

*Institutes* and Melanchthon's *Loci communes theologici* of 1521 and 1536, seeing this relationship as important to an understanding of both documents.

John R. Schneider's seventh essay discusses "Melanchthon's Rhetoric As a Context for Understanding His Theology" (141). Schneider makes the pertinent observation that Melanchthon's understanding of rhetoric and dialectic, developed early in his career, explains his approach to theology, to biblical exegesis, and to his progressive expansion of the *Loci communes*. Melanchthon systematically integrated dialectics into his concept of rhetoric. In fact, he stated that rhetoric was but "a part of dialectics." (149). This view influenced his approach to Scripture, since he identified rhetorical and dialectical approaches in the writings of the Bible, especially in Paul's epistle to the Romans.

The final essay by Nicole Kuroпка emphasizes that Melanchthon's concept of rhetoric fused Renaissance and Reformation ideals. "Melanchthon's rhetoric has the double aim of decoding sources and reforming politics." (161). The revival of ancient literature in Florence aimed at both exegesis and political improvement. Likewise, Melanchthon saw the Reformation as having both a linguistic and a civic dimension. Biblical exegesis is designed to change lives and transform society.

These eight essays whet our appetites for a more expanded version of each topic. Each could profitably be the subject of a detailed monograph. There are so many questions left unanswered or only partly answered. For example, more specifically and in more detail what does the correspondence between Calvin and Melanchthon reveal concerning their differences on predestination, church practices, free will, and the Lord's Supper? What does Melanchthon's relationship with the Swiss Reformers reveal about his attitude to Zwingli's theology and later Swiss theology? What were the differences between them, and did Melanchthon change over time? To what extent, if any, did he part from Luther on such questions as the Lord's Supper, predestination, justification, and so on? In more detail, how did Melanchthon's concept of rhetoric and dialectic influence his biblical exegesis and his application of the classics to his contemporary society?

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O'Brien, Peter T. *The Letter to the Ephesians*. Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999. xxxiii + 536 pp. Hardcover, \$40.00.

After a hiatus of some seven years, O'Brien's commentary on Ephesians marks the first of several new commentaries slated to appear in the Pillar New Testament Commentary series. According to the editorial preface, the goal of the PNTC series is to avoid "getting mired in undue technical detail," but at the same time to provide a "blend of rigorous exegesis and exposition, with an eye alert both to biblical theology and the contemporary relevance of the Bible" (viii). Written by O'Brien, this commentary undoubtedly accomplishes the goal of the series. O'Brien, currently vice principal and senior research fellow in NT at Moore Theological College in Sydney, Australia, provides the same diligent, lucid, and probing exegesis in this commentary that he demonstrated in his commentaries on Colossians and Philemon (Word Biblical Commentary), and Philippians (New International Greek Testament Commentary). While the commentary takes a deliberately conservative viewpoint, it does not sacrifice

intellectual analysis or reflection in the process.

The commentary includes a table of contents/outline and an introduction (addressing such issues as authorship, destination, life setting, purpose, and genre). It also contains a subject-and-author index, an index of extrabiblical material, and an extensive Scripture index (24 pages). There are also 18 pages of select bibliography. The English text of the commentary follows the NIV. The commentary has chapter-and-verse references on the top outer margins of each page, making it easy to locate a particular passage. With the outline of the book tucked away into the table of contents at the beginning of the book, it would have been helpful, however, if the top margins could also have contained some reference to the current place within the book's outline.

The primary strength of O'Brien's work is its robust defense of the Pauline authorship of Ephesians. O'Brien devotes forty-two pages of his introduction to outlining and responding to the main arguments against Pauline authorship (the impersonal character of the text, its language and style, literary relationship with Colossians, theological emphases, the picture of Paul, and the issue of pseudonymity). While O'Brien's arguments will not be convincing for all, they do bring together the most pertinent and current evidence in favor of Pauline authorship and strengthen the case for making this a plausible option. On the basis of his belief in Pauline authorship, O'Brien suggests that Ephesians was written shortly after Colossians (ca. A.D. 61-62) during Paul's imprisonment in Rome. He suggests that Paul simply remodeled his letter to the Colossians for a more general circulation with the specific purpose of "informing, strengthening, and encouraging" (57) Gentile believers, who lived "in and around Ephesus, or on the road to Colossae" (49). The introductory section of O'Brien's commentary alone makes it worthy of a place on the bookshelf of any theological student, pastor, or teacher.

