprint of Zondervan, now owned by Evangel Publishing House, Nappanee, IN], 1990).

The debate over the Quadrilateral can be most clearly set forth in the contrasting approaches of John Cobb and William Abraham. Cobb has given an interpretation which emphasizes "the full integrity of (contemporary) experience and reason alongside (past) Scripture and tradition." Abraham has given a sharp response to those who work in the spirit of Cobb: "While the stated goal of the