

Greek NT appears to be in need of more accuracy (cf. grace as power, 29).

Chapters 4 and 5 present Jesus' special provision for a fruitful Christian life, that is, his presence and his solutions (resources), and his commandments. Living out his commands is impossible without his presence, reminds Stanley, for Jesus transforms our paradigms (cf. the ten beatitudes in Matthew 5, 64-75) and invites his followers to a veritable tour de force of an invitation to repentance, which is a true and beneficial change of mind and direction. It is interesting to read here a number of references to social surveys run by George Barna (87, 99).

Chapters 6 to 8 have similarly formulated titles and lay before the reader three major tests of one's salvation. A genuine Christian should experience love (not anger) towards other people, should verify one's views and practice on wealth and properties (it is wonderful to think of John Wesley's diary and monthly expenditures here, 135), and should be able to demonstrate perseverance in the Christian life (i.e. continuity in the daily struggles for a holy life, etc.). Following in this sense, chapter 9 emphasises that God's judgement counts, and that every Christian will be accountable for their living before God, to be praised, rewarded or rebuked, although, on all counts, always received with love.

The book ends with the author's clear opinion that the qualities of repentance, assurance, continuity and progress should not be lacking in any Christian who indeed lives out their salvation. The book is very commendable for pastors and teachers, and makes for delightful reading for anyone willing to face tough questions about Christian living.

Octavian Baban, Bucharest, Romania

What We Have Heard From The Beginning: The Past, Present, and Future of Johannine Studies

Tom Thatcher (ed.)

Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007, xiii + 423 pp., £26.99, pb, ISBN 978-1-60258-010-7

SUMMARY

This is a compilation of essays by senior Johannine scholars who describe their thoughts on the state of Johannine Studies. A response from a younger scholar follows each contribution. The essays track the trends in Johannine Studies over the last half century as scholars moved from the historical critical method to narrative criticism, and in a few cases to postmodern and postcolonial approaches. This is an excellent book for a description of the past, present and future of Johannine Studies.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dies ist eine Artikelsammlung aus der Feder von erfahrenen Autoren zu den johanneischen Schriften, die ihre Gedanken zum Stand der johanneischen Forschung darlegen. Jedem Beitrag folgt eine Antwort von einem jüngeren

Gelehrten. Die Artikel verfolgen die Trends der johanneischen Forschung der letzten fünfzig Jahre, in denen sich die Gelehrten von der historisch-kritischen Methode zu narrativen Ansätzen und in wenigen Fällen zu postmodernen und postkolonialen Ansätzen bewegten. Es ist ein exzellentes Buch für eine Beschreibung der Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft der johanneischen Forschung.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage rassemble des contributions d'éminents spécialistes des études johanniques qui donnent leur sentiment sur l'état de ces études. Chaque contribution est suivie d'une réponse par un spécialiste de la jeune génération. Les exposés présentent les tendances qui sont apparues dans la seconde moitié du XX^e siècle, alors que les spécialistes passaient de l'approche historico-critique à celle de la critique narrative, et parfois aussi à des approches post-modernes et post-coloniales. C'est une présentation excellente du passé, du présent et du futur des études johanniques.

* * * *

The title *What we have heard from the beginning* should not be confused with the message received by the audience of 1 John. Rather this book is a collection of essays on the state of Johannine Studies. In a sort of Johannine pun, *What we have heard* refers to what has been written and taught about the Johannine Literature, and the Gospel more specifically, over the last half century or more. Tom Thatcher asked senior Johannine scholars 'to discuss, briefly and in a conversational tone, his or her journey with John. This discussion could include an evaluation of the state of the field, programmatic remarks on questions that merit further attention, a personal history of research, a summary of current work – anything that one might share with an interested student over coffee after class' (xvii). Each contribution of these senior scholars is followed by a response by a younger Johannine scholar. Thatcher describes this second group as those 'who will carry the study of the Fourth Gospel into the next several decades' (xviii).

What we have heard from the beginning has at certain levels already accomplished Thatcher's goal that the book 'be a sort of time capsule, a virtual conversation between future students of the Johannine Literature and some of the living legends of a golden era of scholarship' (xvii). Because of the number of contributors, the book does so in a diverse way. Some of the senior contributors focus primarily on their personal history of research (Beutler, Brodie, Schneiders), others reiterate their positions on Johannine topics (Borgen, O'Grady). Yet others seek to blend their personal history with the direction their research has taken and where they think Johannine studies should go in the future (De Jonge, Fortna, Kysar, Moloney).

Reading the contributions together, some similar themes can be noted. Most of them began their studies in a field that was dominated by historical criticism

and especially the work of Rudolf Bultmann. J. Louis Martyn's *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (1968, 1979, 2003) was a watershed for a number of scholars, as his two-level approach to the Gospel offered glimpses of the situation behind the text. Another defining moment was Alan Culpepper's *The Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* (1983). His narrative approach to John's Gospel was an inspiration for numerous narrative studies in the following decades.

