

Kee must be commended for his recognition of the diversity of the leadership of the early church. He correctly identifies Simon as a black and acknowledges the fact that Christian leadership included more than Palestinian Jews. Here early Christianity is shown to be ahead of some contemporary expressions of the Christian faith, which still have struggles on this issue. The openness of the early Christians to the leading of the Holy Spirit is not only striking; it is the very thing that drove their worship and opened the way for Saul's worldwide ministry.

I see his rationale for John Mark's return from the first missionary journey (165-166) as speculative. There is no evidence to support his view of Mark's conservative stance.

Those who accept Lukan authorship of Acts and see the "we" passages as supportive will find Kee's review of recent literature on the subject and endorsement of their conclusions as interesting. Kee uses archaeology to demonstrate that Luke's portrayal of Acts 14:8, where Paul and Barnabas are viewed as gods, is accurate. The assumption of the Greco-Roman world was that those who performed public miracles, as Paul had done, were indeed gods in human form. Also demonstrating this point are the excursuses on Roman citizenship, house churches, Athens, Epicurean and Stoic philosophy, Corinth, and Ephesus, among others (see 200-235).

All told, this is an informative and thought-provoking volume, which reflects serious research. I enthusiastically recommend it for pastors, college and seminary professors, and even the thoughtful lay reader.

Howard University School of Divinity
Washington, DC

BERTRAM L. MELBOURNE

Macchia, Stephen A. *Becoming a Healthy Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999. 239 pp. Hardcover, \$16.99.

Stephen Macchia is president of Vision New England, the largest regional church-renewal association in the country, and also serves on the executive committee of the National Association of Evangelicals. In this capacity he has studied hundreds of New England churches, testing the principles that he enunciates in this book. *Becoming a Healthy Church* is another book in a growing repertoire of publications on church health. In fact, church health has become the center of investigation in many church-growth circles in recent years. The seminal book in this area is Christian Schwarz's *Natural Church Development*. In fact, no review would be complete without comparison to this work.

Macchia's main argument is similar to all such books: Creating a healthy church should be the focus of all congregations. Macchia's research methodology appears to be that he devised ten characteristics of a healthy church out of his own experience, and then tested them on over 8,000 people at a convention, following that up with personal on-site visits to churches that further confirmed his findings. He lists several helpful sources for each of the healthy characteristics as notes to each chapter, but there are no references to other studies of church health, such as Schwarz's research.

Although Macchia suggests ten characteristics of healthy churches, he recognizes that there are additional possibilities. Schwarz, on the other hand,

limits the quality characteristics to eight. Interestingly, all but one of Macchia's characteristics can be found in Schwarz, indicating that different researchers are arriving at the same basic qualities for healthy churches. Macchia's research would have been more objective if his quality characteristics had arisen out of his research, as Schwarz's did, rather than from untested experience followed by research to discover whether they were valid. However, even though his methodology is flawed and his research was limited to New England, the results are confirmed by Schwarz's more extensive research on all six continents.

The strength of this work lies in the descriptions of each of the quality characteristics. It will help a church discover and better understand what is needed in each of the areas. Unlike Schwarz, Macchia does not offer a tool for a church to evaluate itself, but he does provide excellent discussion guides for each of the characteristics, which a church can use to enhance its self-understanding.

While Macchia does not connect church health with church growth as Schwarz does, he makes an excellent addition to the list of quality characteristics: stewardship and generosity. This is hinted at in Schwarz's "functional structures," but the expansion that Macchia gives is commendable.

If Macchia had published his findings before Schwarz, his research would have received a better evaluation, but since it follows of Schwarz's major contribution, it must be judged in that light. As such, it falls short in several areas: the scope of the research, the extensiveness of the research, the correlation with church growth, and the failure to provide a church with an instrument to evaluate its health. Its strength lies in its confirmation of the principles of church health through study of New England churches, which confirms that church health needs to be an important component of American church life. Like Schwarz, Macchia is committed to a "principle" approach to church health rather than the more traditional "model" approach. This is commendable in that it helps make the book applicable to any church situation. It is well worth reading by anyone who is seriously interested in pursuing church health as a basis for church growth. As such, it is a welcome addition to the literature rapidly developing in this field.

Andrews University

RUSSELL BURRILL

Marsden, George M. *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. 142 pp. Paperback, \$11.95.

A decade ago George Marsden had established himself as one of the foremost historians of American Fundamentalism. With the publication of *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief*, it was obvious that a major shift in the focus of his attention had taken place. *Soul* is a historical study of the declining influence of Protestantism in several of the mainline universities—the subtitle tells the story. In the concluding chapter Marsden goes beyond historical analysis and makes two positive proposals. The first is that Christian intellectual perspectives should be accorded the same opportunity for presentation and discussion as other views. "Ultimately," he reasons, "there seems no intellectually valid reason to exclude religiously based perspectives that have strong academic credentials" (431). And he goes on to