

and his charismatic convictions. They do not however endorse his views on the Toronto Blessing (TB hereafter).

In the first essay Lloyd Petersen takes issue with Stibbe's contention that the 'ecstatic' phenomena associated with the TB is God's way of meeting an essentially ecstatic culture. In essence he argues that Paul did not propose ecstasy in the Corinthian church as the answer to the needs of the ecstatic culture in Corinth. In Petersen's view the ecstatic phenomena by and large occur in charismatic churches where the clientele have already been softened up to a point of responsiveness.

In the second essay Mark Smith questions Stibbe's 'This is That' hermeneutic. In particular he challenges Stibbe's prophetic interpretation of Ezekiel 47 as setting out a four staged pattern of revival of which the TB can be understood as stage 4 or the Fourth Wave (stage 1 = early Pentecostalism, stage 2 = early charismatic movement, stage 3 = John Wimber's Third Wave). Stibbe justifies his hermeneutic on the basis of the New Testament authors' midrashic use of Old Testament prophecies. Smith counters that because the New Testament writers are unconcerned with the original sense of the Old Testament this does not justify us in being unconcerned with Paul's original sense.

In the third essay Vivien Calver examines ecstatic laughter which Stibbe himself describes as 'extraordinary'. Calver scrutinises laughter as it occurred in the Great Awakening in New England and under Wesley. Neither, in his view, supported ecstatic laughter. The rest of his chapter is an extended discussion of laughter in the Old and New Testaments. Many of the references to laughter he demonstrates are to 'mocking laughter'. The only verse in the whole Bible, in his view, which predicates the laughter of Christians is Luke 6 verse 21.

The final contribution examines the validity of the 'Wait and See Gamaliel Principle' which Stibbe urges as a criterion for assessing the TB. Here John Lyons makes the point that Luke uses Gamaliel solely for the reason that he utters what he wants his readers of the Acts of the Apostles to hear, namely that the church will not be overthrown. This does not however, he contends, justify us in adopting this as a principle to scrutinise the validity of the TB or any other movement. Indeed, he shows that Luther and more recent theologians have eschewed this use of the Gamaliel principle as a valid test for assessing Christian movements and phenomena.

This book is a thoughtful piece and will cause devotees of the TB both to reflect on their experiences and to reconsider their apologetic for it. It should be said however that the authors don't really grapple with the Toronto experience beyond the level of the outward ecstatic phenomena which the Airport Vineyard Church regarded as merely human responses to the TB. Their endeavours also highlight the difficulties which scholars, clergy and laity alike find in attempting to analyse and authenticate Christian experience whether it be the TB, Rwanda, Keswick, Cursillo, Anglo-Catholic mysticism or the liberal Broad Church feel-good factor.

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### **John Newton and the Evangelical Tradition**

**D. B. Hindmarsh**

Oxford: Clarendon, 1996, 366 pp., HB,  
ISBN 0 19 826379 1

### **RÉSUMÉ**

*Dans cet ouvrage, Bruce Hindmarsh étudie la vie et l'œuvre de John Newton, qui fut pasteur de l'Église Anglicane dans l'Angleterre du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Il considère trois moments décisifs dans les jeunes années de Newton : sa conversion en 1748, son acceptation du calvinisme en 1754 et son ordination en 1757. Hindmarsh étudie le calvinisme de Newton de manière détaillée et le présente comme un théologien essentiellement pratique et pastoral. Il démontre que Newton a été un « évangélique inclusiviste » et que son ouverture a fait de lui une figure patriarcale. Il est ainsi devenu un ami et un conseiller de nombreux évangéliques de la cité de Londres et au-delà.*

### **ZUSAMMENFASSUNG**

*Bruce Hindmarsh untersucht in der vorliegenden Studie Leben und Werk John Newtons, dem anglikanischen Geistlichen des 18. Jahrhunderts. Er geht dabei auf drei bedeutende Wendepunkte aus Newtons frühem Mannesalter ein, nämlich seine Bekehrung von 1748, seine Annahme des Calvinismus von 1754 sowie seine Ordination von 1757. Hindmarsh bietet eine detaillierte Untersuchung von Newtons Calvinismus und stellt ihn als*



*einen im wesentlichen praktisch und pastoral veranlagten Theologen vor. Er zeigt auf, daß Newton ein 'inklusive Evangelikaler' war, dessen Aufgeschlossenheit ihn zu einer patriarchalen Figur machte, die für viele Evangelikale in London und darüber hinaus zu einem Freund und Berater wurde.*

Bruce Hindmarsh's study of John Newton is a scholarly but readable account of Newton's life with a strong emphasis on his theology. Drawn from his doctoral research the writer has drawn on rich veins of primary source material.

