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# Book Reviews

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*God's Book for God's People*, by John R.W. Stott. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1982. 93 pages, \$2.95 Paper.

Do you have a friend who doubts the authority of the Bible? This may be an appropriate book for such doubters. Stott, who is an eminent former rector of All Souls Church in London, provides a very brief introduction to evidences, the authority, and the relevance of the Scriptures.

The book consists of five sermons preached at All Souls in February and March of 1980. Each chapter considers a text in a simple and colloquial style. The content is intended for students and newer converts, those with a minimal understanding of the importance of the Bible to the church.

The approach is trinitarian, with chapters on the Bible as a message from God, with Christ as the focus, and the Holy Spirit as articulator through human authors. Practical explanations of the value of the Bible to the church and the Christian conclude the volume.

The result is an inexpensive, lucid introduction to the authenticity of the Bible. The bibliography contains key books that open the way to greater depth on any of the topics he discussed. This book is best circulated to those struggling with the weakened dependability of the Scriptures under the influence of both religious and secular criticism of the Bible as the authoritative word of God.

**Ivan L. Zabilka**  
801 West Worley  
Columbia, MO 65201

*Archaeological Commentary on the Bible*, by Gonzalo Baez-Camargo. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1984. 288 pages, \$17.95.



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Baez-Camargo, Ph.D., recently deceased, was professor of Hebrew and Bible at the United Evangelical Center of Mexico City, a translator, consultant, and research associate of the United Bible Societies, a newspaper columnist, a world traveler and lecturer, and author of twenty-two books. He followed closely the work of archaeologists in Bible lands.

This book, first published in Spanish in 1979 and widely acclaimed, was brought up to date (to 1982) and translated into English by the author at the urging of Dr. Eugene A. Nida of the American Bible Society.

The archaeological material is arranged in biblical order, from Genesis to Revelation, and tied to specific chapters and verses. Each section of comment ends with a reference to the source of the author's information. Extensive bibliographies and a few black-and-white illustrations (some of inferior quality and value) are included.

The author exhibits a wide acquaintance with archaeological literature in several languages. He is a master at simplifying complex data and relating them to the various biblical passages. He grinds no biblical and theological axes but honestly presents different perspectives when the scholarly verdict on the meaning and relevance of archaeological material is not unanimous.

The Old Testament portion of the book is treated in considerably more detail and depth than is the New. For example, much more could have been included about the cities of Paul and light from the papyri on his letters.

Nevertheless, here is a store of valuable archaeological information, accurately assayed and related to the biblical text for the average reader by a distinguished evangelical scholar.

**Dr. Edward Blair**

Professor of New Testament Interpretation, Emeritus  
Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary

*Fire in My Bones*, by Charles H. King, Jr., Eerdmans, 1983.

“I am compelled now to confront whites eyeball to eyeball and dare them to suggest anything less of me than they see in each other.” The words are those of an experienced pastor, professor,

soldier, and administrator who has borne the burden of racial discrimination in the inner city and on a presidential commission, in the classroom and in the church. At first glance King's book is simply the engrossing tale of his personal struggle with white racism. Bracketed by a prologue ("In Search of a Lost Identity") and epilogue ("I Tire of Being Black"), the book is divided into 32 chapters organized into four parts. Each part covers a key period of King's life: roots, the church, the city, and racism today.

However, the book is so much more. Interwoven throughout are fascinating historical accounts of the black National Baptist Convention and the rise of Martin Luther King, Jr. (ch. 11), and critical analyses of such social issues as penal reform (ch. 21). The common theme is the black experience—an experience constantly marred, notes King, by white racism, institutional and personal. King astutely explores the critical question of why it is so difficult for whites to recognize their racism. Moving beyond the sit-ins, farm-ins, walk-arounds, and bust-outs of recent decades (pp. 62-68, 97), the author introduces us to the confrontation/reconciliation method he has developed for breaking down racism: "encounter" seminars which expose white people to "an inescapable black anger and truth." The book is well written, arresting the reader's attention with its vivid language. The periodic inclusion of correspondence and newspaper articles adds to the sense of experiencing the events of the book with King.

