

sanctuary (127), and Christ's high-priestly ministry (129). The English abbreviation "SDA" is used consistently rather than the German "STA," as should be the case in a German translation. Furthermore, one wonders what Knight really means when he speaks about a "maturation" of the church that took place in the twentieth century. Few would probably feel comfortable separating the 27 fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church into two sections, as he does. The first section, according to Knight, includes those Protestant beliefs that Adventists share with other Christians on the basis of the gospel (the authority of Scripture, God the Father, human nature, salvation through grace by faith, and the rites and the role of the church), whereas the second section contains beliefs that are unique to Seventh-day Adventism (such as the seventh-day Sabbath, the annihilation and conditionalist state of the dead, the two-phase ministry of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary, the prophetic role of Ellen G. White, and the return of Christ before the millennium). Such a distinction appears to be artificial and quite subjective. While Knight is certainly correct when he states that Seventh-day Adventists see themselves as a people who preach a final message to the whole world, one keenly misses any reference to the Adventist self-understanding as being the remnant church. This deficiency becomes even more obvious in light of the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist understanding of the church as remnant is very different and distinct from the common Protestant ecclesiology. Unfortunately, a good number of books listed in the scant bibliography are not listed in their German translation, which would have enhanced its usefulness for the German reader. Still, the fourth edition of the *RGG* has fortified its position as the standard reference work in religion, not just for the German-speaking part of the world. No serious student of theology will be able to ignore it. Every research library should have it. The publication of subsequent volumes is eagerly awaited. Unfortunately the high price will preclude a wider circulation.

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Braaten, Carl E., and Robert W. Jenson, eds. *Union With Christ: The New Finnish Interpretation of Luther*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998. ix + 182 pp. Paperback, \$21.00.

On June 1, 1996, a seminar took place at St. Olaf College in Minnesota, during which the major lectures were presented by five scholars from the Systematic Theology Department of the University of Helsinki, Finland, led by Professor of Ecumenics, Tuomo Mannermaa. *Union With Christ* is the published version of those lectures in English, together with responses by four American Lutheran scholars. The work introduces a radical revision of the Lutheran understanding of Luther, constitutes a major breakthrough in Luther research.

The impetus for the Finnish research was provided by the ecumenical dialogue between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church, begun during the Archbishopric of Martti Simojoki in the early seventies. The task was to see if a point of contact could be found on the basis of which the discussions might proceed, particularly in reference to the

Orthodox doctrine of *theosis*, that is to say, participation in God.

With respect to methodology, the Finns did not begin their research with the Lutheran Confessions, particularly the *Formula of Concord*, or with subsequent Luther studies, but with the writings of Luther himself. Proceeding cautiously and carefully, they did not ignore what they found to be Luther's ontology, but went beyond the traditional idea that faith is an act of the will, volitional obedience, with no ontological implications.

The key idea in the Finnish insight into Luther is that "in faith itself Christ is really present" (Mannermaa). This idea represents a radical departure from the traditional Lutheran concept of forensic justification, largely based on the *Formula of Concord*, in which Christ for us was separated from Christ in us. The book shows how this insight into Luther articulates his belief that by faith the believer receives the righteousness of God. The believer is not only declared righteous (forensic justification) because of the work of Christ on Calvary, but actually receives Christ's righteousness by faith and thereby becomes righteous. The language of this new insight into Luther, says Carl Braaten, "falls like a thud on Lutheran ears accustomed to hearing from Luther chiefly what echoes their Lutheran tradition" (viii).

By listening to Luther himself, the Finns found that he followed the Hebrew way of thinking in that the thing that is known is itself present in the one who knows. Based on this way of thinking, Luther understood that because God and his Son are one, God's attributes are present in Christ, and that due to the presence of the indwelling Christ, the believer is able to share those attributes. This is why Luther was able to say that "the righteousness of Christ becomes our righteousness through faith in Christ, and everything that is his, even he himself, becomes ours . . . and he who believes in Christ clings to Christ and is one with Christ and has the same righteousness with him" (6). The believer has no righteousness of his own, but is made righteous because of Christ's righteousness. Hence for Luther, this oneness with Christ, or union with Christ, constitutes "being." This means that for Luther the means of spiritual existence "is not the event of 'forensic justification' but the divine person of Christ" (153). Juntunen refers to this insight as "Luther before Lutheranism."

