

From Nature to Creation

A Christian Vision for Understanding and Loving Our World

Norman Wirzba

THE CHURCH AND POSTMODERN CULTURE

James K. A. Smith, series editor

Renowned theologian Norman Wirzba engages philosophers, environmentalists, and cultural critics to show how the modern concept of nature has been deeply problematic. Wirzba explains that understanding the world as creation rather than as nature or the environment makes possible an imagination shaped by practices of responsibility and gratitude, which can contribute to the healing of our lands and communities.

ENDORSEMENTS

“Norman Wirzba writes with verve, alacrity, and theological sensitivity in laying out particular arguments for bringing back the importance of creation for a theological anthropology relevant to earth ethics. This book will be valuable not only for individuals but also in a variety of ecclesial as well as educational settings.”—**Celia E. Deane-Drummond**, University of Notre Dame

“*From Nature to Creation* expertly traces how major trends in contemporary culture undermine the possibility of care for creation. Most importantly, this book not only persuasively shows how the felt absence of God and the pervasive degradation of the world are linked but also compellingly demonstrates how we may love God and embrace our creatureliness in ways that are faithful and life-giving for all of God’s creatures.”—**Steven Bouma-Prediger**, Hope College; author of *For the Beauty of the Earth*

“As commercialized nature and utilitarian thinking poison the planet and change the climate, what could be more important than ‘creation’ as the gracious way we live? No one is better than Wirzba in describing modernity’s idolatrous and disastrous course and offering a Christian understanding of creation as the antidote.”—**Larry Rasmussen**, Union Theological Seminary, New York City

“In this, his most important book yet, Norman Wirzba asks the simple question: what difference would it make if we thought of the earth not as nature but as creation? His answer—that ‘this is the world in which God delights . . . the world we are called to love’—challenges everyone. Drawing with magisterial and eloquent scholarship on a vast range of sources across both Christian and secular thought, Wirzba calls us to attentiveness, to rootedness—and above all, to gratitude.”—**Loren Wilkinson**, Regent College, Vancouver

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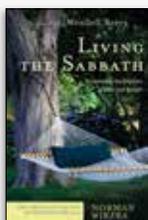
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Norman Wirzba (PhD, Loyola University, Chicago) is professor of theology and ecology at Duke University Divinity School. He is the author or editor of numerous books, including *Food and Faith: A Theology of Eating*; *Living the Sabbath*; *Making Peace with the Land* (coauthored with Fred Bahnsen); *The Essential Agrarian Reader*; *The Paradise of God: Renewing Religion in an Ecological Age*; and *The Art of the Commonplace: The Agrarian Essays of Wendell Berry*.

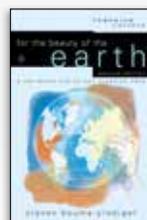
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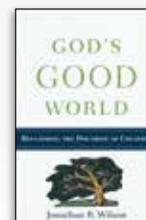
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Crucified and Resurrected

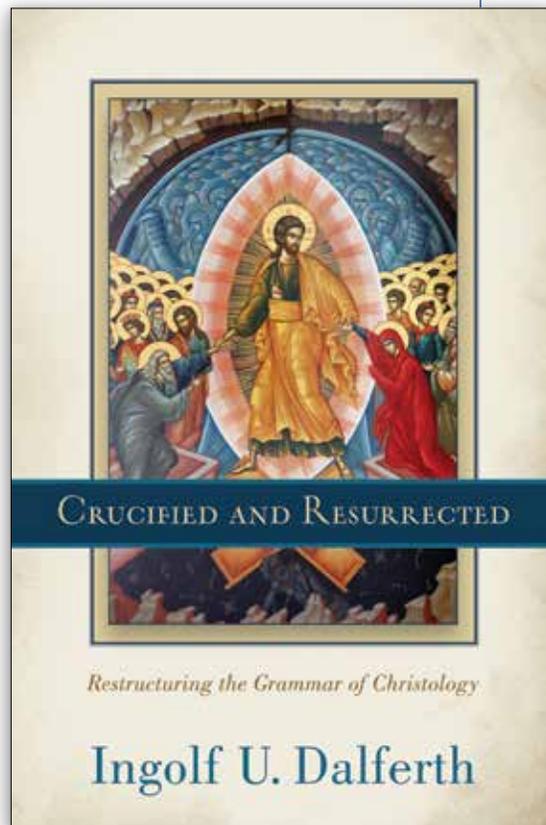
Restructuring the Grammar of Christology

Ingolf U. Dalferth

This major work, now available in English, is considered by many to be one of the finest and most significant contributions to modern Christology. Preeminent scholar and theologian Ingolf Dalferth argues for a radical reorientation of Christology for historical, hermeneutical, and theological reasons. He defends an orthodox vision of Christology in the context of a dialogue with modernity, showing why the resurrection, not the incarnation, ought to be the central idea of christological thinking.

