

Samaan could have made his point on following Christ's model more effectively by examining segments of Christ's life where his methods are clearly demonstrated. Although Samaan does allude at times to Christ's encounters with people, he rarely, if ever, offers any in-depth study. More often he alludes to witnessing experiences he himself has experienced. For instance, in the chapter "The Mingling Christ," he uses eight examples from his own experience while only once briefly alluding to the encounter of Jesus with the woman from Samaria. In a book entitled *Christ's Way of Reaching People*, this is a serious omission.

Also missing from the book is an analysis of the way Christ used language to reach people. As Christ mingled with people he familiarized himself with people's lives and was able to use what he had observed to illustrate the truths of the kingdom and to meet people's needs. At least one chapter on this vital aspect of Christ's outreach would have made the book more complete and more true to its title.

At times the chapter titles are deceptive. For example, the chapter entitled "Christ Can Be Trusted," is mainly about how we can win people's trust rather than about trusting Christ. The chapter, "Christ the Answer to Our Needs," is more about ministering to people's needs than Christ as the answer.

In spite of these negative comments, Samaan's sincerity cannot be doubted. Furthermore, his encouragement to witness as Christ did bears repetition.

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Schneemelcher, Wilhelm, ed. *New Testament Apocrypha*. Vol 1, *Gospels and Related Writings*. Rev. ed. English translation edited by R. McL. Wilson. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co.; and Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991. 544 pp. \$29.95.

To fully appreciate the contents of this volume one has to look at them alongside the previous editions. What we have is not simply a revised version of the old *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen*, but a completely new recasting of the third German edition begun by E. Hennecke and completed by W. Schneemelcher in 1959. Some of the recent discoveries from the Nag Hammadi Library were accounted for in that edition, yet without providing the complete texts. This was remedied in the last decade with the fifth and sixth German editions which also introduce the reader to the ever-increasing literature devoted to these apocryphal writings. It is from these last German editions that the present English translation is made by R. McL. Wilson, who had earlier translated into English the two volumes of the third German edition, published in 1963 and 1965

respectively. He is eminently qualified as the translator-editor of this revised edition. As he hastens to state in the preface, the translation of texts from German into English is not second-hand, but has been checked against the original languages of the ancient texts. Moreover, as he puts it, "Some things go more easily into English than into German!"

Obviously, the Nag Hammadi material constitutes the bulk of the improvement. A substantial part of this is the section by B. Blatz devoted to the Coptic Gospel of Thomas, which in the previous edition of the NT apocrypha was relegated to the appendix. Whereas extensive extracts were provided in the previous edition, the new edition gives complete translation of texts preceded by valuable introductions and basic bibliographies to editions, translations, and studies.

The contribution made by the inclusion of Gnostic texts, however, is not as great as it may appear, for we now possess several such translations of the Gnostic documents and those provided in this volume do not necessarily surpass the others. Moreover, the guidance provided to the literature devoted to these apocryphal writings does not always lead to the best studies cited in the more exhaustive bibliographies of scholarship dealing with the Nag Hammadi Library. Also, encountering the numerous Gnostic texts alongside non-Gnostic documents could be perplexing to those accustomed to looking at the Gnostic corpus in the particular editions. The abundant and widespread Gnostic material in this volume tends to color the rest with the same "heretical" outlook. Certainly, not all extra-canonical Gospels and related writings are to be deemed as schismatic or unorthodox works, composed in the interests of one heretical sect or another. Some works are but legendary expansions of canonical narratives. But had all the Gnostic texts in this volume been grouped together, the significance of this publication would have been reduced considerably, since these are found elsewhere and, more often than not, in better translations.

It is to be expected that the introduction to such a volume should recount the history of the NT canon. Schneemelcher is exceptionally good in providing a detailed account of the historical development. He is also responsible for updating the section on the papyrus fragments of unknown Gospels, previously done in collaboration with J. Jeremias (deceased), and revising the section on the Gospel of Bartholomew, formerly done in collaboration with F. Scheidweiler (deceased). Other previous contributions by distinguished scholars have also been updated: the work of P. Vielhauer (deceased) on Jewish-Christian Gospels has been revised by G. Strecker; that of H. C. Puech (deceased) on the bulk of the Gnostic Gospels has been revised by B. Blatz; those of A. Meyer and W. Bauer (both deceased) on works attributed to relatives of Jesus have been replaced by the contribution of W. A. Bienert. Curiously enough, in this revised edition all of Bauer's contributions have been either eliminated or replaced: his small

section on Jesus' earthly appearance and character has been left out and his much respected work on the Abgar Legend has been replaced by that of H. J. W. Drijvers. Only that by the aged O. Cullmann on the infancy Gospels is largely unchanged. Here some expansion would have been necessary, at least the inclusion of some unique and possibly early extracts from the Armenian version (e.g., the identification of the star of Bethlehem with a group of angels).

In the section entitled "Gospels under the names of holy women," one finds three Gnostic titles: *The Questions of Mary*, *The Gospel of Mary*, and the *Genna Marias*. The scant attestations to the first and the third titles do not even warrant calling these works "fragmentary." While the first two are accounted for in the Nag Hammadi corpus, the third is but a paragraph from Epiphanius' account on the Gnostics. The inclusion of such titles in the volume attests to the attempted thoroughness of its coverage. Even here, the reader is given a basic bibliography to editions, translations, and studies.

The importance of this revised edition lies simply in its bringing together most of the existing documents, however fragmentary, that fall within the established category of NT apocrypha. Surely not all known Gospels are included; the omission of certain late Gospels in addition to some of the "Infancy Gospels" is noteworthy.

The value of such an edition to serious students of the New Testament is immeasurable. The ultimate usefulness of the present volume is largely to be determined by the awaited indices. These are expected to be at the end of volume 2, as one finds them in the German edition.

Let us hope that the second volume will appear at not too great an interval after the first.

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Shorter, Aylward. *The Church in the African City*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991. viii + 152 pp. Paperback, \$19.95.

This latest book by Aylward Shorter, written after many years of mission experience in Africa, deals with a timely subject. Shorter addresses the crisis of rapid urbanization, with its ensuing materialism and secularization, which threatens to overwhelm much of sub-Saharan Africa. His aim is to examine the challenges this urbanization process poses for the church and to develop strategies that will enable the church to meet this situation.

The content of the book does not fully justify its title. The focus is on East Africa (in particular, Nairobi, Kampala, Dar-es-Salaam, and Harare) and on the work of the Roman Catholic Church. But the author has also