

Self-transcendence (p. 145), the divine 'eternal presence' (p. 148) and imagination related to feeling (cf. Schleiermacher) (p. 150) are included in Pannenberg's anthropological presuppositions.

For Bloesch, Hasel maintains, Scripture is inextricably linked to Christ, and is therefore 'sacramental' (p. 181). Bloesch's concept of God is that of 'transcendence' (p. 203) but includes 'a personal dimension' (p. 209), thus emphasising the role of Jesus in revelation. History, for Bloesch, is the 'vessel of eternity' (p. 206), but God is 'transhistorical'. Bloesch's anthropological views presuppose the 'qualitative difference between man and God' and the 'total depravity of humankind' (p. 210).

The final chapter is one of evaluation and conclusion. Here Hasel compares the strengths and weaknesses of the concepts of Scripture in the theologies of Pannenberg and Bloesch. Hasel majors more on the weaknesses than the strengths. For Hasel, both theologians have a 'functional use of Scripture' (p. 256), even though they start from different perspectives. Hasel believes that neither theologian has developed a 'consistent view of Scripture' (p. 259). Nor is he convinced that their understanding of Scripture's origin, nature and use is derived from Scripture itself (p. 257).

The book's usefulness for students of the doctrine of Scripture has been referred to already. Obviously the book has value for those studying either Pannenberg or Bloesch. Certainly theological libraries should include this in their collection.

I do, however, question whether a dissertation should be published 'as is' without editing.

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Christ and the Spirit

G. W. P. McFarlane

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RÉSUMÉ

L'ouvrage de Graham McFarlane est une étude de l'œuvre du théologien écossais du XIX^e siècle Edward Irving, pour nous aider à comprendre sa conception de la Trinité et de l'incarnation. McFarlane tente de montrer que

la théologie d'Irving unit la théologie à l'anthropologie en ce que l'incarnation est vue comme le lieu où Dieu le Fils répare notre défaillance humaine dans l'obéissance à Dieu, en rendant une obéissance parfaite à Dieu le Père par la puissance du Saint-Esprit.

C'est une étude stimulante, qui non seulement fait progresser notre compréhension de la pensée d'Irving, mais aussi nous incite à réfléchir à nouveau à la signification de l'incarnation.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Bei Graham McFarlanes Werk handelt es sich um eine Untersuchung des Beitrags des schottischen Theologen Edward Irving (19. Jahrhundert) zu unserem Verständnis der Trinität und der Inkarnation. McFarlane weist darauf hin, daß Irvings Theologie eine Integration von Theologie und Anthropologie erreicht, indem sie die Inkarnation als den Moment auffaßt, da Gott, der Sohn, unser menschliches Versagen, Gott zu gehorchen, wiedergutmacht, indem er Gott, dem Vater, mittels der Kraft des Heiligen Geistes vollkommenen menschlichen Gehorsam leistet.

McFarlanes Buch ist eine anregende Untersuchung, die nicht nur zu einem besseren Verständnis von Irvings Denken beiträgt, sondern die uns darüber hinaus herausfordert, die Bedeutung der Inkarnation neu zu überdenken.

One of the encouraging signs in contemporary systematic theology is a great re-birth of interest in the traditional doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation. Many theologians working in this field have shaken off the old liberal idea that these doctrines are simply the result of the imposition of Greek metaphysics upon the simple ethical unitarianism taught by Jesus Himself and have come to appreciate that these doctrines in fact lie at the very heart of the Christian faith and give it shape and coherence.

Among the leaders of this renaissance in Great Britain has been Professor Colin Gunton of King's College London and Graham McFarlane's work, which was originally a Doctoral thesis supervised by Professor Gunton, is an exploration of the contribution to our understanding of the Trinity and the Incarnation made by the 19th century Scottish theologian Edward Irvine.

Edward Irving has until quite recently been regarded as a Victorian ecclesiastical oddity, a promising Presbyterian preacher who went off the rails through his interest in

what we would now call charismatic renewal, his belief that Christ had a fallen human nature, and his conviction that the millennium was just around the corner. However, the importance of Irvine's thought has now been reassessed by a number of theologians including Karl Barth and Colin Gunton, and it has come to be realised that he was in fact an important theologian from whom we have much to learn.

According to Dr. McFarlane what makes Irving particularly significant is that his response to the fact that in his day the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation were: 'being increasingly deemed irrelevant and increasingly undermined' (p. 3) was not to abandon them but to produce instead a fresh and creative account of the relationship between them which gives a proper place to the Biblical teaching about the role of the Holy Spirit. As McFarlane puts it: 'Irving is of interest because he holds together his doctrine of the incarnation in such a way as to make sense of the Spirit's place in the redemptive narratives' (p. 4).

McFarlane's account of how Irving does this falls into three parts, looking successively at Irving's doctrine of God, his doctrine of human being, and then finally his doctrine of the person of Christ. The reason for this tri-partite structure is to demonstrate how Irving's understanding of the person of Christ draws upon his understanding of the nature of God and Man and of the relationship between them.

To be more specific, McFarlane's basic thesis is that according to Irving: '... we understand God and ourselves to the degree we understand the Son and the Spirit' (p. 5). This is because, like the mature Barth of the *Church Dogmatics*, Irving sets out a theology and an anthropology which is centred upon the truth about God that has been made known to us through the incarnation, and this truth concerns the relationship of the Son to the Father through the Holy Spirit.

In Irving's view what we learn from the revelation of God in Christ as witnessed to by the New Testament is that within the being of God Himself God the Son gives perfect expression to the will of God the Father through the activity of God the Holy Spirit who unites them both. Human beings, who are made in the image of the Son, are, he says, likewise intended to be obedient to the will of God through the power of the Spirit. Their failure to do so is made good in the incarnation in which God the Son enters into our fallen

human condition and renders perfect human obedience to His Father through His relationship to Him in the Spirit.

In his exposition of Irving's theology McFarlane demonstrates the links between Irvine's thought and that of his mentor Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and also shows how it relates to a the thinking of a range of other theologians ancient and modern including the Cappadocian Fathers, Friederich Schleiermacher and John Macmurray. Although McFarlane's book is written in a very compressed style that is not always easy to follow it is worth persevering with because what he has to say is extremely important not simply because it contributes to our understanding of the theology of Edward Irvine, but, more importantly, because it presents us with a coherent and stimulating vision of how God and Man relate to each other in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, and how this fulfils God's original intention at creation. It challenges those within the Liberal tradition like the late G. W. H. Lampe who contrast the idea that Christ was a genuine human being empowered by the Spirit with the traditional doctrine of the Incarnation. On the hand it also challenges those within the Evangelical tradition who see the purpose of the incarnation within a legal paradigm and view the work of Christ primarily in terms of His bearing the legal penalties for sin, neglecting the Biblical teaching that Christ came to recreate fallen human nature from the inside by overcoming the disobedience of Adam through His own perfect obedience.

One thing that did strike me, however, was the absence in McFarlane's work of any interaction with the work of Biblical scholars. This is not a criticism of McFarlane since he obviously had to limit his work at some point, and it is perfectly legitimate simply to show how Irving relates to the Christian theological tradition. Nevertheless it does highlight the perennial danger that systematicians and Biblical scholars may inhabit different worlds and not engage with one another's work. From the evidence that McFarlane presents it is clear that Irving himself rooted much if not all of his theology in biblical exegesis and if his vision is to carry ultimate conviction his exegesis needs to be scrutinised in the light of current understandings of the texts upon which he draws. Perhaps Dr McFarlane might be persuaded to produce another book looking at this issue. . . .

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