At the same time there are drawbacks—for instance, King's "completely nonobjective, black point of view" (p. 145). While this strengthens the book as a testimonial to black experience, it leads to an occasional slanting of language whereby it can be claimed that blacks cannot be racist (p. 231). Those seeking an explicitly theological encounter with racism may also be disappointed. The place of God in King's approach is not well developed. Yet, his analysis of the past weaknesses of the white (especially) and black church is incisive and his defense of the oppressed against their oppressors ("white people must change"—ch. 32) is biblically sound. Moreover, he does acknowledge the need for a "theological base for the future" (not developed here) so that the preferably nonviolent cultivation of black identity may ultimately lead not to separation but to the unity of the races in mutual respect (pp. 110-111).

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Overall, King is to be heartily commended for allowing the fire in his bones to burn brightly, that others might also see.

**John F. Kilner**

Assistant Professor of Church in Society  
Asbury Theological Seminary

*The Supremacy of Jesus*, by Stephen Neill in *The Jesus Library* Series edited by Michael Green. Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1984. 166 pages and index \$5.95.

Bishop Stephen Neill, with charm and disarming subtlety, argues effectively for the supremacy of Jesus. His vast learning of world religions equips him to address searching minds, particularly university students. This book can have significant evangelistic impact.

Nurture impact, too. For the author illumines, from Scripture and reason, our historic faith. Bishop Neill will help people struggling to find an anchor; rather, *the* Anchor.

His chapter on the cross (“One for Many—Does It Make Sense?”) is eloquent (see, e.g., pp. 149-151), and Chapter 7 on the Friend could find a place in the literature of friendship. More, the author shows Jesus as Liberator (Chapter 2 on the Law), true Messiah (Chapter 5), Supreme Teacher (Chapter 3 where Gautama Buddha and Socrates are contrasted to Jesus). Each chapter strikes one as very worthwhile.

Philosophers will identify with Neill who knows the history of thought. Missiologists will also hear the book, for the good bishop did his homework in a lifetime of international endeavor.

Careful readers could wish for a bibliography, especially from a writer so widely read.

God bless this splendid book and Michael Green’s editorship of *The Jesus Library*.



**Donald E. Demaray**  
Fisher Professor of Preaching  
Asbury Theological Seminary

*Loving God*, by Charles Colson. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983, 255 pages, \$11.95.

If you stop by your local Christian bookstore, you may get the impression that you are the only person who has not yet read this book! And by the looks of sales, you might be! Heralded as the most significant work of Colson to date, the book takes a different turn from his previous books. Without abandoning the use of story—his own and others—Colson sets out on a more systematic and theological journey.

After nearly a decade as a Christian, Colson has come to the conclusion that experience and faith must be informed and thought through. Drawing on his own vocation as lawyer, he sets out to show how he has engaged in that reflective and integrative project in his own life. The focal point revolves around the idea that “loving God” is the reason for living. And in light of our increasing secularization, he sees it as the most important mandate we face in the church.

The book has been called a “lay theology,” and in some senses it is. But Colson would be the first to admit it is not comprehensive. His aim is to define “loving God” as *obedience*. To do that, he works systematically from the problem of sin (why we are not obedient) to the possibility of holiness (the goal of Christian discipleship). Along the way, we see the majesty of God, the centrality of Christ, the necessity of suffering, the potential for the church, and the certainty of everlasting life. Colson’s desire is to produce “the radical Christian,” that is, the Christian who has found the *roots* of reality and is now ready to live consistent with them no matter what.

For me, one of the deep delights of this book is to see one of the Christian “celebrities” beginning to move beyond the very celebrity-ism which has left certain persons shallow and trendy. This book reveals a man determined to stick it out for the long haul, and who realizes that the “haul” will probably be unpleasant on many occasions. I would commend this work as worthy of personal and group study. For some it will be a call to break from the frothy, prosperity-centered heresies floating around today. For all

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it is a contemporary reminder that “loving God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength—and your neighbor as yourself” is still what it’s all about.

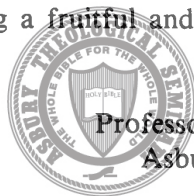
**Dr. Steve Harper**  
Associate Professor of Spiritual Formation  
Asbury Theological Seminary

*Partners in Ministry*, by James L. Garlow. Beacon Hill, 1981.

