

Martin Luther's Theology of Beauty

A Reappraisal

Mark C. Mattes

Many contemporary theologians seek to retrieve the concept of beauty as a way for people to encounter God. In this volume, one of today's leading Lutheran theologians argues that while Martin Luther's view of beauty has often been ignored or underappreciated, it has much to contribute to that quest.

This groundbreaking book is the first extensive study on Luther's theological aesthetics. Contrary to the common misconception that Luther rejected beauty as a theological essential, Mark Mattes shows that the concept of beauty is actually a crucial theme for Luther's paradoxical understanding of justification by grace alone through faith alone. Christ "without form or comeliness" is God's gift of mercy to troubled sinners, so Christ is beautiful in God's estimation. Likewise, Christ is desirable for sinners seeking relief and liberation from the law's unrelenting accusations and from the enslavement of sin, death, and the devil. The new birth alters the human senses, opening them to discern and appreciate beauty as God has implanted it in the world. Mattes shows that Luther affirms music and visual imagery as human expressions of beauty and discusses the implications of Luther's aesthetics for music, art, and the contemplative life. The author explains that for Luther, the cross is the lens through which the beauty of God is refracted into the world. Mattes also puts Luther's view of beauty in opposition to some key contemporary theologians.

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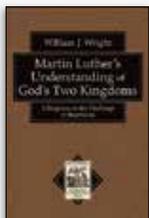
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Mark C. Mattes (PhD, University of Chicago) is professor of philosophy and religion at Grand View University. He previously served parishes in Illinois and Wisconsin. Mattes has authored, edited, or translated a number of books and is an associate editor of the *Dictionary of Luther and the Lutheran Traditions*. He also serves as associate editor for *Lutheran Quarterly* and as a contributing editor for *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology*.

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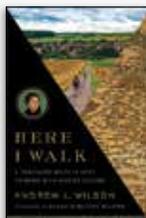
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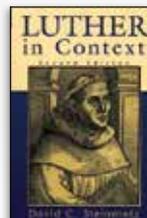
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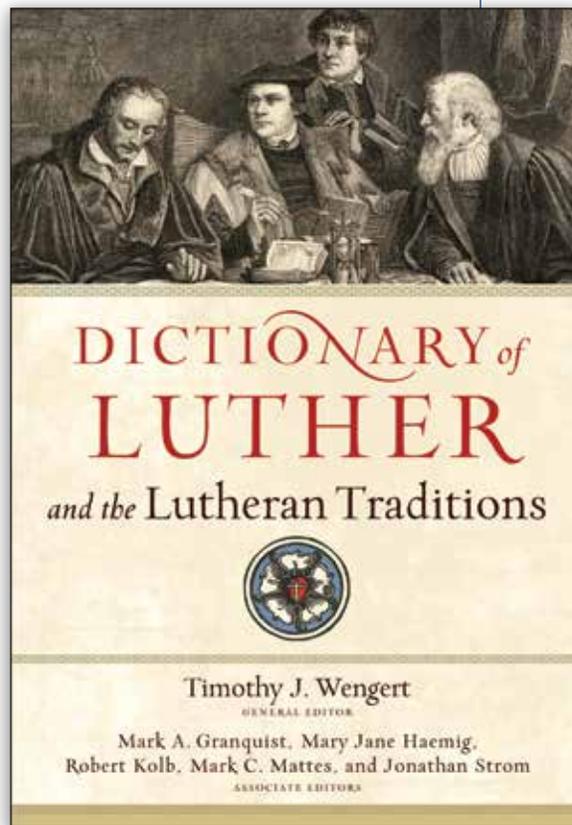
This major, cutting-edge reference work brings together experts in church history representing a variety of Christian perspectives to provide a comprehensive overview of Luther's life and thought, key figures of his time, and the various traditions he continues to influence. Containing nearly six hundred articles, the dictionary traces the history, theology, and practices of the global Lutheran movement, covering significant figures, events, theological writings and ideas, denominational subgroups, and congregational practices that have constituted the Lutheran tradition from the Reformation to the present day.

FROM THE INTRODUCTION

Today Lutherans form a worldwide movement within the church catholic. This dictionary demonstrates that thesis at every turn. Not only did Martin Luther and his colleagues in Wittenberg and beyond insist on their continuity with the witness of the early church and even of certain medieval thinkers, but from the very inception of the Reformation the Reformers influenced church life and proclamation for a much wider audience than simply German-speaking Christians within the Holy Roman Empire. Students from all over Europe came to study in Wittenberg. German writings of Luther and others and those already available in the academic lingua franca of Latin were quickly translated into a variety of languages. Reformers indebted to Luther and what grew to be the Lutheran traditions spread many of these ideas throughout Western Europe, Scandinavia, Finland, parts of the kingdoms of Poland and Hungary, and beyond.

But the movement that grew out of the Reformation did not stop in the sixteenth century. As important as the persons and events of that time were for shaping the Lutheran traditions, the new social, political, and theological contexts of the ensuing centuries provided Lutheran churches with opportunities for continued growth and development. . . .

The entries in this dictionary trace the remarkable growth and development of the Lutheran traditions, focusing on Luther and including not simply well-known, influential names and movements from Germany and Scandinavia but also lesser-known but nonetheless crucial figures who founded and preserved a Lutheran witness to the gospel throughout the world. Brief sketches of Lutheran churches throughout Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Australia provide the reader with a view into the rich diversity of cultures in which the Lutheran witness to the gospel has flourished over the centuries. What better way to commemorate the five-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation than to document its historical, theological, and cultural impact around the world!



