

BOOK REVIEWS

The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700) by Jaroslav Pelican. *The Christian Tradition, A History of the Development of Doctrine*, 2. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974. XXV, 339 pages. \$16.50.

The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700) follows *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971) and represents a major effort by the erudite Sterling Professor of History and Religious Studies at Yale University to describe the development of doctrine within non-Western Christendom.

Pelican begins his narration with a chapter summarizing the Byzantine Theologians' perspective on the first six centuries of their heritage. The seventh and eighth centuries are emphasized, especially the work of Maximus Confessor. The succeeding chapters investigate the doctrine of the person of Christ, the significance of icons, the relationships between Eastern and Western theology. The definition of Trinitarian monotheism and the eventual definition of Byzantine particularity.

The data organized around the above foci is gathered from a staggering range of materials produced by Byzantine, Syriac and Slavic Christendom. The excellent appended bibliography indicates the depth and breadth of Pelican's knowledge of the literature of the period. It is unfortunate that he does not seek to inform the reader regarding the interweaving of doctrinal development with social, political and economic developments within society **and** within the church. Doctrine is seen as "What the church of Jesus Christ believes, teaches and confesses on the basis of the word of God." (*The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition, 100-600, p. 1*) It is treated as an integral and independent whole. For a more extensive critique of Pelican's historiography, see my "On the Development of Doctrine: Reactions to Jaroslav Pelican" *The Asbury Seminary*, XXX, 2 (1975), 3ff. Pelican's well-written account must be read carefully in light of materials such as the two editions of *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. 4: *The Eastern Roman Empire (717-1453)*, 1st edition and *The Byzantine Empire*, 2nd edition.

These comments can in no way detract from the probability that Pelican's series, *The Christian Tradition*, irrespective of the problems

inherent in such a monumental undertaking, will be the point of departure for future efforts as was Harnack's *History of Dogma* for an earlier generation of historians of the Christian tradition.

David D. Bundy

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit, by William Fitch. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974. 304 pages. \$7.95.

A Scottish Presbyterian minister here presents an incisive, thought-provoking declaration of the dynamic ministry of the Holy Spirit. In response to controversy within the Church, relating to the gifts and the baptism of the Spirit, he states: "There is one sole objective in the Holy Spirit's activities: He is present to glorify Jesus. This means that whatever begins with the Holy Spirit always ends in Jesus Christ" (22). "He shall glorify me" (John 16:14). Here too is the duty and joy of every Christian, an accomplishment made possible only through the power of the Spirit. As Christians we must rediscover what it means to be indwelt by the Spirit in our daily living. The power of the Spirit, the variety and beauty of His ministries, becomes clearer to us under chapter titles such as: "The Forgotten One," "The Fruit of the Spirit," "The Gifts of the Spirit," "Speaking in Tongues," "The Spirit of Truth," "The Spirit of Love," "The Spirit of Holiness," "Filled with the Spirit," and "Preaching in the Power of the Holy Spirit."

A return to the simplicity of the Biblical teaching on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is greatly needed in a day when false emphases have created within the Church much divisiveness regarding the Person and ministry of the Third Person in the Trinity. This volume should make a significant contribution to this end.

James D. Robertson

Divine Sovereignty and Human Freedom, by Samuel Fisk. Neptune, N.J.: Loizeaux Brothers, 1973. 175 pages. \$3.95.

This volume is by the professor of theology at Baptist Bible Institute of California. He served also as pastor of the University Church and spent two terms on the mission field in the Philippines. Professor Fisk is reacting against the doctrine dear to many in the Calvinistic

tradition of predestination. The book struggles with the theological task of reconciling divine sovereignty with human freedom. In this he endeavors to strike this difficult balance.

His method is that of quoting authorities on the subject, much like the procedure of a debater. He is less concerned with digging into the raw material of the scripture than in quoting authorities on the subject. The volume reflects a large amount of diligence on the part of the author in assembling these quotations from many sources. It reflects wide reading and a judicious use of his sources. Many of the sources quoted are in the form of tradition, and the author's purpose is to show that even in these sources a case cannot be made for unconditional predestination. The strategy is to appeal from dogma concerning these classical points of Calvinism to the data of scripture in refutation of them. The theme of election, for example, was explained by citation from numerous authors; that the election is for service, not for salvation. All are elected to salvation, not all are elected to the same type of service. Fisk approves Moody's summation, "The elect are the whosoever will; the non-elect are the whosoever won't." Again he quotes Spurgeon to the effect that "There can be no such thing as unwilling love, unwilling trust, or unwilling holiness. Volunteerness enters into the very essence of a moral act." (p. 67).

The author deals in depth and with effectiveness with texts which are often quoted in defense of determinism.

In an appendix Spurgeon is quoted as saying, "the atonement is sufficient for all, efficient only for those who believe". There is a helpful and extensive bibliography and an index to scripture references.

