

drawn from the evidence of history and also from the principles of God's Word, his historical evaluations could be made more persuasive to those who are now likely to be skeptical.

Should Miller choose to leave that task to others, answering questions of a more personal nature might ameliorate the appearance that his historical project is captive to his own historical contingency. Has his research caused him to change his mind on any controversial issue? Are there any historically identified areas where his institution needs to grow in its understanding or relinquish extreme views? Has he confronted his own biases against those of history, and how did they fare? How has a study of history persuaded him personally to back away from extremes (Miller comes close to this kind of admission on page 19)?

While theoretically incomplete, Miller's historical-theological project holds significant promise. For too long, Adventist theology at the popular level has drawn meaning almost entirely out of the movement's discontinuities with the majority of church history. *The Reformation and the Remnant* is a fresh and welcome contribution that popularizes a serious attempt to find meaning in Adventism's continuities with its antecedents. This is critical not only for telling the story truthfully, for embracing the contributions of Protestantism, and for refining the movement's sense of identity, but also for opening new possibilities for the Adventist tradition to contribute to a wider stream of Christianity. In all these, Miller is to be commended for putting his expertise at the service of his faith community. *The Reformation and the Remnant* is a book that the polarized factions of his church cannot afford to ignore.

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Miller, Nicholas P. *The Reformation and the Remnant*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2016. 144 pp. Softcover, US\$15.99.

In his recent book, *The Reformation and the Remnant*, my former student Nicholas Miller explores Protestant historical and theological themes from an avowedly Arminian, free-will viewpoint. As someone from a more Reformed, Calvinist tradition, I have found it interesting to see where there is agreement, and where there might be some differences in our outlook.

In my view, Miller's account of *sola scriptura*, *prima scriptura*, and *tota scriptura* captured quite well what most Reformers were after as they sought to raise the authority of the Bible over against what had become degenerate traditions. In that same context, his description of Adventist leader and claimed visionary Ellen White's authority as *prima traditionis* is a helpful way of putting the authority of someone regarded as more than ordinarily human but less than fully scriptural. (From my angle, quite a few in the main Protestant traditions do, in fact, treat figures like Martin Luther or John Calvin as *prima traditionis*, even though the formal theologies of these groups do not really have a category like that).

I also thought his distinction between "governmental" and "moral influence" views of the atonement was quite helpful. Again, from my angle I

would say that if humans could specify one “correct” view of the atonement, it would have to draw on all the major theories (maybe even including “moral influence” that I find the least satisfying: “Jesus was nice, you should be too”), with then the real discussion focusing on how the various theories might be amalgamated and under what proportions, etc. His explication of possible Adventist reactions to *Obergefell* also has been helpful—even practically, since I ended a course last term, “Religion and American Politics,” by going through important Supreme Court decisions on religion and public life, and probably ending with *Obergefell*.

Of particularly Adventist issues, I was glad to have Miller set out standard Adventist teachings in relationship to Reformation teachings, some of which Adventist matters I’d read about before, but not all. I was intrigued to find out that Frank Hugh Foster had been a translator of Grotius, since I had known Foster mostly for his genetic history of Calvinism—still, in my mind, a really good historical account of early New England theology, though also one that too easily takes standard moral conventions of the late nineteenth century as the bar against which to judge Edwards and his students (I find Foster’s judgments about, as opposed to his exposition of, these figures woefully inadequate). I thought Miller’s explanation of “moral government” theories was done quite well. Although I continue to have serious doubts about the adequacy of “moral government” ideas about God, especially as set out by N. W. Taylor, it should be obvious, even to us nay-sayers, that a theology responsible to Scripture, Christian tradition, and lived present-day experience must include some element of moral choices understood by conventional common sense.

My objection to full-scale “moral government” theories remains that they seem so obviously a reflection of unself-critical conventions about human nature that are almost entirely a product of the modern era (that is, from the second half of the sixteenth century onwards). Folks like myself probably need to give greater credence than we do to modern common-sense reflections about human nature, the character of human sinfulness, the power of human choosing, and the like. But it is also possible that more self-criticism about such modern eureka might be warranted among those who see “moral government” as answering all or almost all foundational questions about the ordering of the universe.

I do see Miller as trying to be fair to Reformed believers and their beliefs; that effort is certainly appreciated. As someone who stubbornly sticks with at least some form of many traditional Reformed convictions, I’d want to suggest modifications in a few things: for example, on what “Reformed thinkers are most concerned about” (48)—I would say that the threefold offices of Christ (prophet, priest, and king) were just as important as divine sovereignty in itself, but of course with “Christ as king” implying what Miller says concerning divine sovereignty (For instance, in the Heidelberg Catechism, divine sovereignty is prominent, but in terms of “my only comfort in life and in death” being “my faithful lord and savior Jesus Christ”).

Similarly, while the focus in the First Great Awakening was certainly on justification, I think you’d have to read a lot of George Whitefield’s

sermons (and also a surprising number from Jonathan Edwards) to see them focusing directly on predestination and divine sovereignty (129). Those were background, foundational convictions, to be sure, but they most wanted individuals to see “the divine and supernatural light” (JE) or to experience “the new birth” (Whitefield).

Questions about creation, sin, death, and the fall are too complicated to address quickly, but after years ago reading B. B. Warfield on creation, evolution, divine sovereignty, the proper role of science, etc., my mind has been at ease with the notion that scientific investigations, when carried out with a focus on empirical results, can be a relatively safe pointer to how best to interpret at least some aspects of the Scriptures. The challenge, as Miller puts it quite well at several points in this book, concerns the weight that specific interpretations of early Genesis should be given. The idea that physical death before the fall and the goodness of the creation are incompatible strikes me as an unnecessary conclusion from *tota scriptura*, but I realize that a whole lot more is involved in such discussions than simple questions of one-off biblical interpretations.

I pray that this book will be helpful to Adventists as they deal with the important matters the book takes up. I’m glad Miller is bringing his gifts and insights to the service of his own Adventist fellowship, even as he continues to think about scholarship for the rest of us as well.

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Noll, Mark A. *In the Beginning Was the Word: The Bible in American Public Life, 1492–1783*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. 339 pp. Hardcover, US\$29.95.

*The following is based on an oral response to a presentation that Dr. Mark A. Noll gave at Andrews University on his book In the Beginning was the Word. Nicholas Miller, who gave the response, studied for his PhD in American Religious History under Professor Noll’s oversight at the University of Notre Dame. Miller’s dissertation was on the religious influences on the American Constitution’s First Amendment, published as The Religious Roots of the First Amendment (Oxford, 2012).*

With his new book on the Bible in America, Professor Mark Noll has brought us another work of scholarship that affirms the importance of a knowledge of religion, Christianity, and the Bible to a fuller and more complete understanding of American history. *In the Beginning* gives an overview of the impact and role that the Bible had in American public life during its first three hundred years. It is not a review of the role of the Bible generally, but the Bible in relation to the public square and political life and identity.

The publication of this book coincides with Professor Noll’s last year of full-time teaching. The academy is now taking stock of his enormous contributions to the shape of both Christian history, and larger American intellectual history over the last four decades. *In the Beginning* provides a good opportunity to consider not only Noll’s mature thought on religion