Although many of these seasoned Johannine scholars moved from the historical-critical to the narrative approaches, they do not want to see historical inquiry abandoned. Francis Moloney, who wrote a three volume narrative study of the Gospel, sums up this sentiment well: 'I do have difficulty with a future that loses touch with the world behind the text, the world of the text, and the two thousand years of tradition that have given us the Fourth Gospel as a major book within the Christian Scriptures' (210; see also Ashton, Fortna, Van Belle, von Wahlde).

But not all of the contributors had journeys that ended with narrative criticism. Some have travelled on to postmodern or postcolonial approaches. Robert Kysar now promotes a postmodern, almost deconstructionist, approach to the Gospel. Fernando Segovia challenges readers to think geopolitically about the Johannine Literature, by which he means moving beyond 'the assumptions of modern Western ideology' that he sees as being the main academic approach to the interpretation of John (283).

Whether postmodernism, postcolonialism etc. will be or already are the next pivotal movements in Johannine Studies is unclear, but the testimony of the 'Johannine Community' writing in this book is to not to abandon the historical questions. They call for a blending of approaches, especially since after all of these years of study, there is no consensus on the authorship, date, provenance or unity of the Gospel. Alan Culpepper states, 'In the quest to understand the Gospel of John, there is no room for methodological exclusivism' (114).

Intentionally or not, this book charts another trend in Johannine Studies. Of the eighteen senior contributors, only one is a woman (Schneiders). Among the younger scholars there are six women (Sproston-North, Williams, Reinhartz, Coloe, Lee and Conway). The geographical representation of senior contributors is decent, although a bit heavy on the North American contribution. Thatcher does stress that only 'some of the living legends' participated (xvii). Still, contributions from Jörg Frey, Martin Hengel, Andrew Lincoln, Udo Schnelle and Hartwig Thyen, among others, are missed.

For any Johannine scholar, *What we have heard from the beginning* is an extremely interesting and insightful read. For anyone interested in a primer on the thought and research of some of the major players in Johannine studies during the last half of the twentieth century, this is the book.

Benjamin E. Reynolds, Toronto, Canada

Re-inventing English Evangelicalism 1966-2001. A Theological and Sociological Study

Rob Warner

Bletchley: Paternoster, 2007, £19.99; 284 pp., h/b,
ISBN 978-1842275702

SUMMARY

In this book Rob Warner, one of the key Baptist players in British evangelicalism during the 1990s, analyses the movement in which he played a significant part. In doing so he brings his considerable knowledge of contemporary evangelical history and evangelical leaders into conversation with both theology and sociology. The insights that emerge are both helpful and fascinating – especially for those of us for whom all of this is also living history.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In diesem Buch analysiert Rob Warner, einer der baptistischen Schlüsselfiguren im britischen Evangelikalismus der 1990er Jahre, die Bewegung, in der er eine wichtige Rolle spielte. Dabei bringt er sein beachtliches Wissen der zeitgenössischen evangelikalen Geschichte und von evangelikalen Leitern sowohl mit der Theologie als auch mit der Soziologie ins Gespräch. Die Einsichten, die dabei zutage treten, sind sowohl hilfreich als auch faszinierend – besonders für diejenigen von uns, für die all dies auch lebendige Geschichte ist.

RÉSUMÉ

Rob Warner est l'un des baptistes qui ont joué un rôle influent au sein du mouvement évangélique britannique dans les années 1990. Il propose ici son analyse de ce mouvement, en s'appuyant sur son immense connaissance de l'histoire contemporaine du mouvement évangélique et de ses responsables, en portant attention aux considérations théologiques et sociologiques. Ses réflexions sont à la fois utiles et fascinantes, en particulier pour ceux qui ont été les acteurs ou les témoins de cette histoire.

* * * *

In the first part of his book, Warner explores what he terms the conversionist-activist axis of evangelicalism. The expansion of the Evangelical Alliance in the UK under the dynamic leadership of Clive Calver, the exciting growth of Spring Harvest, the 'blip' of the Toronto blessing, the decline in the sale of Christian magazines and indicators of the decline in practice of daily Bible reading and the Quiet Time are all considered. Very helpfully too, in chapter four, Warner takes a hindsight look at the lasting impact of some of the evangelistic programmes that peppered the Decade of Evangelism: Jesus in Me, Minus to Plus, On Fire and – perhaps saddest of all – DAWN with its vision to plant 20000 new churches in the UK in time for the new millennium. Warner's overall conclusions – as both a participant observer and activist – are disturbing ones: 'a zealous stoking of vision inflation' coupled with 'evidence of delusional tendencies' (113-114) led to boom and bust.