

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

Quadrilateral may have been to stress the interdependence of Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience in theological reflection, the inevitable result of such language in the modern arena has been that reason and experience win out over Scripture and tradition. This leads Abraham to argue that United Methodists should scrap the Quadrilateral as 'a hastily contrived shotgun wedding between Scripture and tradition . . . and reason and experience.'

He then goes on to suggest that "if you cannot get what you desire on one ground, pass laterally to the next until you do," and this will have the net effect of fostering "confusion between doctrinal standards and the criteria of theological reflection" (12, 13).

Responding to the perspectives of Cobb and Abraham, this quintet of United Methodist scholars (Holiness or other Arminian evangelicals were excluded, though both Gunter and Maddox have Holiness backgrounds) has suggested a somewhat affirmative, alternative assessment of the Quadrilateral. Affirming the essential authenticity of the Quadrilateral, they characterize their view of "a truly *Wesleyan* Quadrilateral" as emphasizing "the *dialogical* relationship of Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience." By this they "mean that authentic doctrinal reflection will not resort to simply using whichever criterion seems most amenable to one's preexisting assumptions, or to playing one criterion off against another. Instead, it will confer among the criteria concerning the issue in question until it finds consensus, or a way of honoring the integrity of all four" (140).

This volume will be of interest to at least three different audiences: (1) United Methodists who are interested in clarifying the current battle that is going on for the doctrinal soul of their denomination; (2) Wesleyan scholars interested in not only the fate of the Quadrilateral concept in the thought of Wesley himself, but also the question of the theological usefulness of the Quadrilateral concept for theological methodology; and (3) scholars and laypersons of all traditions interested in the issue of theological methodology. The latter group would be especially concerned with how the viability and usefulness of the classic Protestant *sola Scriptura* principle might play out against Wesley's more Anglican-conditioned *prima Scriptura* approach to theologizing.

Stephen Gunter served as the main editor, primary author of the introduction and conclusion, and the sole author of Chapter 1, "The Quadrilateral and the 'Middle' Way." This first chapter seeks to give a thumbnail sketch of the Anglican background of the *prima Scriptura* alternative to the more Reformed, Continental Protestant *sola Scriptura* method so strongly championed by the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Puritans. The following four chapters address the four discrete constituents of the Quadrilateral: Scott J. Jones on Scripture ("The Rule of Scripture"), Ted A. Campbell on tradition ("The Interpretive Role of Tradition"), Rebekah L. Miles on reason ("The Instrumental Role of Reason"), and Randy L. Maddox on experience ("The Enriching Role of Experience").

Each of these four essays has three main goals: (1) define the meaning of Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience (both for Wesley and for our time); (2) describe and assess Wesley's use of the four theological quadrants; and (3) seek to assess how Wesley's treatment might contribute to our contemporary theological discourse.

Each contributor has done a masterful job in his or her respective area. Gunter's

treatment of the Anglican background is a superbly succinct treatment of rather contorted political, ecclesial, and theological developments which unfolded in the emergence of the distinctive Anglican identity. It is this Anglican setting that sets the stage for the historical and theological unfolding of the *via media's* emphasis on *prima Scriptura*. Both Jones and Campbell have given us helpful digests of their previously published, classic treatments of Wesley's use of Scripture and tradition.

Miles is probably the least known of the five, but nevertheless is a rising star in Wesleyan studies. Maddox's credentials have been clearly established with his magisterial survey of Wesley's theology entitled *Responsible Grace* (Nashville: Kingswood Books [an imprint of Abingdon Press, 1994]). To my knowledge, however, neither Miles nor Maddox has published any extended treatments of the role of reason and experience in theological method. This is certainly a stellar cast of writers, eminently qualified to address the issues.

While Gunter, Jones, and Campbell have been solid, the most helpful contributions to the Quadrilateral debate come from Miles and Maddox. This is not to downgrade the importance of Scripture and tradition (or Jones' and Campbell's contributions) in either Wesley's theological discourse or our subsequent work. The most problematic areas of the Quadrilateral, however, have dealt with how one defines and construes the roles of reason and experience in theological development.

Miles writes with not only insight and an informative background in the epistemological, philosophical currents of Wesley's day and ours, but with a certain captivating verve. Maddox moves the issue forward with his usual informative clarity, solidity, breadth of vision, and depth of both theological/philosophical insight and practical application. These encomiums to Miles and Maddox, however, should not be taken as criticisms of Gunter, Jones, and Campbell: there is simply not a "clinker" in the collection.

No matter how the reader might judge the success of these writers, I would urge that this book is must reading for the respective audiences named above. While the setting of the issues is more relevant to the United Methodist and Wesleyan scholarship concerns in particular, the issues these scholars are wrestling with have timely relevance to all who are interested in theology, epistemology, and theological methodology.

One final observation: For those Protestants unfamiliar with, or put off by, any hermeneutical method other than that associated with the venerable *sola Scriptura* approach, I urge a patient reading of this volume. One of the consistent conclusions of these writers is that Scripture is (for both Wesley and us) not simply one authority among four, but truly "an authority without peer" (132). A patient and reflective perusal of this fine symposium will prove to be richly rewarding.

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Keel, Othmar. *Corpus der Stempelsiegel-Amulette aus Palästina/Israel. Von den Anfängen bis zur Perserzeit—Katalog Band 1: Von Tell Abu Farag bis 'Atlit, Orbin Biblicus et Orientalis*. Series Archaeologica, 13. Freiburg/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997. 810 pp. 298 DM.

Two years after the initial publication of the introduction, the first catalogue volume of the monumental *Corpus* has appeared—and with 810 pages it is a