

ners Faraday und seiner indirekten Wirkung auf Einstein (235-261). Gerade vor dem Hintergrund von Mühlings Fazit der hohen Relevanz weltanschaulicher Gehalte, darf eine evangelikale Theologie den unbedingt nötigen Diskurs mit der Naturwissenschaft beginnen, bzw. fortsetzen. Mühlings Werk liefert dazu eine Grundlegung, die man nicht ignorieren sollte, will man ein vergleichbares Niveau erreichen.

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Evangelism after Christendom: The Theology and Practice of Christian Witness

Bryan Stone

Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2007, 335 pp, €23,00, pb,
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SUMMARY

Stone has written a compelling book in which he offers a theology of evangelism. He challenges the present practice of evangelism which has been corrupted by aggressive tendencies within Christendom and effectiveness-based trends within modernity. He proposes a practice of evangelism entirely shaped by the story of God's peace. The church is called to embody her message in the world and that embodiment is evangelism itself. This embodiment consists of a community shaped by virtuous practice. Stone's book is well written and poses serious questions for many aspects of ecclesiological practice. The risk, however, is that soteriology is reduced to ecclesiology, i.e. the church has nothing to tell, only to show.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Stone hat ein überzeugendes Buch geschrieben, in dem er eine Theologie der Evangelisation darlegt. Er kritisiert die gegenwärtige Praxis von Evangelisation, die durch aggressive Strömungen innerhalb der christlichen Welt und durch effizienzorientierte Entwicklungen innerhalb der Welt der Moderne verdorben worden ist. Stattdessen schlägt er eine Praxis der Evangelisation vor, die ganz und gar von der Geschichte von Gottes Frieden bestimmt wird. Die Kirche ist dazu berufen, ihre Botschaft in der Welt zu verkörpern, und diese Verkörperung ist Evangelisation *per se*. Diese Verkörperung besteht aus einer Gemeinschaft, die durch einen gerechten Lebenswandel geprägt ist. Stones Buch ist gut geschrieben und stellt ernsthafte Fragen an viele Aspekte kirchlichen Lebens. Es besteht jedoch die Gefahr, dass dabei die Soteriologie auf Ekklesiologie reduziert wird, d.h. dass die Kirche nichts zu sagen, sondern nur etwas zu zeigen hat.

RÉSUMÉ

Voici un ouvrage incontournable qui bâtit une théologie de l'évangélisation. Il met en question la pratique actuelle qu'il juge corrompue par des tendances agressives au sein de la chrétienté, ainsi que par des tendances à privilégier la

recherche de l'efficacité selon les méthodes de la modernité. Il propose une pratique de l'évangélisation entièrement gouvernée par l'histoire de la paix de Dieu. L'Église a pour vocation d'incarner son message dans le monde et cette manière de vivre constitue elle-même une forme d'évangélisation. Cela consiste en une vie communautaire marquée par une pratique vertueuse. Ce livre est bien écrit et pose de sérieuses questions concernant de nombreux aspects de la pratique ecclésiologique. On doit cependant déplorer que la soteriologie y soit réduite à l'ecclésiologie, comme si l'Église n'avait rien à proclamer, mais seulement l'exemple d'un style de vie à montrer.

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Bryan Stone has written a challenging book which intends to do nothing less than 'reclaiming the E-word': he sets about finding new ways for Christian evangelism after Christendom. This should not be done – as Stone often observes – by merely focusing on what works, regardless of proper theological reflection. Rather, Stone wants to offer a theology of evangelism in order to fill this gap.

The problem he sees comes about mainly through the influence of two different stories which have shaped the way the Church does evangelism. The most prominent is the Church's own history of Constantinianism, when the Church began to feel too much at home in the world and thus lost her capacity for a powerful witness about the other world to which she belongs. The second is the more recent story of modernity. Here the Church risks accepting the imaginary realm of the neutral and is forced back into the private realm. She thus loses the capacity to speak and witness in the public sphere and becomes muted. She can only play by the rules set by the public sphere, where 'universal' values such as effectiveness and usefulness prevail. These two stories are ultimately stories of violence, and counter the story of God, which is a story of peace. (In establishing this point, Stone relies heavily on Yoder.)

Stone proposes evangelism as a virtuous practice. Drawing on MacIntyre, he explains that a practice is characterised by intrinsic values. It can excel not by meeting external criteria but by excelling in the practice, judged by its intrinsic values. This should also be true for evangelism. The Church is a practice with intrinsic values shaped by the story of God, not by the two other stories. Stone expounds how God tells his story along three lines: first through Israel, chosen as a nation of priests; secondly, through Jesus who announced the coming of the kingdom and embodied that peaceful kingdom by dying on the cross as an example of utter obedience to God; and thirdly through the work of the apostles who embodied Jesus in the community of the early church.