For those who are interested in exploring questions regarding the relationship between ordained ministers and lay people in the church this book is a must. Dr. Garlow has put his finger on one of the currently hot issues in the church. In this small volume he uses as a major premise that all Christians are ministers. Every layperson is called to ministry. While this concept is not new it is apparent that it is being reclaimed in our day.

Dr. Garlow is well qualified to write on this subject. He has been minister of lay development at Bethany First Church of the Nazarene near Oklahoma City for some time. He studied Wesley’s activities and views on lay ministry and has been instrumental in conducting numerous seminars in local churches and other places on the subject of lay ministry. The first two chapters of the book are concerned with the biblical and theological bases of lay ministry. Chapter three points up the unjustified clergy-laity dichotomy, tracing also the history of John Wesley in the use of lay ministers. The remaining three chapters stress the gifts, training and sending of lay people into the world for Christian ministry.

The book is well written and contains much practical counsel on the importance of lay ministry in the local church. It should prove to be very helpful to those in the church who are interested in creating and maintaining a fruitful and effective ministry in the church.



**H. W. Byrne**  
Professor of Christian Education  
Asbury Theological Seminary

*Beyond Easy Believism*, by Gary R. Collins. Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1982, 197 pages.

This book is addressed to the Christian reader. It calls attention to the subtle influence of atheistic humanism in the major areas of Christian living. Included in the eleven chapters is a variety of subjects such as commitment, intellectualism, emotionalism, success, sex, home life, and worship. The reader is asked to reexamine his biblical beliefs and obedience in the face of popular opinion and social pressures. Collins the psychologist blends consistently into his generally hortatory approach throughout the book.

The book is written in popular style making for easy reading. It contains many excellent quotations and some good illustrations. There is an abundance of reference notes in each chapter. A study guide is provided that can be used personally or in groups. A good book for pastor and people to read.

**V. James Mannoia, Ph.D.**  
Professor of Pastoral Ministry  
Asbury Theological Seminary

*Reconciliation*, by John Edward Jones. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany Book House, 1984.

Lawyer John Edward Jones understands legal aspects of broken relationships. As a Christian, he has experienced the reconciling love of God. His struggle—to bring his living, biblical faith to the practice of law. Applying God's principles, he began to see tattered relationships mended by the reconciling power of God.

Christ calls us all to be ministers of reconciliation in our broken world. This story shows how one man answered this call in his work and in his life.



**David Fowler**  
Student  
Asbury Theological Seminary

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*Don't Waste Your Sorrows*, by Paul E. Billheimer. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1977.

God uses sorrow to build our characters and prepare us for leadership. But only if we let him. Mr. Billheimer does an excellent job dealing with the various reactions to and theologies of sorrow. This is a book of hope and encouragement. Sorrow is used by God to teach us agape love; true success in life is to give love. Knowing this we can “rejoice in our suffering.” I recommend it.

**Douglas Moore**


Student

Asbury Theological Seminary

*The Lay-Centered Church*, by Leonard Doohan. Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1984, 175 pages, \$8.95.

The contemporary lay renewal taking place in Protestantism is well known to most of us. This insightful book shows us parallel developments in Roman Catholicism. Taken at face value, the book is important in showing one dimension of ecumenicity. Almost surprisingly to some ears, the author speaks of “the priesthood of all the baptized.” And he goes on to claim that this post Vatican II understanding of the Church is one of the most promising signs in Roman Catholicism.

The value of the book, however, is much greater than its message to Catholics. It is actually a very helpful introduction to a theology of the laity, the ministry of the laity, and a spirituality for the laity. Without blurring or confusing the roles of clergy and laity, Doohan provides a vision for the strongest kind of Church—one in which all members share in ministry. Any church, Protestant or Catholic, which is trying to recover the dynamic of lay ministry will find this book inspiring and instructional.

The seal of Asbury Theological Seminary is circular with a double border. The outer border contains the text "ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY" at the top and "1800" at the bottom. The inner border contains "THE BIBLE FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD". In the center is a shield with a cross and an open book.

**Dr. Steve Harper**  
Associate Professor of Spiritual Formation  
Asbury Theological Seminary