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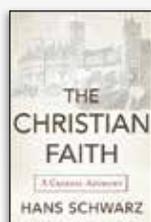
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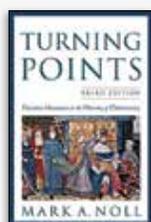


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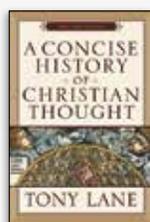
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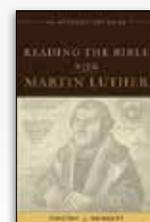
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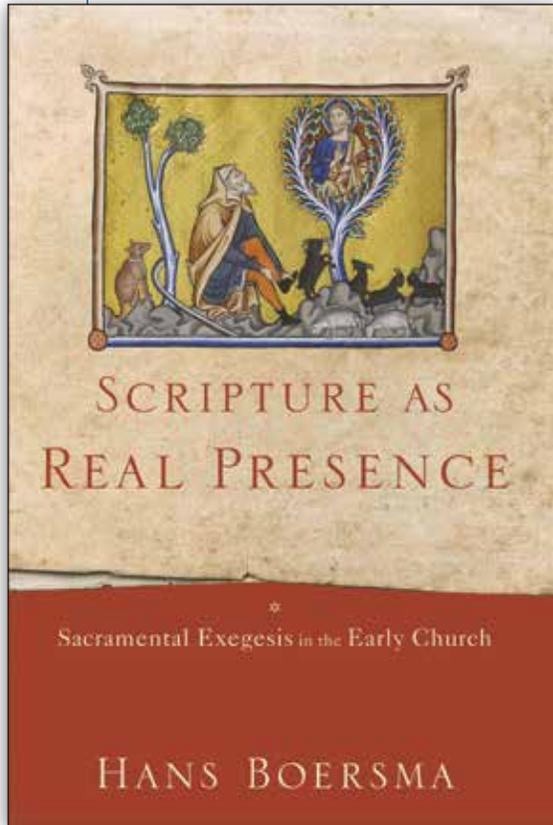
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“This volume makes an outstanding contribution to the retrieval of the ancient Christian biblical hermeneutic. It will reinforce the growing consensus that patristic exegesis remains valid and indispensable for the church today.”—**Mary Healy**, Sacred Heart Major Seminary

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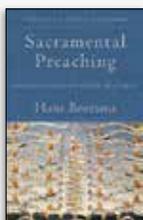
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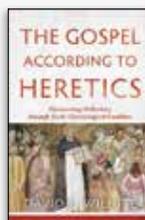
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Hans Boersma (PhD, University of Utrecht) is J. I. Packer Professor of Theology at Regent College in Vancouver. He is the author of numerous critically acclaimed books, including *Violence, Hospitality, and the Cross*; *Sacramental Preaching*; *Nouvelle Théologie and Sacramental Ontology*; and *Heavenly Participation*. He is also coeditor of *The Oxford Handbook of Sacramental Theology*.

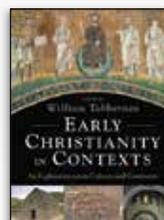
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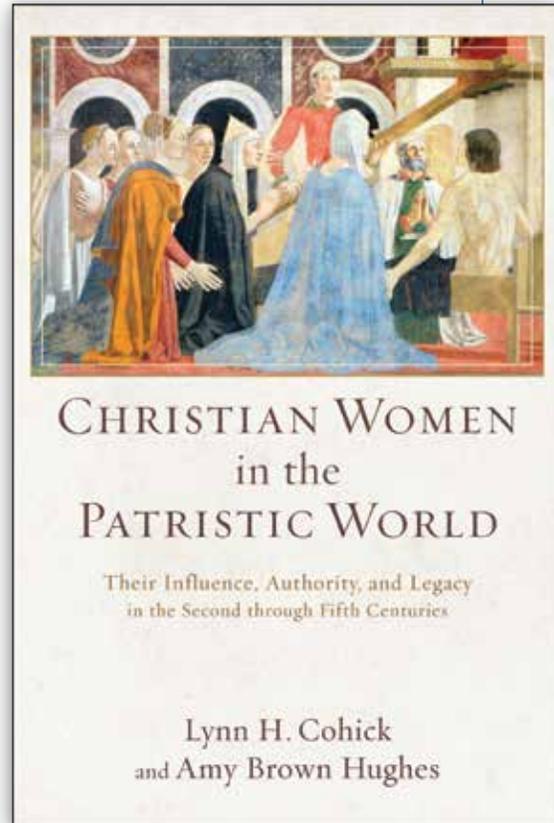
Lynn H. Cohick and Amy Brown Hughes

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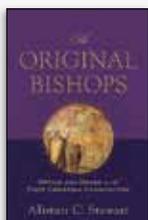
Lynn H. Cohick (PhD, University of Pennsylvania) is professor of New Testament and chair of the biblical and theological studies department at Wheaton College. She is the author of several books, including *Women in the World of the Earliest Christians* and commentaries on Philippians and Ephesians. She is also coauthor of *The New Testament in Antiquity*. Cohick previously taught at Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology.

Amy Brown Hughes (PhD, Wheaton College) is assistant professor of theology at Gordon College.