The appropriate evangelistic strategy for the Church is, according to Stone, that she herself be the strategy and embodies her message. The practice of the Church is her witness. She is called to embody the kingdom of

peace amidst the violence of the world. Evangelising is not about inviting people to adhere to a set of convictions but an invitation to live in a new story with a whole new *telos*, a new community of virtuous practice. This implies that ecclesiology and soteriology are essentially the same and that participation in the eschatological community of the church is salvation.

Virtue is essential for the witness of the evangelising community. Virtue has intrinsic value and as such it does not aim at effectiveness. The Church is called to the radical witness of martyrdom and obedient self-sacrifice. Stone concludes with four essential virtues for our time: presence, patience, courage and humility. Living these virtues shapes a faithful witness to the story of God.

Stone's account is compelling for several reasons. The mere fact he offers a well-wrought theology of evangelism deserves praise. He sharply challenges the actual practice of evangelism. Visibly aimed at the American context, his analysis of effectiveness-based evangelism is highly relevant for the European context. The way in which the Church has accepted being pushed back into the private sphere and has accepted and integrated the utterly modernist values of effectiveness and usefulness in her evangelistic practice poses a great threat. There is much to learn from the Radical Orthodoxy-like boldness Stone proposes. This is not only a challenge for our missiology but for our entire ecclesiology. It is necessary to be aware of the fact that Jesus' life and the lives of his followers are not only about being saved but also about the embodiment of his realm on earth. Soteriology is also ecclesiology and not merely a matter of the heart of the individual.

This, however, is also an apparent weakness in Stone's book. By identifying soteriology with ecclesiology he puts an almost unbearable pressure on the highly imperfect practice of the Church. The force of evangelism lies also – and perhaps foremost – in the proclamation of the Word. The weakness also becomes visible in the way Stone depicts Jesus as the bringer of the kingdom of peace, but not as the one who died for the sins of the world. It is essential to say both: embodiment and proclamation. The church's message for the world *does* concern forgiveness of sins. But this message can only be proclaimed from the virtuous practice of an evangelising community of saints. This is rightly the essential message of Stone's impressive work.

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Jesus + Nothing = Everything

Tullian Tchividjian

Wheaton: Crossway, 2011; 224 pp., pb, \$18.99, ISBN 978-1433507786

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage captivant et d'orientation pastorale décrit quelque chose du voyage spirituel de son auteur. Celui-ci explique diverses difficultés qu'il a rencontrées et quelles réponses il a trouvées dans l'Évangile même. Par sa franchise et sa vulnérabilité, il est désarmant et communique avec efficacité. L'explication qu'il donne de l'Évangile, en particulier son évaluation de l'état d'esprit moralisateur et légaliste souvent rencontré au sein du monde évangélique, est en grande partie clairvoyante. L'ouvrage manifeste cependant de sérieuses déficiences quant à sa compréhension de la sanctification : elle revient en effet à une conception passive, celle d'une « sanctification par la foi seule ».

SUMMARY

This winsome and pastoral book describes something of its author's spiritual journey. It explains various difficulties experienced by Tchividjian and the answers he found in the gospel itself. In its openness and vulnerability, the book is disarming and effective. Much of the book's explanation of the gospel – particularly its assessment of much moralistic and legalistic evangelicalism – is astute. However, it shows serious deficiencies regarding its understanding of sanctification, which comes across as a passive theology of 'sanctification by faith alone'.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieses gewinnende und pastorale Buch beschreibt in Zügen die geistliche Reise des Autors. Es schildert unterschiedliche Schwierigkeiten, die Tchividjian erlebt und die Antworten, die er im Evangelium selbst gefunden hat. In seiner Offenheit und Verletzlichkeit ist das Buch entwaffnend und wirkungsvoll. Ein großer Teil seiner Darlegung des Evangeliums ist scharfsinnig, besonders was die Bewertung von vielen moralisierenden und gesetzlichen Strömungen im evangelikalen Bereich angeht. Jedoch weist die Schrift ernsthafte Mängel auf in bezug auf ihr Verständnis von Heiligung, das als eine passive Theologie der „Heiligung allein aus Glauben“ vermittelt wird.

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This is a winsome and pastoral book that breathes the air of one person's spiritual journey and explores the ways in which the answers he has found in the gospel of grace apply to the whole people of God. Tchividjian's great burden is to set Christian believers free from the perennial danger of legalism by a fresh appropriation of the grace of God. While I have reservations about several areas of this book, the open-hearted transparency with which Tchividjian writes, and the concern to reapply gospel truth to pastoral wounds with vulnerability and honesty, are at once disarming, moving and helpful.