

for comment—each on the subject of theological method.

Firstly, White consciously follows the pattern established in analytic theology of defending the coherence of his doctrinal position at a conceptual (loosely 'philosophical') level. The difficulty here is that the plausibility of belief in incarnation seems excessively dependent on the philosophical success of conceptual construction. On the one hand, it is true that questions of conceptual coherence can not be dodged if claims are to be intelligible. On the other hand, claims can be both intelligible and plausible without needing to be so demonstrated at a sophisticated conceptual level. It would be quite unfair to expect the author to address the question of theological method involved here but, equally, the point needs to be made.

Secondly, White assimilated the doctrine of the atonement to alleged natural moral intuitions. But those who seriously encounter the love and holiness of God in Christ crucified must ever after humbly conform any moral intuitions to what they have now learned. Moral sense can not stand in judgement! Yet this essay conjures up the picture of an intellectually balanced, morally composed theologian, shaping the biblical matter according to the canons of his judgement. Now it may indeed be the case that cardinal features of a proper doctrine of the atonement can be expounded in the light of moral experience; with serious qualifications one might even allow talk of some natural moral intuitions. But moral, as intellectual, wisdom must allow its countenance to pale in the light of the cross, just as far as the cross and its foolishness require.

It would be unjust, however, to overstate these points. Conclusions that are similar could, I think, be argued in a different way to quite convincing effect. But although one could have discussed the issues of substance that arise here, it is important also to attend to theological method and, indeed, mood, which can not leave substance unaltered. It is just that I miss Luther.

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***The Gospel According to Matthew***  
**Leon Morris**

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/Leicester: IVP,  
1992, 781 pp., ISBN 0 85111 338-9

***The New American Commentary Vol. 22***  
***Matthew***

**Craig L. Blomberg**  
Nashville: Broadman, 1992, 464 pp.,  
ISBN 0 8054 0122 9

**RÉSUMÉ**

*Ce sont là deux nouveaux commentaires sur l'Évangile de Matthieu par deux spécialistes évangéliques. Morris a un souci strictement exégétique, tandis que Blomberg s'attache plus à la structure de l'Évangile et à son application. Blomberg manifeste une plus grande familiarité avec les publications récentes.*

**ZUSAMMENFASSUNG**

*Dies sind zwei neue Kommentare zum Matthäusevangelium von evangelikalen Wissenschaftlern. Morris' Anliegen ist ausschließlich exegetischer Natur, während Blomberg seinen Schwerpunkt auf die Struktur des Evangeliums und seine Anwendung legt. Blomberg ist mit der neueren Literatur besser vertraut.*

These two commentaries have much in common: both are middle level one volume commentaries written by leading, well-informed evangelical scholars. Both are based on the English text of the gospel, though referring to Greek in the footnotes. Both cautiously recommend the traditional view that Matthew the tax-collector was in some sense author of the gospel, and both respect Matthew as a historical source, while interacting to a greater or lesser extent with critical issues. Both have a useful introduction to Matthew's themes at the start of the commentary.

Morris provides his own English translation of the gospel; Blomberg comments on the NIV. Morris's commentary is almost twice as long as Blomberg's, and Morris is able to offer a verse by verse treatment of the gospel (with the advantages that a more detailed approach brings), whereas Blomberg works more in sections (with the advantages that a less fragmented approach brings). Morris is a veteran scholar, who is most familiar with the older literature and whose main interaction with recent literature is with some other recent commentaries (including Gundry, Carson and France). Blomberg is a younger scholar who

refers more to the most recent journals, books and approaches and who offers some interesting suggestions on the structure of the gospel. Morris is more strictly exegetical seeking to elucidate Matthew's meaning; Blomberg reflects more (though necessarily briefly) on questions of application.

The commentaries agree on many things, not all of them obvious: e.g. they both trace the 'exception' clause in 5:32, 19:9, back to Jesus and argue that Jesus allowed divorce and remarriage in exceptional cases (contra W. Heth and G. Wenham *Jesus and Divorce*, R. F. Collins, *Divorce in the New Testament*, and others). They diverge on other points: e.g. Morris entertains the view that 'on this rock' (16:18) could be a reference to Jesus' teaching and Blomberg prefers to take it as a reference to Peter; Morris takes 16:28 to refer to Jesus' death and resurrection and Blomberg to the transfiguration.

Both commentaries are well-written, and both are to be warmly recommended—with Morris having the edge for those wanting more detail, and Blomberg for those wanting a somewhat more accessible, modern approach and more up-to-date bibliography. With France and Carson already available, English-speaking readers now have a remarkable range of middle-level evangelical commentaries on Matthew. With the massive three volume International Critical Commentary of W. D. Davies and D. Allison almost complete and Don Hagner's Word commentary expected shortly, students of Matthew will soon be very well served indeed.

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***Guardians of Creation: Nature in Theology and the Christian Life***

L. Osborn

Leicester: Apollos, 1993, 172 pp., £9.95, paperback, ISBN 0 85110 951 9

**RÉSUMÉ**

*L'auteur s'efforce de bâtir une éthique de l'environnement sur un fondement théologique. Dans la première moitié du livre, il aborde les sujets de la montée de l'écologie et de la spiritualité verte, et il présente des critiques de l'attitude chrétienne et les réponses qui peuvent y être données. L'auteur édifie lui-même une théologie trinitaire de la création en réponse à ces*

*critiques. C'est un ouvrage stimulant, qui apporte une contribution précieuse au sujet, mais il souffre d'un manque de clarté quant au rôle de Christ dans la création, et l'hébreu du premier chapitre de la Genèse y est mal compris.*

**ZUSAMMENFASSUNG**

*Der Verfasser erarbeitet eine Umweltethik auf theologischer Grundlage. Im ersten Teil des Buches behandelt er das Aufkommen des Umweltbewusstseins, die Öko-Spiritualität und die an verschiedenen christlichen Positionen geübte Kritik. Anschließend antwortet er auf diese Kritik. Der Verfasser entwickelt selbst eine trinitäre Schöpfungstheologie. Seine Argumentation ist nachdenkenswert, die Rolle Christi bei der Schöpfung bleibt jedoch unklar und der hebräische Text in Genesis I wurde mißverstanden.*

In this book Dr. Lawrence Osborn, who has degrees in both science and theology, seeks to develop a Christian environmental ethic grounded in a theological understanding of the environment as a dimension of God's good creation. It begins with a brief survey of the rise of environmentalism and of the issues which lead to talk of a present environmental crisis. He then outlines the case that some environmentalists make against Christianity as being responsible for the attitudes and beliefs that have precipitated the crisis. This leads to a chapter on non-Christian forms of 'green' spirituality, which is a very useful guide to this area. After this comes a survey of some Christian responses to the environmental crisis. These are helpfully classified into three groups: those that are negative reactions to green spirituality; those which try to reconstruct Christian theology into what is claimed to be a more environmentally friendly form; those which re-examine traditional Christian beliefs in the light of the Bible in order to find resources to address the present crisis. There is a disappointing weakness in the critique of the views surveyed under the first two categories. The reason for this might be its necessary brevity, but more could have been said without expanding the chapter very much. Another way of dealing with this weakness would have been to point the reader to a few books or articles where a fuller critique can be found. In fact, the book could do with a short annotated bibliography rather than just the list of works cited.

Dr. Osborn's own approach to developing a theologically based Christian environmental ethic falls into the third of his categories, and makes up the second half of the book. There is a lot that is very good here, especially the insistence on