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Review: Metaphysics: Constructing a World View

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kind of a major critical response. This deficiency is significant, especially when the book is addressed largely to students (p. 10). If the conservative option is correct (see chap. 10, p. 438, for instance), then critiques are indispensable.

This volume was produced chiefly to be an introductory textbook for upper levels of college or for graduate school, keeping other interested persons (such as pastors) in mind as well (p. 10). It is this reviewer's opinion that this is perhaps the best evangelical book on the market for that purpose. It is a most noteworthy contribution to contemporary theology and is highly recommended as a textbook in this area. In fact, reviewing the book caused this writer to decide to use it for his graduate level courses in contemporary theology.

GARY R. HABERMAS

LIBERTY BAPTIST COLLEGE AND GRADUATE SCHOOL

Metaphysics: Constructing a World View, by William Hasker. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1983. Pp. 132. \$4.95. Paper.

This volume by William Hasker, Professor of Philosophy at Huntington College, is another in the "Contours of Christian Philosophy" series edited by C. Stephen Davis. It joins other books on the subjects of Epistemology and Ethics, as well as a projected volume on Philosophy of Religion. After an Introduction, *Metaphysics* is divided into four additional chapters which treat major issues in this area of philosophy, followed by a brief Epilog. There is no doubt that the questions raised in each of the chapters address areas of critical concern not only for the philosopher but also for the theologian.

In the Introduction, Hasker notes major questions in metaphysics, sets forth some guidelines for answers, and ends by listing three criteria for evaluating theories. In these last two sections there are both strong and weak points. The criteria of factual adequacy (correspondence), logical consistency (coherence) and explanatory power are excellent indicators of truth (pp. 25-28). However, I found the statement that "philosophical assertions can't be based on religious authority" (pp. 22-23)—including Scripture (p. 116)—to be quite objectionable. If Scripture is established as a reliable source by any of several possible approaches, what precludes using it as such? Just as problematical is the apparent separation between theological beliefs and philosophical reasons for those beliefs (p. 24).

Chap. 2 is concerned with "Freedom and Necessity" and moves from several key definitions to treatments of compatibilism, determinism, free will, and a section on the relevance of this issue to the theological subject of predestination and foreknowledge. Although treading through explosive issues, this chapter is quite readable and provides a good overview, including critiques, of each position. Although not everyone will agree (even with each other!) with the conclusions concerning these volatile subjects, Hasker places the chief options before his readers and defends well, as an example of a practical application of philosophical truth, the theological position favoring foreknowledge.

In chap. 3 the subject is "Minds and Bodies." There is a discussion of behaviorism, idealism, dualism, emergentism and the subject of immortality or resurrection of the body. Hasker again sets the most popular alternatives before his audience in a readable fashion, favoring emergentism. However, I was somewhat distressed by the treatment of emergentism in that, while it is interesting and a possible solution, it is extremely inconclusive, particularly in that it virtually ignores an important portion of the first criterion proposed in chap. 1, namely, factual correspondence (p. 26). While it is possible that emergentism fits some of the facts, is internally coherent and somewhat explanatory, its lack of external evidence renders it quite questionable. Even Hasker admits that strong scientific evidence has not been supplied (p. 74) and that evidence might even have to come from other areas (pp. 75-76).

Chap. 4 deals with the nature of the world and the realism-idealism debate in particular, but also includes treatments of common sense realism, instrumentalism and a brief discussion of cosmology. This chapter is one of the best and is a very readable presentation of a much ignored but increasingly important subject due to the recent findings of modern physics. Hasker's major conclusion, given the brief space allotted, is a well-reasoned defense of "scientific realism."

In the fifth and final chapter the subject is "God and the World," featuring discussions on the relationship between God and metaphysics and assessments of naturalism, pantheism, panentheism (process theology), and theism. One problem with this chapter is that, with the exception of one paragraph on cosmology, very little was given as an apologetic for theism. Therefore, in spite of Hasker's statements that philosophers base belief on good reasons (p. 18), that God is the most important subject of metaphysics (pp. 120-21), and that dogmatism has no place in philosophy (pp. 22-23), it appeared that this last section was more of a statement than an argument. However, even a brief presentation of reasons why theism is the proper system (pp. 120-21) surely would have strengthened the chapter, as Hasker himself seems to note (p. 106). In a final Epilog, Hasker summarizes several of the most important themes of the book, including the centrality of God, the creation of the world, and man as created in God's image.

Positively, this work is written in a refreshingly non-technical and readable style, which will greatly facilitate its study by students and lay persons alike. Another commendable feature is the wide use of definitions, if only as introductory grounds (p. 60). The book is quite brief for the nature of the subject, as Hasker points out (pp. 17, 85), which means that numerous subjects had to be left out (pp. 52, 62, 69, 106, 107). Yet a surprising number of options are entertained, each treated both cautiously and courteously. Lastly, Hasker is humble with regard to his work (pp. 25, 120), which is surely an asset.