Crucified and Resurrected reorients Christology from the traditional focus on the incarnation to the original focus on the resurrection. Dalferth explains that Christology is about God, not a particular past event of history, and it is about the activity of divine love in resurrection rather than about incarnation. Resurrection is not merely about the crucified Jesus but about God, who through his salvific presence creates life from death and good out of evil for his creatures. Dalferth articulates the main features of a grammar of Christology so as to state, clearly and systematically, the consequences of the christological transformation of theology. He shows that a dogmatic explication of the Christian faith has to follow a path of thought that leads from the resurrection to the cross, from the cross to the life of Jesus, and from there to the understanding of God, which, when given a new and rearticulated form, leads to the understanding of salvation. Dalferth also offers a critical account of contemporary debates about the sacrificial understanding of Jesus's death and its relevance for understanding contemporary Christian life. In the process, he explores how Christology has fared in modernity, introducing readers to the works of an exhaustive number of interlocutors, both friendly to and suspicious of the orthodox model.

Dalferth's proposal is both pneumatological and trinitarian and addresses themes such as soteriology, the doctrine of atonement, and preaching. The result is a faithful restating of orthodox Christology in a modern key. *Crucified and Resurrected* was first published by Mohr Siebeck as *Der auferweckte Gekreuzigte* in 1994. It was translated by Jo Bennett.

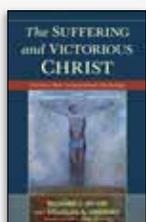


Ingolf U. Dalferth (DrTheol, University of Tübingen) is Danforth Professor of Philosophy of Religion at Claremont Graduate University. He is also professor emeritus in the faculty of theology at the University of Zurich, where he served as director of the Institute of Hermeneutics and Philosophy of Religion for many years. He has held academic positions at the universities of Durham, Tübingen, Frankfurt, Fribourg, and Copenhagen. Dalferth is the author of twenty books, including *Die Wirklichkeit des Möglichen*, *Hermeneutische Religionsphilosophie*, and *Becoming Present: An Inquiry into the Christian Sense of the Presence of God*.

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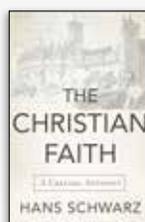
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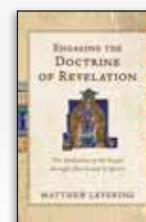
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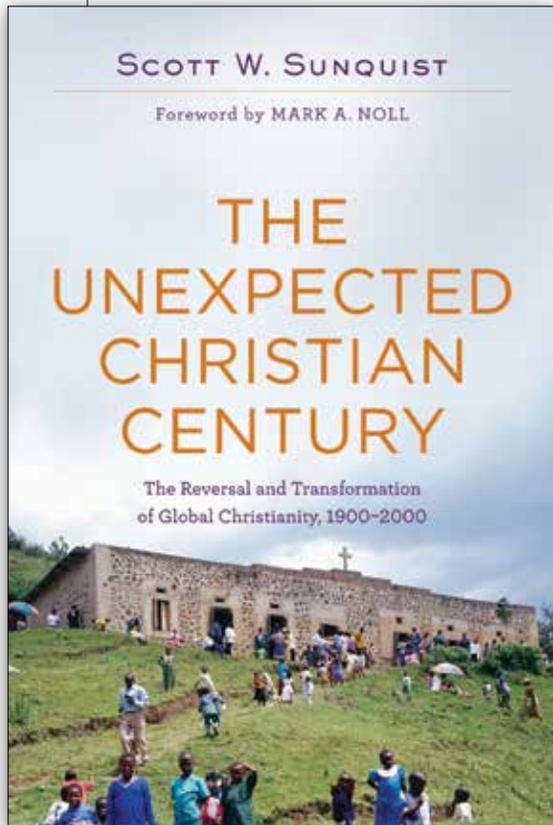
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Scott W. Sunquist

Foreword by Mark A. Noll

“This book provides a learned overview of major themes in twentieth-century world Christianity. Distinguished scholar Scott Sunquist, writing from an insider Christian perspective, shows how such factors as migration, persecution, the decline of Western Christianity, and Pentecostalism have created a religion far different from that of a century ago. He balances depth and breadth in a readable format, and in so doing, provides a valuable addition to the growing body of scholarship on world Christianity.”—**Dana L. Robert**, Boston University; author of *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion*

“It would be hard to overestimate the valuable contribution Scott Sunquist has made to our understanding of the global Christian movement. This short volume illustrates the point. His knowledge is encyclopedic, his perspective fresh. This volume serves as an excellent introduction to what appeared at the beginning to be the century of Western dominance but ended up being so very different.”—**Gerald L. Sittser**, Whitworth University; author of *Water from a Deep Well*