This is a very useful volume. Its strength lies in the balance it seeks and finds between sovereignty and the human responsibility. While designed actually for those in the Calvinist tradition, it can be read with profit by all Christians who seek help in resolving this paradox. The book deserves a wide reading.

George A. Turner

The New International Version of the New Testament, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973. 573 pages. \$5.95.

One cannot but be impressed by the clarity of this translation.

"When he [the Devil] lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies." (John 8:44b)

“These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning!” (Acts 2:15)

“With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. So there was great joy in that city.” (Acts 8:7-8)

“As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, ‘It is the Lord,’ he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken in off) and jumped into the water.” (John 21:7b)

“ ‘Aeneas,’ Peter said to him, ‘Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and arrange your things.’ ” (Acts 9:34a)

“May the God of hope fill you with great joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 15:13)

“Erastus, who is the city’s director of public works, and our brother. . . .” (Romans 16:23b)

Vivid indeed. . . even to contraction and almost chatty quotations.

Paragraph titles are useful for securing a fix on material. Also helpful to the serious Bible student are footnotes indicating variant translations and cross references.

I like the off-white color of the paper, and the generous amount of white space which makes reading easier and invites note-taking.

Every minister must get this interesting translation for himself, pursuing every word, making notes, underscoring, and comparing with other translations. (Comparing translations can be useful in sermon preparation.)

Donald E. Demaray

Mark: Evangelist and Theologian, by Ralph P. Martin. Exeter: Pater-
noster Press, 1972. 240 pages. \$3.00.

What is Mark’s Gospel? And why did he write it? These are the questions the professor from Fuller Theological Seminary seeks to answer in what, by his own admission, is viewed as a companion volume to I. Howard Marshall’s *Luke: Historian and Theologian*.

The book contains helpful surveys of Markan studies, especially those recently that come under the rubric of redaction criticism; it also has much helpful exegetical material that draws attention to Markan emphases. According to Martin, the second evangelist wrote

in a post-Pauline context where Paul's kerygma of the cross was being developed along docetic lines with the result that Jesus as a truly historical figure was being lost. Mark writes, therefore, to remind the Church that the whole ministry of Jesus is important for the Church's proclamation. Martin's thesis is summarized in the following:

The emergence of a situation after his [Paul's] death and the consequent withdrawal of his personal presence from the churches is a postulated step we take on the basis of the above consideration. We imagine an over-compensating stress on Paul's kerygmatic theology which placed all emphasis on Christ as a heavenly figure, remote from empirical history and out of touch with earthly reality. (p.160).

Mark's book puts together just these individual sections of the pre-canonical tradition which emphasize the paradox of Jesus' earthly life in which suffering and vindication form a two-beat rhythm. His christology is *that of a teacher who has caught the essence of Paul's thought yet expressed it by use of language and terminology to which Paul had no access (the Jesus tradition) and did so in order to compensate for what he believed to be a serious distortion of his master's thought as apostle par excellence.* (Author's italics); (p. 160).

In order to offset what he believed to be a dangerous trend in the church of his day he wished to set out the character of Jesus' life, death and triumph with a view to dispelling the doubt that he was truly human as well as fully divine (p. 163).

The case for this thesis is set forth in a careful methodical manner. Martin is obviously well acquainted with the literature, and has reflected much on the current malaise in gospel studies. Almost any attempt to restore the historical Jesus to the Church's proclamation is to be welcomed, and Martin has succeeded better than most.

This reviewer would raise two questions: (1) Martin seems to assume that the second gospel originally ended at 16:8 (pp. 138, 219f). Many, including R.H. Lightfoot and Willi Marxsen, have theologized on this abrupt ending. But all such efforts seem to be only so much special pleading. In the light of all we know about the early Church and the significance of the resurrection appearances, is it really possible to believe an account of the ministry of Jesus could be written without including some appearances? From such a perspective as Martin offers the

empty tomb appears to have more significance than any appearances—a viewpoint not supported by any part of the apostolic corpus of writings.

My second question is perhaps more significant. In the opening chapter Martin discusses what a “gospel” is and why this book came to be referred to by this term—thus creating a new genre (“Gattung” is the ‘in’ term). My question: Is this development as surprising as some moderns seems to think? The early Church proclaimed Jesus as Christ and Lord and the ‘Jesus tradition’ was the raw material of its proclamation. In its proclamation the early evangelists retold his experiences and repeated his parables. All this was the sub-stratum of proclamation. What else could it be called by *evangelion*? The fact that the word is not otherwise known to have been used to refer to a written document is not to be made too much of. The point is that the Gospel is identified with Jesus: and this ought to represent a starting point for all study of the gospels. Fortunately, this is the perspective presented by Professor Martin. Many will find much that is fruitful and provocative. Marshall’s book has found a worthy companion.

Robert W. Lyon