Two other points might also be mentioned briefly. Sometimes it appeared that the chapters were out of order. Should not God's existence be discussed before freedom of the will, eternal life, or the nature of creation? The present order, whether intentional or unintentional, reminds one of Kant's metaphysics. It also seemed that Hasker was so cautious at certain points that he neglected to side very strongly with a clearly superior theory.

Hasker's "primary purpose" in writing this book is that it might be used as a supplemental philosophy textbook (Preface). I believe that it could be quite useful in this regard, especially as one of a couple of texts for a course in metaphysics. Few books are available on this specific topic and one from a Christian perspective is certainly noteworthy. Although I have mentioned several areas of concern, some of which I believe are substantial, these are actually few when one remembers not only the controversial nature of this subject but also, as Hasker notes, that so much is open to challenge in the field of philosophy (p. 20)!

GARY R. HABERMAS

LIBERTY BAPTIST COLLEGE AND GRADUATE SCHOOL

Spirituality and Human Emotion, by Robert C. Roberts. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982. Pp. 134. \$5.95. Paper.

Roberts represents himself as "a philosophy teacher by trade, and a Christian by profession." Both assertions are attested by the contents of this book. He practices his trade as Associate Professor of Philosophy at Western Kentucky University, and has written this book for the purpose of arguing that, in addition to other things, Christianity involves a set of emotions. These emotions are character qualities which should be cultivated by every Christian.

In response to modern man's alienation from Christianity, Roberts rejects those theological approaches which attempt to reinterpret or demythologize Christianity and prefers an approach involving a reinterpretation of ourselves. What modern men need is not a new explanation of the Christian faith but "a reordering of our passions and attitudes" in conformity with Christianity (p. 8). A Christian leader's task is therefore viewed as *therapeutic* in conformity with some traditions in which a pastor is called a "curate" (French, *curé*).

In contrast with some common conceptions of emotions, Roberts views them as construals or "ways of 'seeing' ourselves and our world that grow out of concerns of one sort or another." Christian emotions, then, are determined by one's way of viewing Christian concepts and are thus, to a large extent, within his control (p. 11).

Chap. 2, titled "Emotion and the Fruit of the Spirit," elaborates by identifying an emotion as a construal of one's circumstances in a manner relevant to some concerns (p. 15). "Passions" are those concerns "which, in any given personality, rank higher in the order of the individual's cares . . . over relatively long stretches of his life" (p. 19). To change an emotion one must change his view of the situation. "This is why belief is not enough for spirituality. Christians must not only believe, but must learn to *attend* to the things of God" (p. 24).

In chap. 3 Roberts argues that Christian emotions are "concerned ways of viewing things through the 'lenses' of Christian teaching." The starting point for changing one's emotions is to focus on the Christian truth that this

present life is not the whole story. The Christian's roots must be placed firmly in eternity, not in the present soil of this life alone (p. 38).

Chap. 4 refutes the contention of some philosophers that an acceptance of morality (a willingness to face death with equanimity) is adequate to overcome selfishness and egocentricity. In contrast, the Christian's concerns focus on God's triumph over death and sin; that is, both life and eternal righteousness in spite of death.

Chap. 5 focuses on "Humility as a Moral Project." Here a comprehension of the unmerited grace of Christianity is viewed as the best foundation for engendering this basic Christian virtue.

The final three chapters discuss gratitude, hope, and compassion. One will not find here any secret keys or steps to spirituality—just thoughtful consideration of Christian virtues and helpful Christian exercises.

This book is to be highly commended as thought provoking and devotional in its impact. My complaints are quite minor and not worthy of discussion in a short review. Only one observation, a stylistic concern, is worth mentioning: as a sign of this age Roberts has chosen to use feminine pronouns in most of those instances of illustration and argumentation where masculine pronouns have been traditionally employed. This is merely a distraction, however, and does not substantially detract from the profitable argumentation of the book.

CHARLES R. SMITH

GRACE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Reincarnation vs. Resurrection, by John Snyder. Chicago: Moody, 1984. Pp. 110. \$4.95. Paper.

John Snyder immediately gains the attention of his readers by citing a recent poll to the effect that at least one-fourth of all Americans now believe in reincarnation, and that it "may soon become the most commonly accepted theory of the afterlife in America," especially among college students (p. 13).

But why is this so? Because materialism has created a great vacuum which cannot long continue. People long to be told they are important, and that there is some purpose and hope in life. At the same time, they reject as abhorrent "the prospect of giving account to an infinite, personal God who has the power to cast people into eternal separation" (p. 14). Furthermore, "reincarnation appeals to human pride by teaching that one's final destiny is determined by one's own works and efforts," and it is thus "especially alluring to our sinful nature" (p. 14). Snyder sadly concludes, "reincarnation is an idea whose time has come" (p. 15).

What is reincarnation? The ancient Hindu/Buddhist concept assumed that all reality is essentially one, and that human souls are like drops of water separated temporarily from the ocean (i.e., the impersonal cosmic spirit or world principle called Brahman) which flow back into it like a mighty river. Therefore, "souls" may migrate from one form of existence to another. The ancient Greeks held to a similar view called metempsychosis.