“Written in accessible language but with penetrating insight, *The Unexpected Christian Century* sheds considerable light on Christianity’s prospects in this century by reviewing the last. A valuable addition to a vital discourse.”—**Jehu J. Hanciles**, Candler School of Theology, Emory University

“Despite its brevity, this volume places us in Sunquist’s debt for extending the Christian story beyond the familiar clichés, luminaries, and events of conventional Western church histories to a trajectory that includes and accounts for the fecund world of Christianity in the global South. Full of surprises, this is an astounding, fast-moving story, whose latest chapter was not and could not have been predicted by earlier generations of church historians.”—**Jonathan J. Bonk**, Overseas Ministries Study Center

“The great merit of Scott Sunquist’s book is to narrate the recent history of Christianity as a genuinely and thoroughly *world history*. . . . Accessible histories that feature the broad general developments of the recent past, and yet that remain connected to particular stories of particular places, remain rare. *The Unexpected Christian Century* is a notable addition to such efforts. . . . Readers who pay attention to what [Professor Sunquist] has written will . . . find the book a godsend for opening up a vitally important history and pointing the way toward responsible Christian life in the future.”—**Mark A. Noll** (from the foreword)

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Scott W. Sunquist (PhD, Princeton Theological Seminary) is dean of the School of Intercultural Studies and professor of world Christianity at Fuller Theological Seminary. He previously served as professor of world Christianity at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Sunquist is the author of the *Christianity Today* Book Award Winner *Understanding Christian Mission*, coauthor of the multivolume *History of the World Christian Movement*, and coeditor of *A Dictionary of Asian Christianity*.

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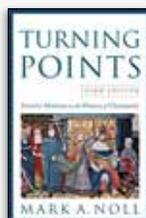
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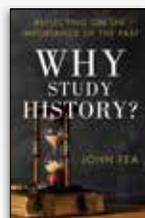
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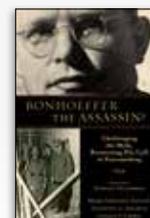
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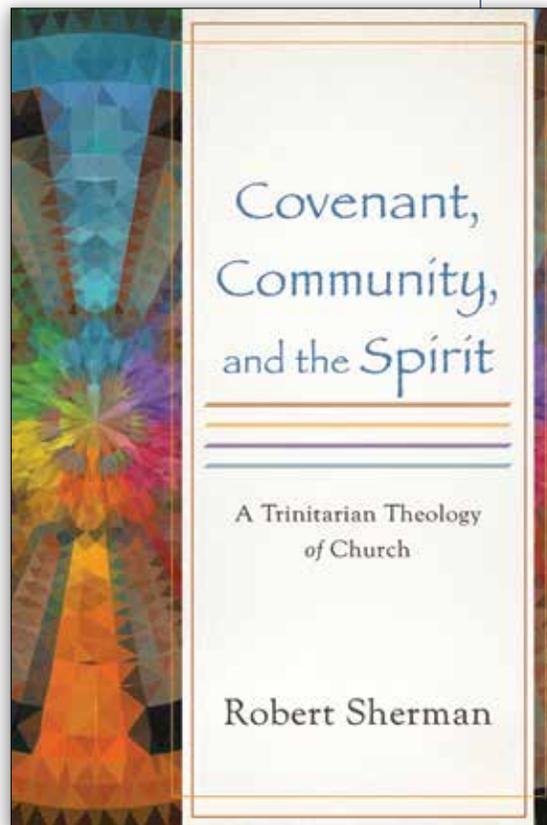
Robert Sherman

“Written with clarity and full of biblical and practical discernment, *Covenant, Community, and the Spirit* displays the riches that Christian teaching about the Trinity and the Holy Spirit brings to our experience and understanding of the church. This is generous Reformed theology at its best.”—**John Webster**, University of St. Andrews

“Uniting us to Christ through the faith-creating gospel, the Holy Spirit simultaneously unites us to Christ’s body. Robert Sherman integrates topics that too often float apart, especially personal salvation, the work of the Spirit, and the nature and mission of the church. Deeply rooted in Scripture and the wisdom of Christian interpretation, this exploration is also wonderfully accessible. This is a welcome contribution to the ecumenical conversation. But it is more than that: it is a personally enriching and edifying meditation on what it means to belong to the people of the Triune God.”—**Michael Horton**, Westminster Seminary California

“More than solely an ecclesiology, this book offers a richly accessible introduction to the whole of Christian doctrine. Reformed Christians will find here an eloquent and enjoyable presentation of their faith, in a mode that is at once classical and contemporary. For Christians of other traditions, this book manifests the gracious interaction and friendly argumentation that represents the best of ecumenically minded, nonpolemical theology. Read this book to learn what Reformed Christianity is, and read this book to learn what true ecumenism is.”—**Matthew Levering**, Mundelein Seminary