*Union With Christ* suggests that the writers of the *Formula of Concord* were stuck on the forensic nature of imputed righteousness and were unable to articulate what the Finnish scholars refer to as Luther's understanding of "donated" righteousness, i.e., the righteousness of the indwelling Christ. The Finnish scholars have recognized that central to Luther's theology is that God must become present in the believer through faith if he is to give him/her his gifts of life and salvation. The Christ who is present in faith transforms the believer into the likeness of Christ. In this way the believer participates in the attributes of Christ. Furthermore, the presence of Christ in faith is the basis of sanctification. As a result of the work of the Finnish scholars, Lutherans can no longer claim that justification and sanctification are distinct theological categories. They have to recognize that justification and sanctification must be understood together as equally significant aspects of the salvation process.

Following the *Formula of Concord*, Lutherans have insisted that justification involves only imputed righteousness, the declaration of the forgiveness of sin.

What is not included in the traditional Lutheran doctrine is the renewal of the believer and the removal of sin. This exclusion was based on the philosophical assumption that God's being is separated from his effects. Therefore, with reference to the doctrine of justification, post-*Formula* Lutheran theology did not consider the ontological dimension. All the justified believer can claim by faith is that he understands he has a new position before God. In contrast to this, the Finnish scholars have shown that according to Luther, justification not only changes the sinner's self-understanding, but changes the sinner ontologically by making him or her righteous. God's grace and his gift of righteousness are "donated" to a believer by virtue of the indwelling Christ.

Carl Braaten concludes, "In the future Luther-scholarship around the world will have to be in dialogue with the Finnish picture of Luther" (75). In this conclusion he is, of course, right. The fact that this new Luther research was motivated by ecumenical concerns does not lessen the significance of the discoveries.

For Lutherans, and other Christians as well, the work of Mannermaa and his colleagues constitutes a revolutionary reinterpretation of Luther's theology, the implications of which remain to be seen. Carl Braaten wonders if it makes sense for Lutherans to continue holding justification to be the chief doctrine of the Christian faith. The same could be asked of any other Christian who is tempted to put all of his theological eggs into the forensic justification basket!

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Bray, Gerald, ed. *Romans*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, vol. 6. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998. xxviii + 404 pp. Hardcover, \$39.99.

This new but old work offers a unique opportunity for laypersons to drink easily from the well of historic Christian theology by collecting the best and most representative patristic writings on Romans. The goal of the proposed twenty-seven-volume series is "the revitalization of Christian teaching based on classical Christian exegesis." In an atmosphere stuffy with modern works, this collection of patristic writings is a fresh breeze from the past.

Bray draws from a variety of early writers from Clement of Rome (second century) to John of Damascus (mid-eighth century) in his survey of early Christian thinking on Paul's epistle to the Romans. A selection of quotations from Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian gives the reader a sense of the earliest Christian thought, before commentary-writing became common. The first surviving commentary on Romans penned by Origen is quoted extensively, as is the work by the fourth century "Ambrosiaster." His literal commentary is one of the most helpful sources in the work. Several voices from the Antiochene school of biblical exegesis—Diodore of Tarsus, Apollinaris of Laodicea, and Theodore of Mopsuestia—are also utilized. The famous preacher John Chrysostom left a series of homilies on Romans, which add a practical flavor to this work. Though Augustine of Hippo never wrote a formal commentary on Romans, much of his thought, which is expressed in various writings, has a direct connection with Romans and is appropriately included. The final major work of Theodoret of Cyr is particularly helpful because of his emphasis upon historical and grammatical detail. Other Syriac and Coptic sources are included in an effort to