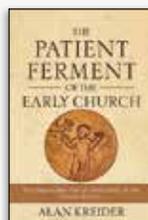
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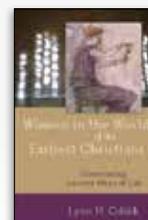
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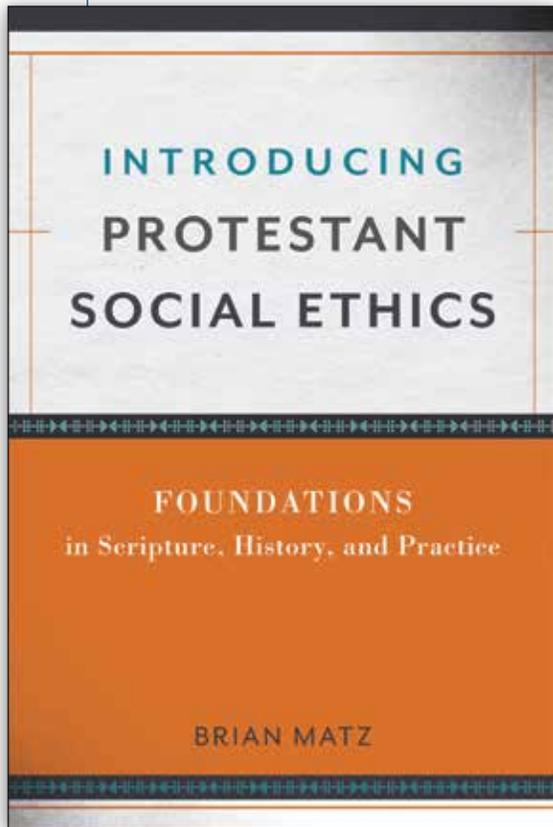
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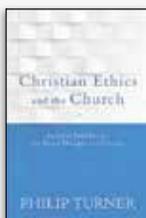
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Brian Matz (PhD, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven and Saint Louis University) is associate professor of the history of Christianity and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet Endowed Chair in Catholic Thought at Fontbonne University. He is the author or coeditor of a number of books, including *Gregory of Nazianzus, Patristics and Catholic Social Thought: Hermeneutical Models for a Dialogue*, and *Grace for Grace: The Debates after Augustine and Pelagius*, and has written numerous articles.

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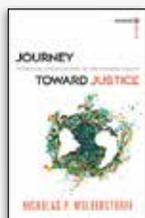
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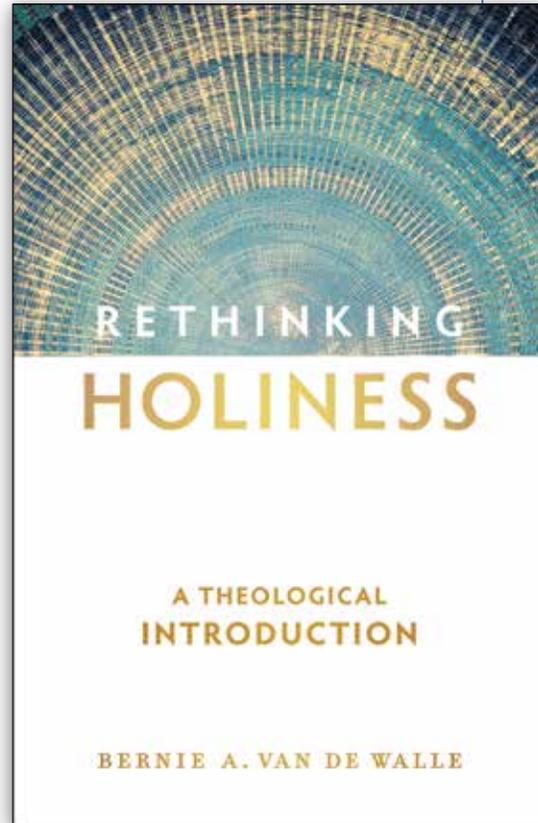
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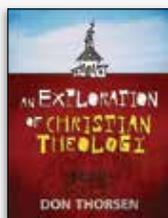