“A language of hope rarely occurs in talk of the church today. Crisis and cynicism too often mar conversation about the congregation. Robert Sherman’s *Covenant, Community, and the Spirit* helps us recover an ecclesiology of hope by setting the church community in the context of the gospel of the Triune God and by retrieving not only the powerful imagery of Holy Scripture throughout but also the idioms of the Christian tradition, in both classical and Reformed variations. As Christ’s body, God’s people, and the Spirit’s temple, we are reminded that the church has life-giving hope, and, as pilgrims on a journey, we see that the church is graced with a vital mission and a joyful calling.”—**Michael Allen**, Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando



Robert Sherman (PhD, University of Chicago Divinity School) previously served as the Richard P. Buck Professor of Christian Theology at Bangor Theological Seminary in Bangor, Maine. A leading theologian of the Reformed tradition, he is the author of *King, Priest, and Prophet: A Trinitarian Theology of Atonement*.

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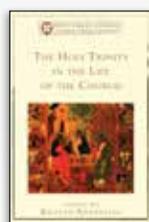
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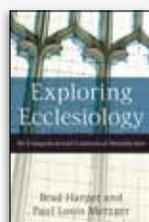
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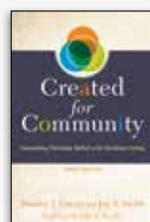
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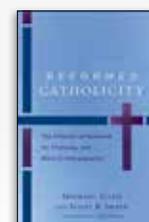
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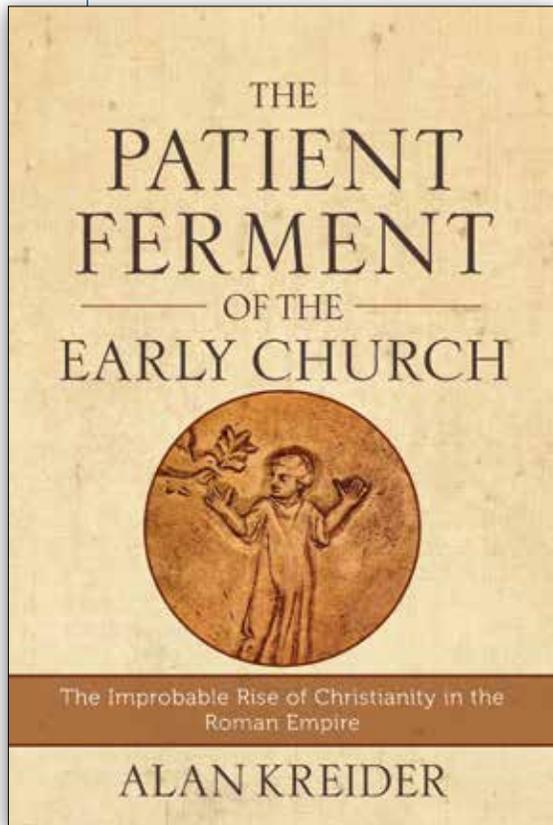
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The Improbable Rise of Christianity in the Roman Empire

Alan Kreider

During the three centuries before the conversion of the emperor Constantine, the Christian church grew in the Roman Empire. It grew despite disincentives, harassment, and occasional persecution. What enabled Christianity to be so successful that, by the fifth century, it was the established religion of the empire?

In this unique historical study, Alan Kreider delivers the fruit of a lifetime of study as he tells the amazing story of the spread of Christianity over its first four hundred years. Challenging traditional understandings, Kreider contends the early church grew because patience was of central importance in the life and witness of the early Christians. Patience was the virtue about which the patristic writers wrote most—Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine all wrote treatises on it. Patience entailed trusting God, who was inexorably at work; obeying Jesus, who embodied patience and called his followers to live in unusual, patient ways; and responding to people who were attracted to their life and message in such a way that they would be formed to become patient believers. Instead of writing about evangelistic method, the early Christians reflected on prayer, catechesis, and worship, all of which formed believers to have patient reflexes and to participate in a church that grew not by plan but by ferment. This book will benefit professors, students, and scholars of ancient Christianity, mission, liturgy, and Christian formation as well as pastors and church leaders.

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Alan Kreider (PhD, Harvard University) is professor emeritus of church history and mission at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. He is the former director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture at Regent's Park College, Oxford University, where he also served as a member of the theological faculty. Kreider has authored several books, including *The Change of Conversion and the Origin of Christendom* and *Worship and Mission after Christendom*.