While O'Brien's commentary is written in a clear and readable style, it should be noted that a reader without the ability to read Greek will find several parts of the commentary rather obscure. One reason for this is the fact that the work draws strongly on the Greek text of Ephesians. O'Brien's footnotes, which often contain a treasure trove of information, make extensive use of Greek terminology and syntactic issues. All of the Greek found in the footnotes is untransliterated. Although all Greek text within the body of the commentary itself is transliterated, the commentary occasionally makes interpretative comments based upon issues of Greek syntax. While challenging for readers without a working knowledge of Greek, pastors and teachers with such knowledge will find O'Brien's insights and comments on the Greek text illuminating and fruitful.

Two other strengths in O'Brien's work merit mention. O'Brien does a superb job in lucidly outlining the various exegetical issues in Ephesians. Both the neophyte and the seasoned scholar of Ephesians will find O'Brien's identification and explanation of the issues informative. The commentary is further strengthened by O'Brien's skillful reference to OT connections and allusions that shed light on Ephesians. An example of these two strengths is found in his exegesis of Eph 4:8. O'Brien outlines five possible explanations for the difference in terminology between Paul's quotation of Ps 68:18 and the same verse as it is found in the Hebrew and LXX texts. While he acknowledges that none of the five suggestions

"fully solves the difficult crux" (293), O'Brien favors the understanding that "God's action in taking and receiving the Levites as a gift, then giving them back to his people in order to minister to the congregation [Ps 68:18] parallels the ascended Christ's leading captives and giving gifts in Ephesians 4" (293).

One must look hard to find much fault with this work. Professors will find it to be an excellent textbook for graduate students in Ephesians. The strong application of Greek grammar and syntax makes it ideal for students desiring to grow in their understanding of Greek exegesis. Pastors will find the book helpful for their personal study of Ephesians and for sermon preparation. The clarity of presentation and strength of scholarship will make O'Brien's commentary one of the premier works of its kind on Ephesians for years to come.

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Schreiner, Thomas R. *Romans*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 6. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998. xxi + 919 pp. Hardcover, \$39.99.

Thomas R. Schreiner is currently a professor of NT interpretation at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. This commentary is the third book authored by him in the area of Pauline studies. It is also the third installment in the Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament series, joining the previous commentaries on Luke (2 vols.) and Philippians (1 vol.).

The commentary is a technical work of reasonable competence that my students have found uplifting, coherent, and easy to read. This strength is somewhat diminished, however, by the format of the commentary. Schreiner abandons "the verse-by-verse approach in favor of an exposition that focuses on the paragraph as the main unit of thought" (ix). The drawback of this format is that it becomes time-consuming to locate comments on a particular verse. One is forced to work through the references in the index or to skim through the pages to locate where the appropriate comments are. With respect to the latter procedure, even after finding the right pages, it is not always easy to know where one is in the text. For example, in commenting on 1:5 there does not seem to be a compelling reason why the comments on *en pasin tois ethnaisin* precede those on *eis hupakoēn pisteōs* when the passage reads *eis hupakoēn pisteōs en pasin tois ethnaisin*. Nor is it clear why 6:19 should be discussed before vv. 17 and 18.

Schreiner's commentary is exegetical, as the series title declares, but it is precisely as an exegetical commentary that it fails. For example, Schreiner presents a number of misleading or incorrect translations. The rendering of *ex anastaseōs nekrōn* in 1:4 as a temporal phrase, "at the resurrection from the dead" (31), cannot be substantiated on grammatical or syntactical grounds. He fails to give justification for this reading on p. 44. A more natural, causal rendering, "by virtue of," would not undermine his essential argument. It is equally difficult to understand why he translates *episteusen de Abraam tō theō* as "Abraham believed God" in 4:3 and *pisteuonti de epi ton dikaionta ton aseβē* as "believes on him" in 4:5 (213). The context seems to demand that we regard the two passages as being parallel to each other (see C.F.D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek*, 2nd ed. [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959], 69, for problems