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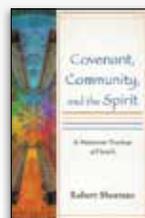
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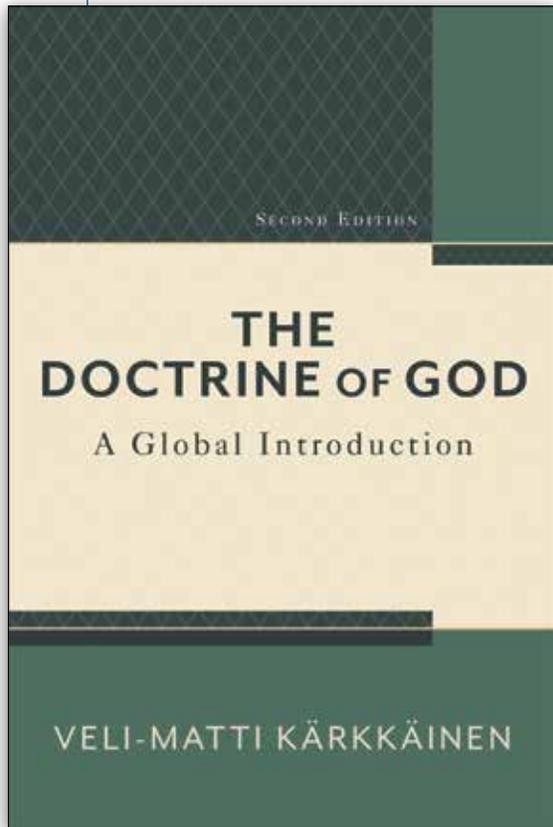
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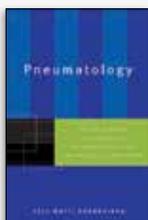
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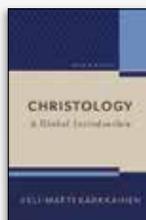
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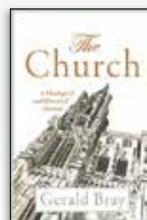
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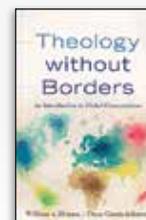
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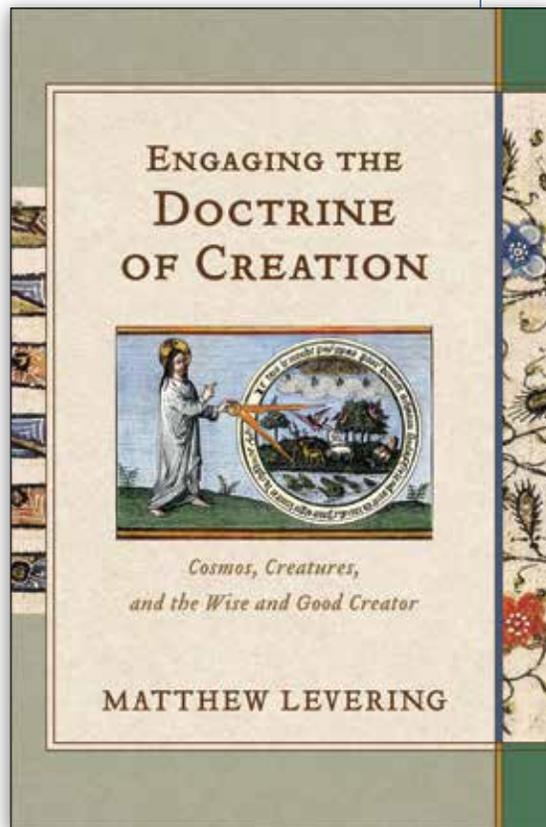
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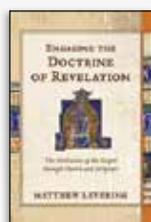
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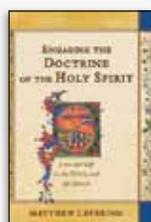
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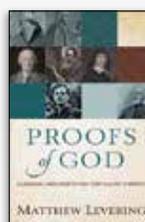
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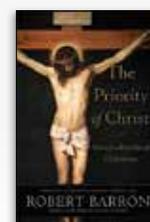
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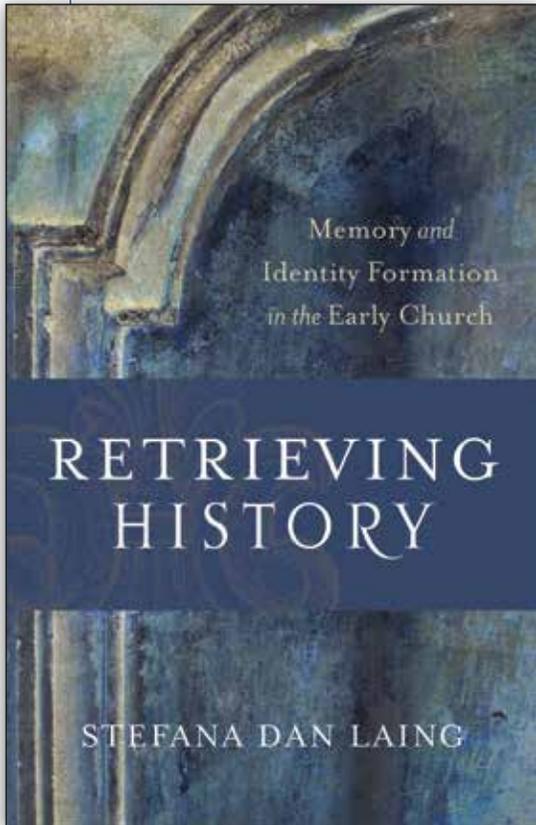
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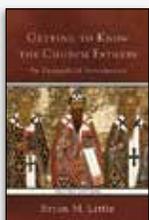
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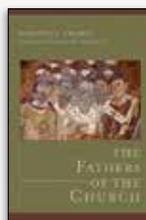
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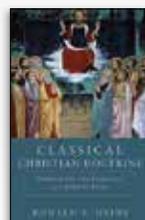
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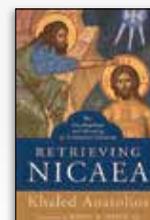
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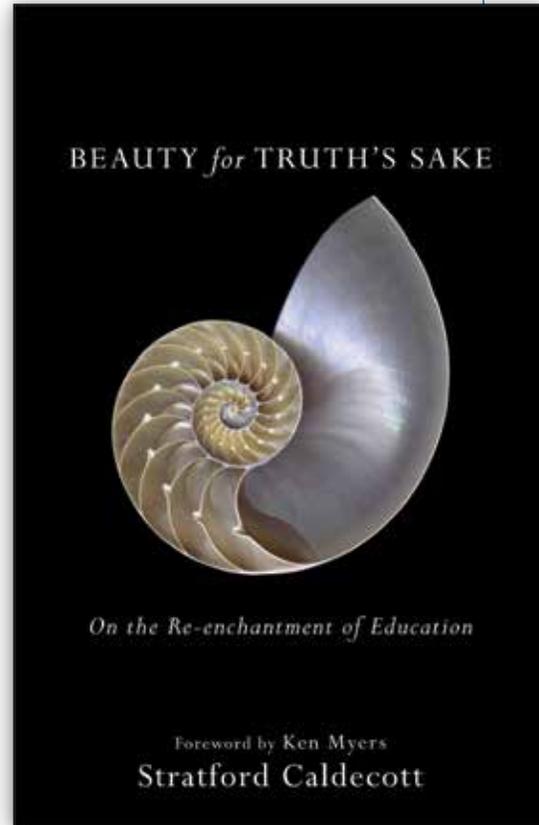
Based in the riches of Christian worship and tradition, this introduction to Christian thinking and worldview helps readers put back together again faith and reason, truth and beauty, and the fragmented academic disciplines. The book reclaims the classic liberal arts and views disciplines such as science and mathematics through a poetic lens. It includes a new foreword by Ken Myers, the producer and host of *Mars Hill Audio Journal*.