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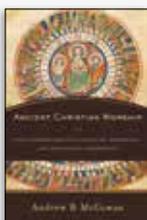
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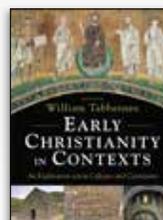
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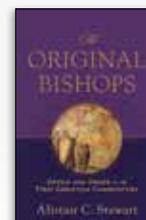
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Medieval Wisdom for Modern Christians

Finding Authentic Faith in a Forgotten Age with C. S. Lewis

Chris R. Armstrong

Most evangelical accounts of church history tend to leave out the medieval period. They seem to assume the church apostatized from true Christianity after it gained cultural influence in the time of Constantine, and the faith was only later recovered by the Reformers. Though recent work has been done to rehabilitate the first six centuries of the church, the medieval period has been left in a black hole, its riches and wisdom inaccessible to modern Protestants.

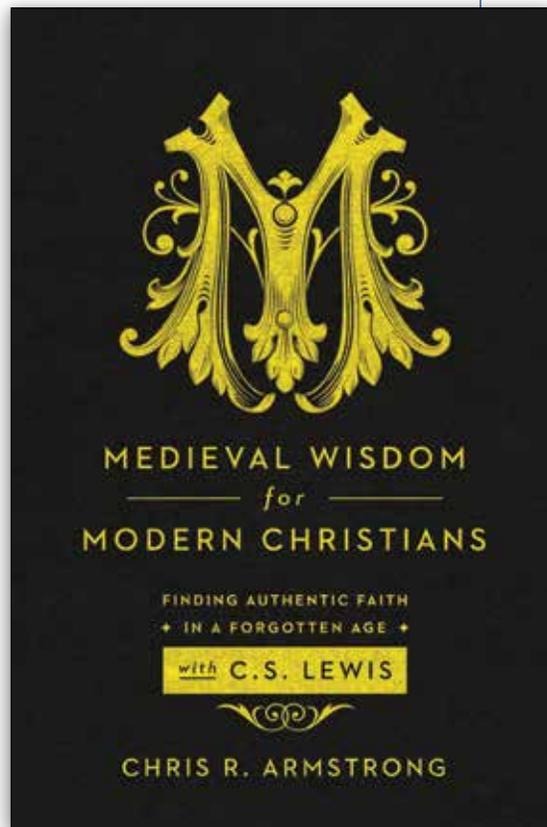
Church historian Chris Armstrong believes the medieval church is the next frontier in evangelical renaissance. He explores key ideas, figures, and movements from the Middle Ages in conversation with C. S. Lewis and other thinkers, helping contemporary Christians discover authentic faith and renewal in a forgotten age.

EXCERPT

I grew up in a home where my father, a theology professor, read to my two brothers and me the delightfully quasi-medieval stories of C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, George MacDonald, and others. These were influences in shaping not only my imagination but also the faith I would find as a young adult. . . .

Since then, I've never lost my fascination with either those modern authors or the medieval world they loved. Of course, they sometimes romanticized that world. But they also, as we'll see, took it quite seriously as a source of wisdom for living. During my doctoral program in American church history at Duke University, a band of friends formed an "Inklings" group. Together we read and discussed those same medieval-influenced authors—and we reached for the older Christian wisdom from which they drew.

After Duke, I took a job editing *Christian History* magazine at Christianity Today. While there, I edited issues and wrote articles on Lewis and Tolkien, as well as G. K. Chesterton (author of two splendid biographies of important medieval Christians), Dorothy L. Sayers (translator of Dante and medieval French literature), and others. At the same time, I was able to continue my exploration—begun in graduate school—of such medieval thinkers as Benedict of Nursia, Bernard of Clairvaux, and the scholastic precursors of the scientific revolution. . . . All of this began to prepare me to see in medieval faith some blessings along with the banes.



Chris R. Armstrong (PhD, Duke University) is the founding director of Opus: The Art of Work, an institute on faith and vocation at Wheaton College, where he also serves as a faculty member in biblical and theological studies. He formerly served as professor of church history at Bethel Seminary and was founding director of the Bethel Work with Purpose initiative. Armstrong is senior editor of *Christian History* and senior editor of the Patheos Faith and Work Channel. He is also the author of *Patron Saints for Postmoderns*.



