

in a way that is precluded by an individualist stance. In fact one could argue that Grenz's notion of community is simply individualism blown up, in that the distinction between the two is far from apparent, held together as they are by (Reformed) doctrine which undergoes little, if any, change. Further reflection on the problems of subjectivity, including its distinction from individualism and its relation to doctrine, may have cleared the air somewhat. Nonetheless, this reviewer wishes to echo Carl E. Braaten's remark that *Theology for the Community of God* "represents the 'coming of age' of American evangelicalism." Seminarians are likely to find it most profitable.

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***God in the Wasteland: The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams.* By David F. Wells. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994. ISBN 0-8028-3773-5. Pp. x+278.**

In this second book of a series of two, David Wells continues his critique of the North American evangelical movement for what he sees as a yielding to the ethos of modernity (urbanization, technology, and capitalism). Wells's main argument can be understood in the light of the comment that, "[t]his century has demonstrated with a kind of ruthless insistence that the effort to be both modern and Christian produces deep and perhaps insoluble problems" (16). One of the author's main critiques of the evangelical establishment is the way it has tried to become a kind of 'civil religion' in its efforts to be culturally adapted. Wells's contention is that before the 1960s North American evangelicalism was an outsider in the modern world, but after the 1960s, with the death of old liberal Protestantism, evangelicalism was propelled into what he terms the "same religious void" as liberalism.

Another contention of the book is that modernity has caused contemporary evangelicals to believe whatever they want, regarding any "confession of God's truth in the church and beyond [as] being simply a part of personal identity and psychological makeup" (27). Wells cannot accept any kind of faith that does not make public its tenets. "Modern culture grants me," he writes, "whatever I want to believe—so long as I keep those beliefs from infringing on the consciousness or behavior of anyone else, especially on points of controversy" (27).

This theological vacuum has prompted the evangelical movement in North America to be a kind of shapeless mass of institutions and entities, according to Wells. The practical implications of this "marriage" between modernity and evangelicalism are many. The first is that the church has become another kind of shopping mall. This has been witnessed by the rise of the megachurches, where Wells sees members attending for purely psychological reasons, not out of any commitment to Truth. He writes that "our culture of abundance has led the churches to refashion themselves into institutions better suited to satisfying consumers of things religious, and it has turned religious life into a field for entrepre-

neurs" (152). His critique of the megachurches is in some ways unfair. Though in some of those churches it is true that psychology has replaced the Word of God, it is also true that in other megachurches people come to hear sermons grounded in solid evangelical truth.

The solution for this "tragedy," as Wells calls the interference of modernity with evangelicalism, is "the recovery of an appropriate vision of God" because the alternatives that evangelicalism is presenting to the world are destructive. This vision of God has to be centered on the cross, because "the cross is not only the place where salvation is found: it is also the place where evil has been judged and where God's triumphant holiness has been revealed" (184). The final appeal of the book is to go back to the Westminster Confession as the faith of North American evangelicals.

The book as a whole can be classified as good in the sense that it calls our attention to the tensions existing in the evangelical movement regarding the place of 'modernity' in the church today. The language is clear and leaves no doubt as to the author's own theological leanings. The book is an easy one to read, free from complicated theological arguments, making it easy for lay people without extensive theological background. In terms of content, however, there are some important flaws. One is the generalization of certain problems that are not so general in the North American evangelical community. Second, is the denial that the church can work *within* the culture in an effort to bring Christ to the modern man/woman. Third, there is the important misconception that a turn towards a seventeenth-century confession of faith—the Westminster Confession—is the solution for the "religious void" that Wells perceives as the most serious threat to the evangelical movement. It is true that contemporary evangelicalism needs some important refocusing in the areas of ministry and evangelism, but the solution lies not in adapting the movement to the Westminster Confession, but in adapting Westminster to the realities of the modern world—without sacrificing the integrity of Truth.

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***Poststructuralism and the New Testament: Derrida and Foucault at the Foot of the Cross.* By Stephen D. Moore. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994. ISBN 0-8006-2599-4. Pp. vii+143.**

This short, didactic volume is an introduction to poststructuralist currents as they apply to the interpretation of New Testament texts. Easy to read, it exposes the New Testament scholar (and other educated readers) to the basic tenets of this movement and to the multiple directions that it is currently taking. Stephen Moore also leads us through his own creative applications of two poststructuralist methods, those of Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, to New Testament passages and themes. The result is a radical critique of certain New Testament concepts and of their classical interpretation.