FROM THE FOREWORD

Some teachers are bound to be disappointed by this book. If they are in the market for an outline of techniques to elevate test scores or lengthen attention spans or any other quantifiable goal, their response may well be like that of the rich young ruler, who went away sorrowful. Stratford Caldecott's wise counsel in *Beauty for Truth's Sake* involves, as did our Lord's, a commitment to renunciation—in this case surrendering assumptions about the ends of education that dominate modern culture.

Modern education tends to endorse Francis Bacon's equation of knowledge with power, and so the Liberal Arts are out of fashion. But while the Servile Arts (which advance technological progress) may be equipped by such a narrow view of knowledge, the power they enable can be properly directed and governed only by the existential orientation encouraged by the Liberal Arts. Within those disciplines, education conveys an understanding of the significance of freedom, which is necessary for the wise exercise of power. Such an education is re-enchanted because it acknowledges the beautiful, Logos-centered order that permeates all of creation. . . .

One of the most sobering claims Caldecott makes in this book comes in his concluding chapter, when he observes that "we are living in an era shaped by philosophical battles that most of us are unaware ever took place." Having spent most of my adult life trying to understand the genealogy of contemporary confusions, I wish I had known more about those battles when I was much younger. Many of our cultural institutions (and the shape they give to our lives) have been shaped by the outcome of those battles, formed by sympathies with the winning if mistaken side. And so many countercultural works of re-enchantment are now necessary. But what a marvelous necessity and what a marvelous and hopeful companion Stratford Caldecott can be for us in the way ahead.



Stratford Caldecott (MA, University of Oxford; 1954–2014) was the editor of *Second Spring*, directed the Centre for Faith and Culture in Oxford for the Thomas More College of Liberal Arts, and served as a research fellow at St. Benet's Hall, Oxford. He has authored several books of theological reflection and cultural analysis.



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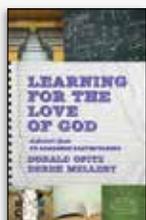
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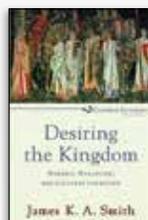
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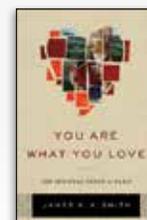
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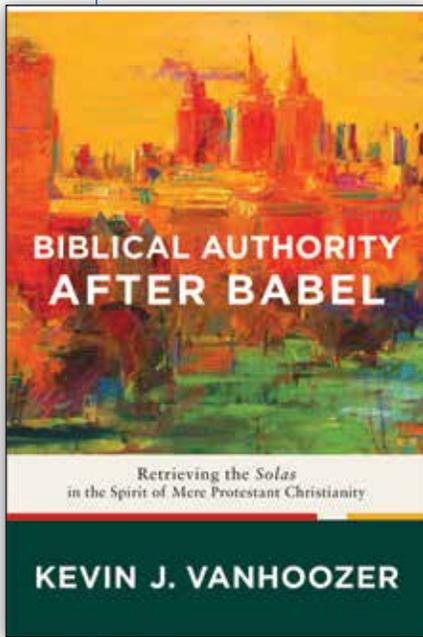
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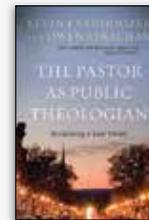
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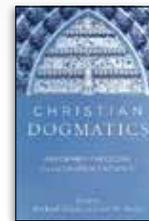
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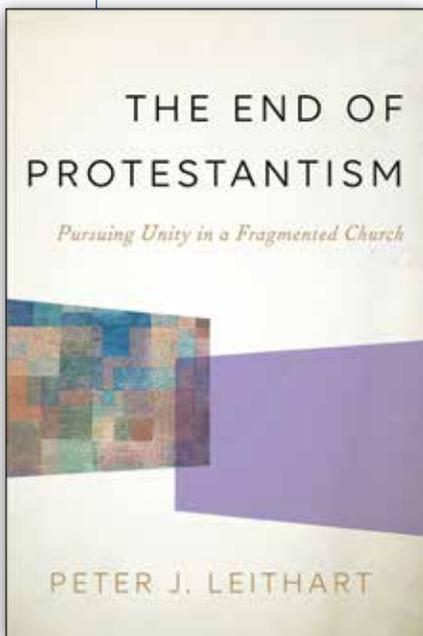
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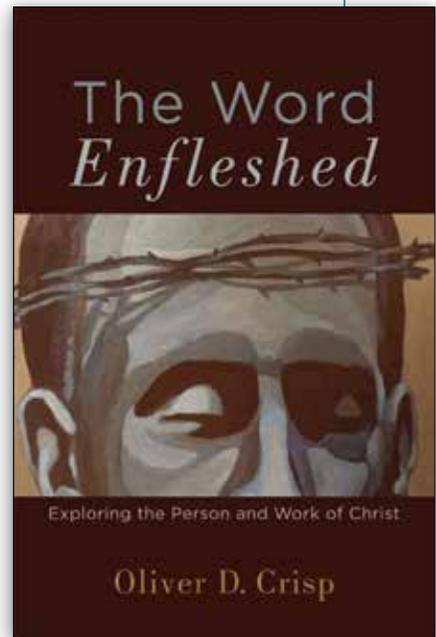
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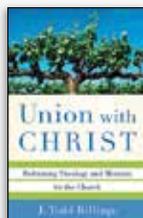
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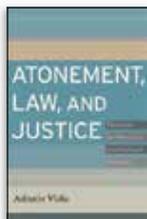
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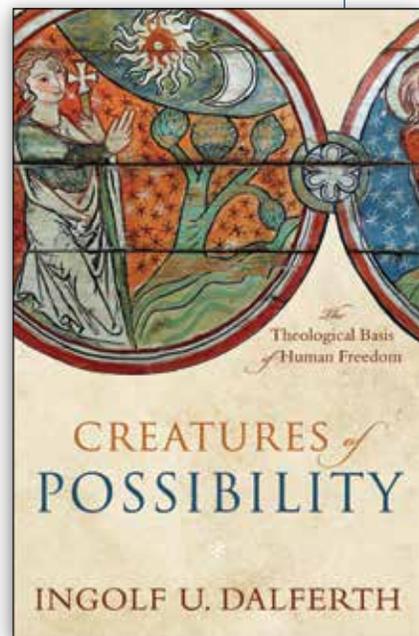