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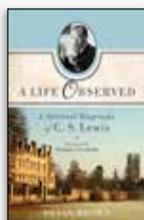
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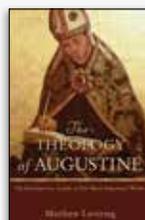
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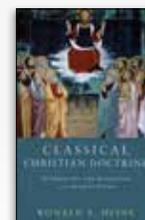
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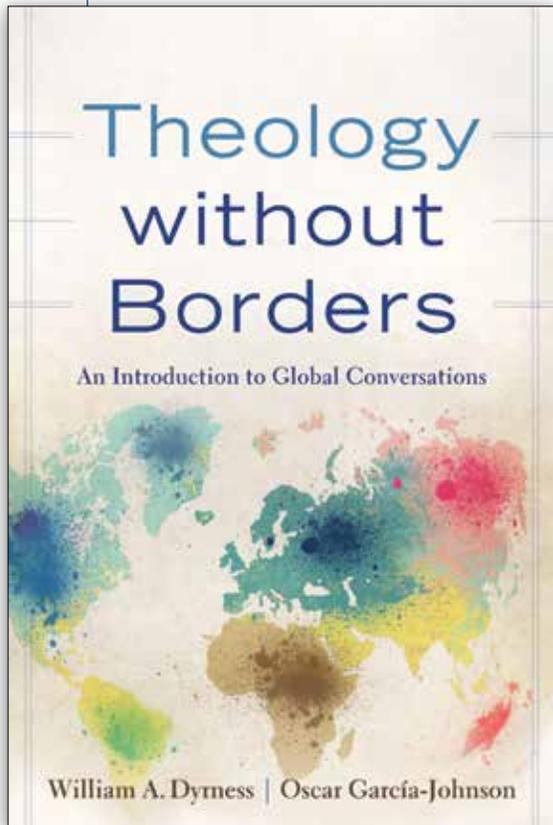
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William A. Dyrness and Oscar García-Johnson

Everyone knows the nature of Christianity has changed and the church is growing rapidly outside the West. But there is no consensus as to what this means for doing theology. Must Western theology be exported? Should Westerners rethink their views of God and the Bible in the light of non-Western thinkers?

Theology without Borders argues that the current demographics of Christianity demand that theology becomes a comparative exercise in which different voices reflect their different settings and begin to learn from each other. It also describes the challenges such a project raises. This concise introduction provides an overview of an emerging global discussion in theology by modeling this discussion from two different perspectives. Combining the voices of a Western and a non-Western theologian, it integrates Western theological tradition with emerging global perspectives, exploring the major issues involved in rethinking theology in light of the explosion of world Christianity. The book envisions a constructive integration of traditional and postcolonial theologies and underlines the contributions from the Global South. It will be of interest to theology and missiology professors and students as well as church leaders and readers interested in the changing face of world Christianity.



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Theology, Mission

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William A. Dyrness (DTheol, University of Strasbourg; Doctorandus, Free University) is dean emeritus and professor of theology and culture at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, and is the author of several books on global theology.

Oscar García-Johnson (PhD, Fuller Theological Seminary) is associate dean of the Center for the Study of Hispanic Church and Community at Fuller Theological Seminary, where he also serves as associate professor of theology and Latino/a studies. He is the author of *The Mestizo/a Community of the Spirit: A Latino/a Postmodern Ecclesiology* and other writings from the Global South.