Hindmarsh examines three significant turning points in Newton's early manhood: his conversion in 1748, his acceptance of Calvinism in 1754 and his ordination in 1757. Newton came as a reluctant convert to Calvinism but his predestinarian convictions were strengthened through hearing Whitefield preach at the Tabernacle to 5,000 people. Before his ordination Newton was part of a circle of Baptist Calvinists, among them John Rylands junior whose supralapsarian views he contested. Newton was not a high Calvinist; indeed his preaching was evangelistic and often made use of exhortations to sinners. In fact Hindmarsh shows that for all his grappling with doctrinal volumes Newton was essentially a practical and pastoral theologian.

Hindmarsh gives us detailed insights into Newton's ministry at Olney and later at St. Mary Woolnoth in the city of London. In the former place where Newton enjoyed the most cordial of relationships with dissenters, his congregation was frequently more than two thousand people. He celebrated Holy Communion once a month which was more than many of his fellow clergy. On Sundays he catechised two hundred children and his Tuesday evening Prayer meeting attracted a hundred and thirty. Newton devoted his mornings to reading and study and his afternoons to visiting or holding cottage meetings. One of Newton's innovations at Olney was to establish hymn singing and Hindmarsh gives an incisive analysis of his Hymnology.

The writer demonstrates very well the way in which Newton became a kind of 'evangelicals patriarch'. This was due in part to his capacity to move easily among dissenters as well as the clergy of the established church. To Newton issues of church order and ministry were matters of expediency. The security of the church was to be found rather in salvation's walls which surrounded it. In short,

Newton was an 'inclusive evangelical' who embraced all who shared the heart of evangelical doctrine. Hindmarsh makes a convincing case that one of Newton's great contributions was as 'an ideal of evangelical catholicity'.

This is a scholarly but lucid account which adds considerably to our knowledge of Newton and his impact on the earlier evangelical movement. The book will be of interest both to the serious student of eighteenth century ecclesiastical history and to those with a more general interest in the earlier evangelical movement.

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### ***Dibdin and the English Establishment***

**E. S. S. Sunderland**

Bishop Auckland: The Pentland Press  
Limited, 1995, 109 pp., £7.50,  
ISBN 1 85821 304 5

### **RÉSUMÉ**

*Ce livre raconte la vie de Sir Lewis Dibdin qui fut Doyen de la cour suprême de l'Église Anglicane en Angleterre de 1903 à 1934. Il fut en fonction sous l'autorité des archevêques Benson, Davidson et Temple. Il considérait cette cour comme une partie importante de l'organisation de l'Église Anglicane, mais défendait le droit de la commission juridique du conseil privé de casser des décisions prises par la Cour de l'Église. Dans toutes les questions légales délicates de la période où il exerça sa fonction, par exemple celle du ritualisme et celle du nouveau livre de Prière de 1928, Dibdin s'est toujours montré comme un Protestant impartial mais ferme.*

### **ZUSAMMENFASSUNG**

*Das vorliegende Buch berichtet aus dem Leben Sir Lewis Dibbins, der von 1903-1934 Dekan des 'Court of Arches' war, dem höchsten Gericht der anglikanischen Kirche. Dibdin übte diese Aufgabe unter den Erzbischöfen Benson, Davidson und Temple aus. Er verstand die Kirchengerichte als einen bedeutenden Teil der anglikanischen Bestimmung, verteidigte aber dennoch das Recht des 'Judicial Committee of the Privy Council', die Entscheidungen des 'Court of Arches' zu*