Ingolf U. Dalferth (DrTheol, University of Tübingen) is Danforth Professor of Philosophy of Religion at Claremont Graduate University in Claremont, California. He is also professor emeritus in the faculty of theology at the University of Zurich, where he directed the Institute of Hermeneutics and Philosophy of Religion for many years. Dalferth is the author or editor of over forty books, including *Crucified and Resurrected*.

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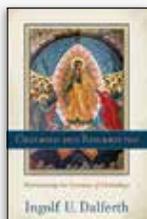
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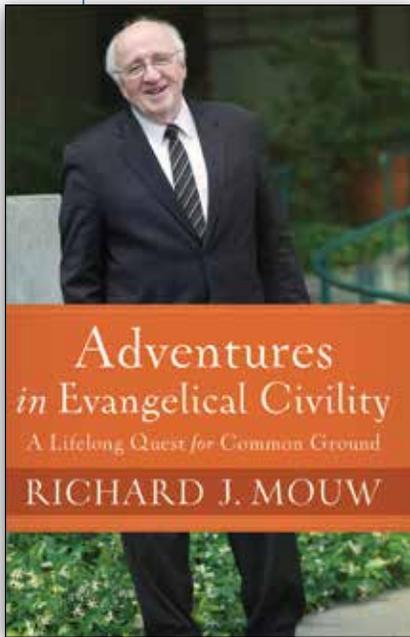
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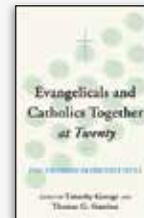
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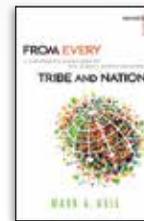
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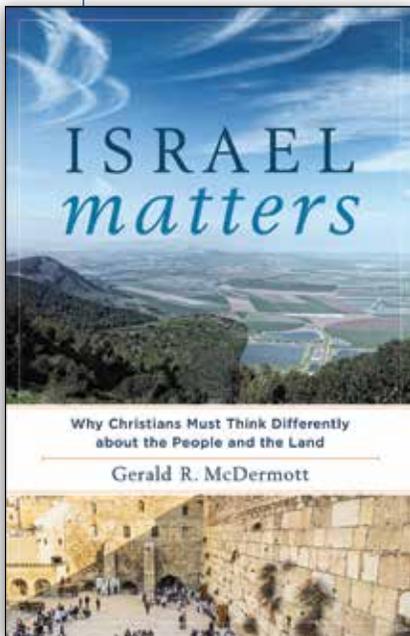
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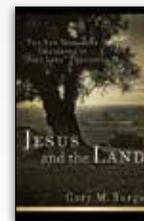
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Gerald R. McDermott (PhD, University of Iowa) is Anglican Chair of Divinity at Beeson Divinity School. He is the author or editor of numerous books, including *Famous Stutterers*, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, *God’s Rivals: Why Has God Allowed Different Religions?*, and *Can Evangelicals Learn from World Religions?*