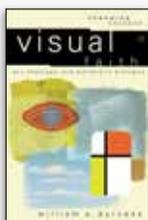
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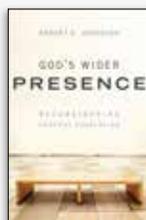
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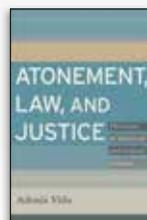
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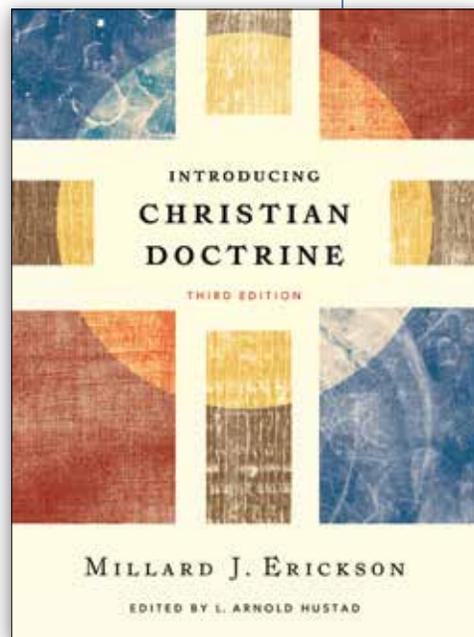
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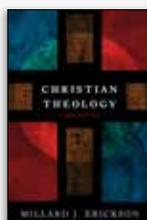
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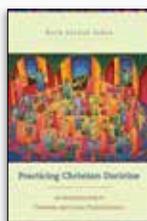
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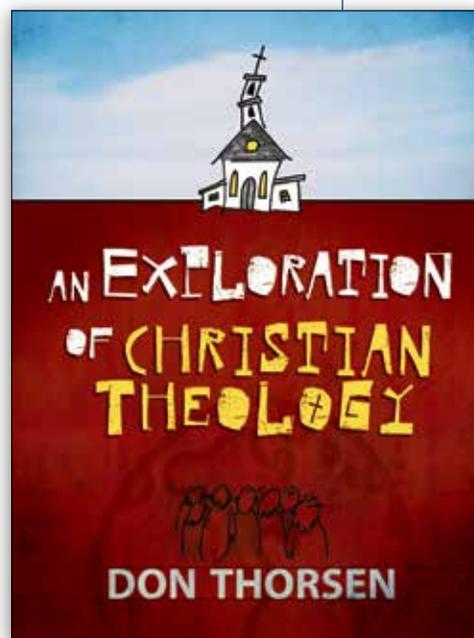
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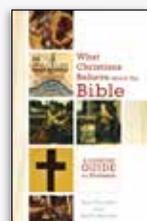
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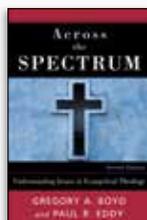
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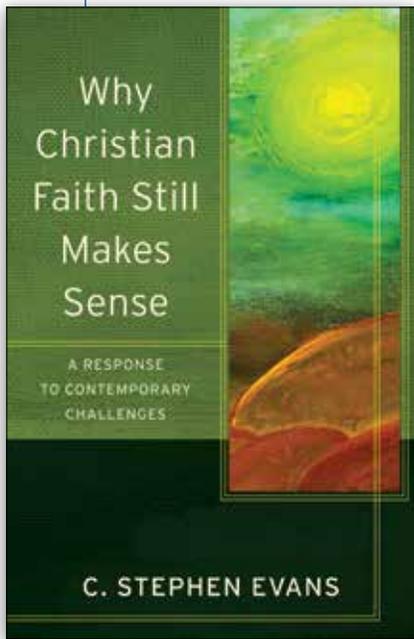
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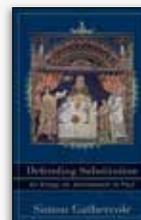
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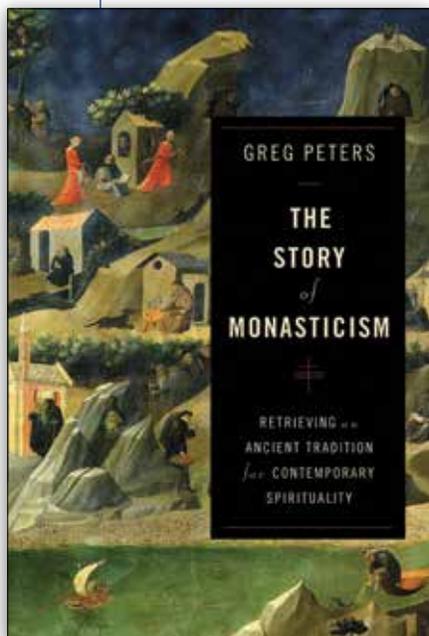
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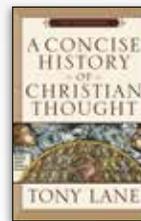
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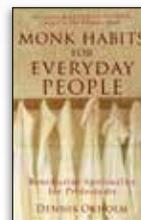
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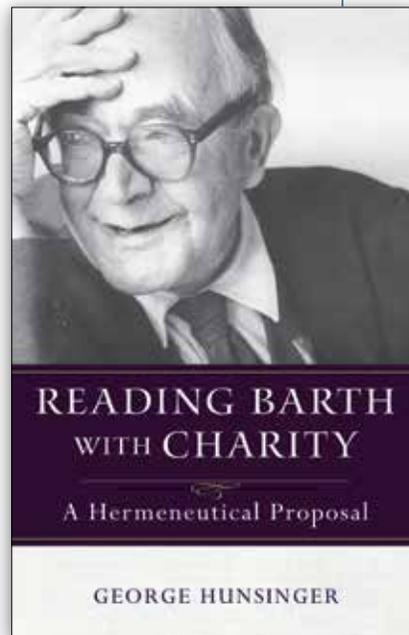
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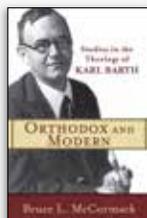


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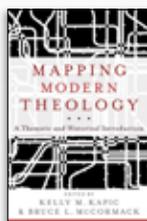
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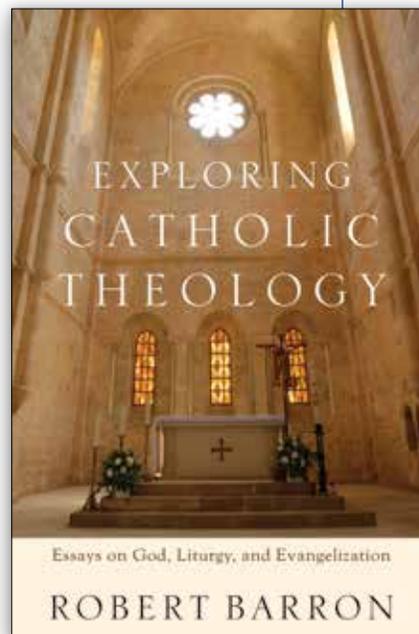
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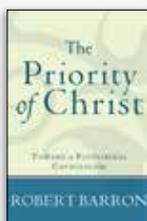


