

conducted the study, who decided to include the survey name, AVANCE, which means "advance" in Spanish, in the title. They also opted to include the Spanish word *Mañana* ("tomorrow"), to point out the Adventist belief in the coming of the Lord. There are books with extraordinary titles and poor content. This book has extraordinary content, but a poor title.

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Wiley, Tatha. *Original Sin: Origins, Developments, and Contemporary Meanings*. New York: Paulist Press, 2002. viii + 276 pp. Paper, \$19.95.

Original Sin is a historical-theological study of the origin, development, and contemporary meanings of one of the most fundamental doctrines of Christianity. In this book, Tatha Wiley, who currently teaches at Metropolitan State University and United Theological Seminary in Minneapolis, Minnesota, traces "the emergence of the idea of original sin, the questions the idea answered," "the development of original sin as a Christian doctrine in the early centuries of Christianity" (9) and in contemporary reinterpretations of the doctrine. The book is divided into two parts. The first part examines the origin and development of the doctrine from apostolic times to the Council of Trent. In this section, the author discusses the Christian origin of the doctrine in the early patristic tradition, along with the role played by Augustine and medieval and Reformation theologians in formulating the classical doctrine of original sin. In the second half of the book, Wiley traces the modern scientific, historical, and philosophical challenges posed to the doctrine. Here, she explains the significance of the Enlightenment and how modernity had a significant impact upon the doctrine.

Wiley agrees that "human alienation from God is a fact" and that "evil is a fact" (9), but argues that "the *concept* of original sin and the *reality* to which the concept refers are different" (8). While she presents a valuable study of the historical and theological development of the doctrine of original sin, Wiley prefers the contemporary meanings of the doctrine that do not rely upon the historicity of the biblical story of Adam and Eve.

In her first chapters, Wiley argues commendably that the doctrine of original sin was not accepted without some resistance in the church's theological tradition. Early Christianity did not have a doctrine of original sin. According to the author, the doctrine first arose as an attempt to find support for the practice of infant baptism. It was only after the church began this liturgical practice that theologians sought to identify the sin for which infants ought to be baptized. Original sin was the answer and pointed to the inheritance by all humanity of the guilt of Adam and Eve's wrong decision. In his fuller development of the doctrine, Augustine found support for the doctrine in Gen 3 and Rom 5. He argued for the solidarity of humankind with Adam: when Adam sinned, all sinned. Although Reformation and Catholic

theologians varied in the finer points of the doctrine, the essential points remained the same.

The Enlightenment, however, inaugurated a resistance to the cultural dominance of the church and its beliefs in Western society, with the result that "the doctrine of original sin suffered the brunt of modern hostility to Christian belief" (108). Wiley argues that modern thinkers were closer to the intellectual orientation of Pelagius than to that of Augustine and "felt the idea that human beings were born already guilty of sin was morally reprehensible" (111). As modern thinkers also rejected the authority of the church over human knowledge, the reliability of the Bible as a historical source of knowledge of the past was also rejected. Since the church had emphasized the historical solidarity of humankind with Adam and Eve, modern evolutionary challenges to the historicity of Gen 1-3 undermined the classical view of the doctrine of original sin.

Original sin was the pivotal element in a Christian theology of redemption. It answered the question why Christ came. And especially for Catholics, original sin was an equally pivotal element in the church's self-understanding, in its ecclesiology (120).

In her book, Wiley introduces contemporary reinterpretations of the meaning of original sin, arrived at by looking at the Genesis story as a symbolic narrative rather than history. As valid reinterpretations of this complex and crucial doctrine, she proposes the views of Piet Schoonenberg, Reinhold Niebuhr, and feminist theologians Rosemary Radford Ruether and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. While the author could have presented the views of other contemporary theologians, such as Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, or Karl Rahner, these theologians nonetheless reflect the modern subjective and existential interpretations of the doctrine and offer valuable insights into the concept of sin and human depravity. Wiley also lengthily expounds Bernard J. F. Lonergan's complex concept of original sin as sustained inauthenticity as a contemporary, meaningful understanding of this doctrine "with a theological anthropology congruent with modern insights into the human person" (203).

Wiley's overall discussion of original sin is well done and helps the reader achieve a better understanding of the complexity of the doctrine of original sin, its origins, and its various contemporary meanings. Above all, her work attempts to answer the important question, "What does the doctrine of original sin have to say to us today?" She certainly succeeds in raising the theological awareness of her readers to the importance of this doctrine. Absent from her study are biblical-theological interpretations of original sin that differ from the Augustinian theological approach.

Scholars who still adhere to a literal reading of Scripture and believe in the historicity of the Genesis creation story will nonetheless benefit from reading this book in their search for a deeper understanding of contemporary human existence.

Wiley's linkage of the origin of the doctrine of original sin to infant baptism is enlightening, demonstrating that some traditional beliefs did not arise by necessity from biblical theology. Wiley's study begins a needed reflection into this crucial doctrine.

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