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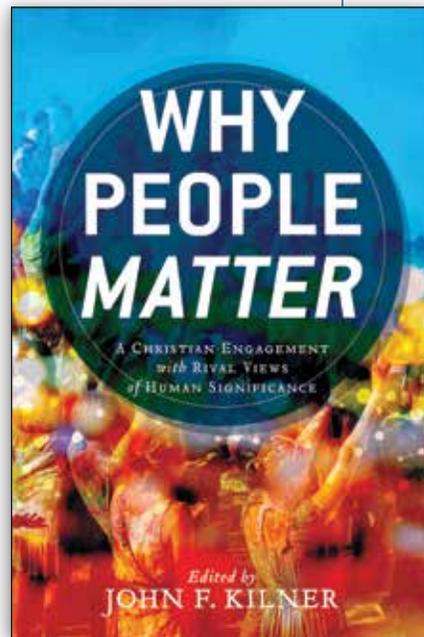
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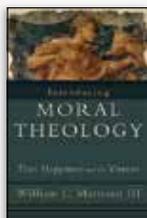
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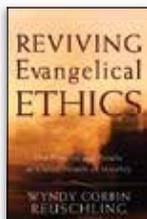
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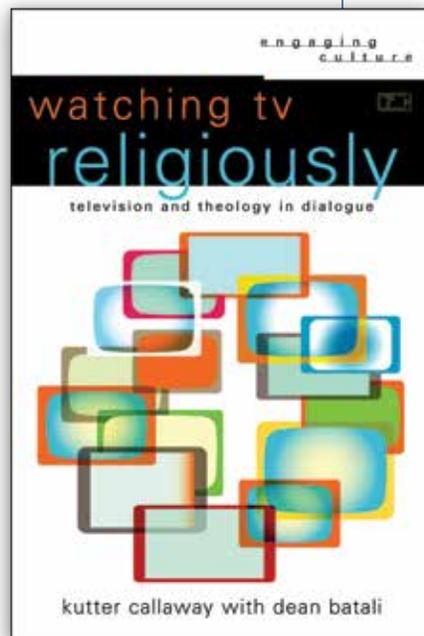
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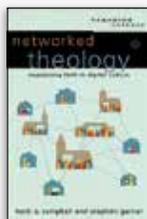
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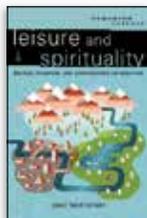
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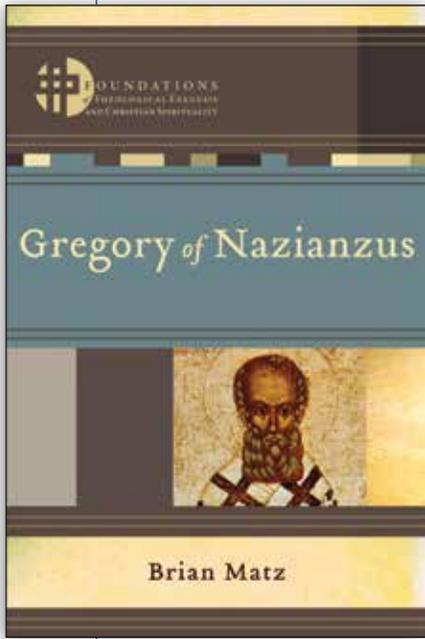
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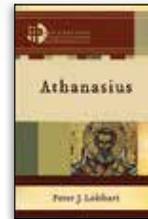
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Brian Matz (PhD, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven and Saint Louis University) is associate professor of the history of Christianity and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet Endowed Chair in Catholic Thought at Fontbonne University. He has authored or edited several books on the use of patristic sources in Catholic social thought.

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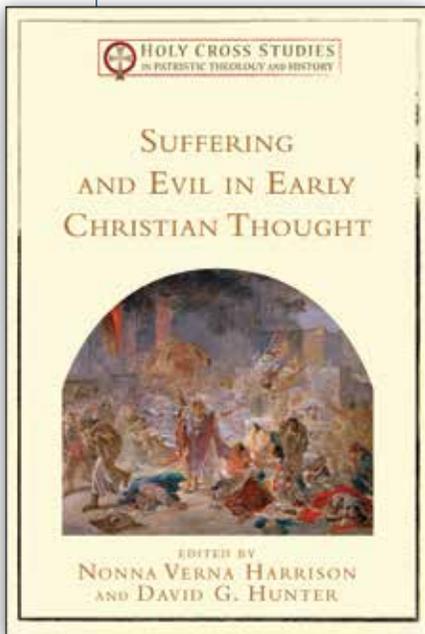
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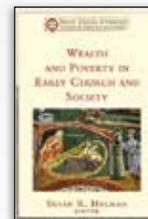
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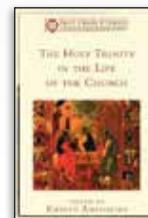
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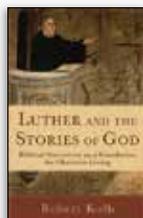
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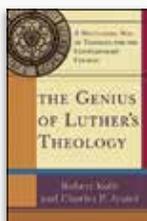
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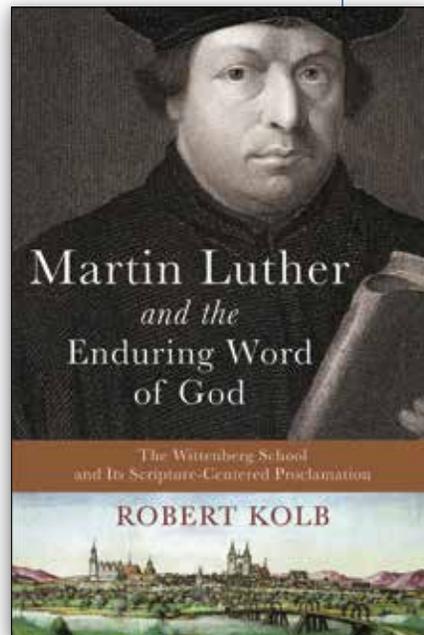
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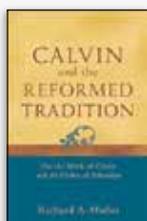
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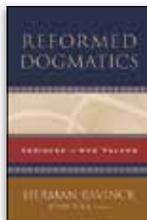
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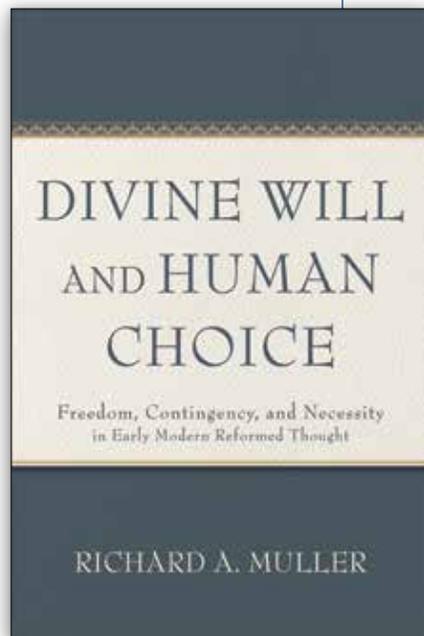
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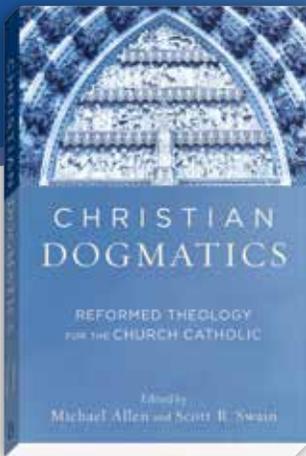