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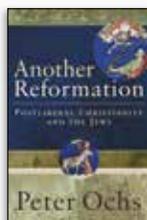
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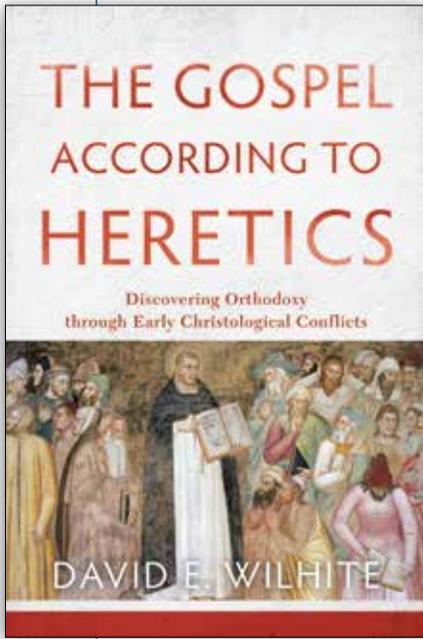


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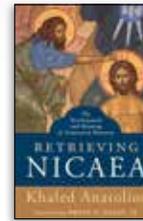
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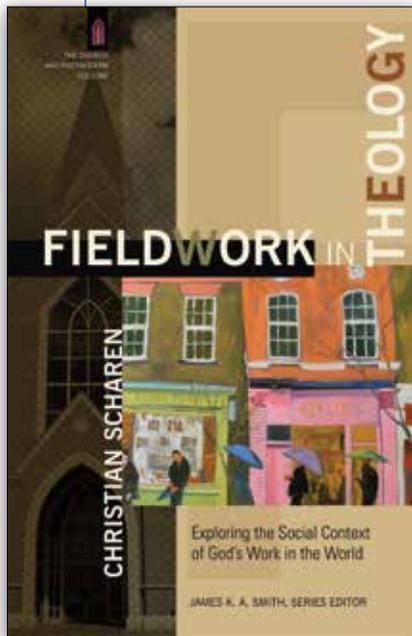
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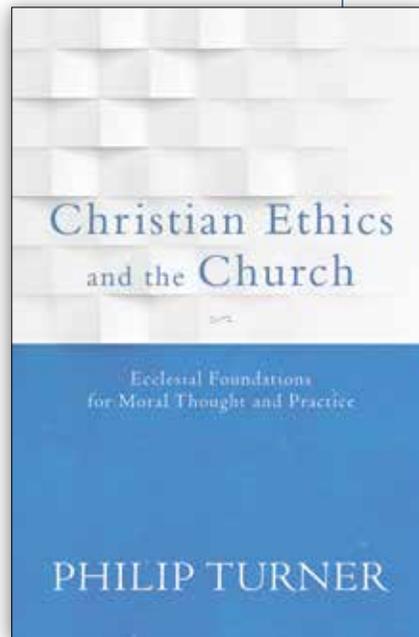
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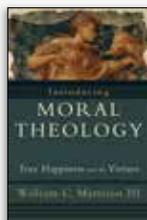
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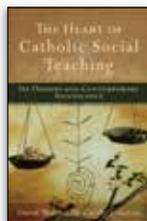
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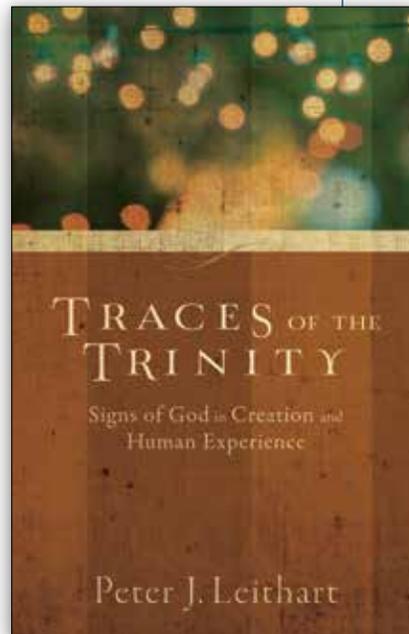
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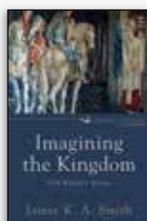
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