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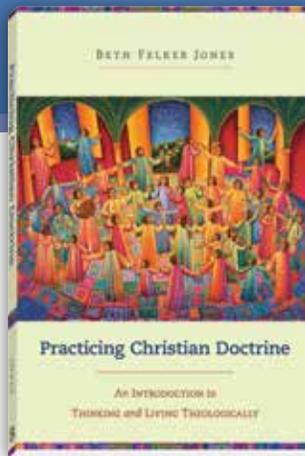
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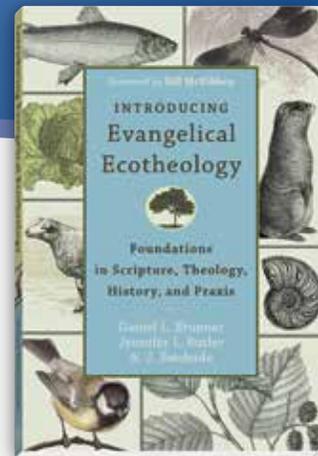
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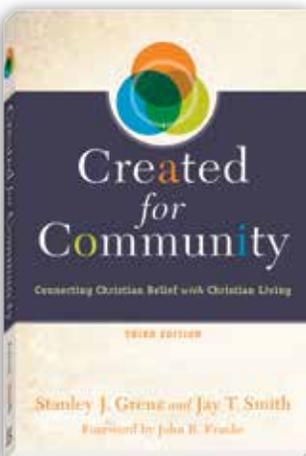
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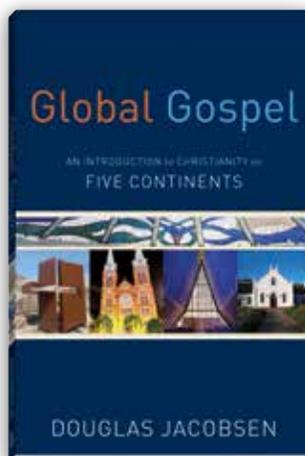
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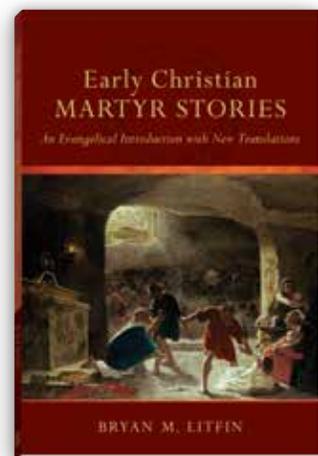
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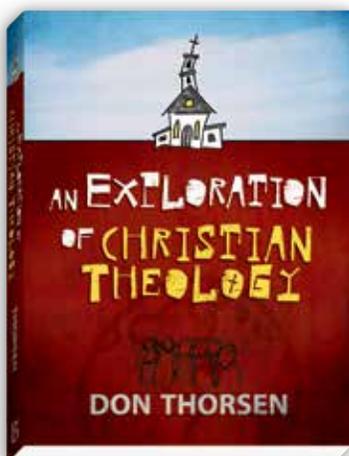


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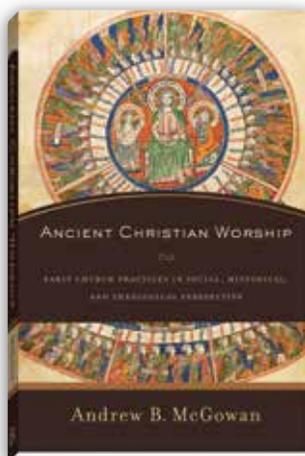


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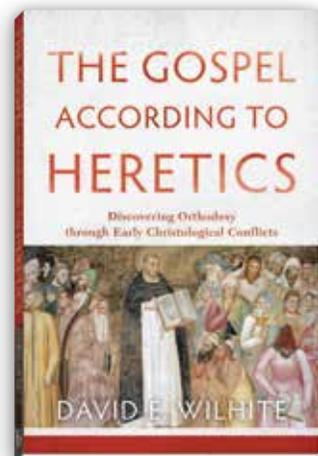
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