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Review: Five Models of Spiritual Direction in the Early Church

Edward L. Smither

Liberty University, elsmither@liberty.edu

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clude other words related to cognition. be assessed; this includes an analysis d of Christ" (1 Cor 2:16), and Paul's unzinger describes as "existential rt 3 (chaps. 5–6) contextualizes the oman literary sources, and then argues med cognitive processes, "leading to a nd others" (p. 160). Part 4 (chap. 7) e role of the "mind of Christ" and its ng meaning" (p. 191), and delineates ations of his study on transformed

on the interaction of the agency of the : interaction results in "transformed" cept of the "renewed mind," which is sset of the Spirit," however, appears to and Munzinger's construct may be cts of the agency of the Spirit with ontext of 1 Cor 2:9—3:4, corporate zinger's one paragraph defense of his . 185–86). Besides, by enfolding the chronistic individualistic orientation, e between the "renewed mind" in Rom p specifically, the agency of the Spirit is sion to Romans 8 (p. 147, n. 32) to pirit is not argued but simply asserted. "renewed mind" of Rom 12:2 and the e same cognitive processes.

ach to social identity and understands ing agenda (p.176). It is difficult to ng for "love" as that which "can level hen in 1 Cor 7:20 he actually argues n which he was called. Further, the r envisions actually may be employed the context of difference. William S. n *Identity* (T & T Clark, 2006) argues Cor 7:20; 12:12–13), but embraces sinfulness, but as something perfectly

s volume provides useful information discernment, pneumatology, or his y Christ-movement. It is an excellent g both theological and ethical insights this important ecclesiological and

J. Brian Tucker

Theological Seminary, Plymouth, MI

Five Models of Spiritual Direction in the Early Church. By George E. Demacopoulos. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007, xi +274 pp., \$30.00, paper.

George Demacopoulos, an assistant professor of historical theology at Fordham University, whose scholarly works include a fresh translation and commentary of Pope Gregory's *Book of Pastoral Rule*, has rendered a stimulating investigation on spiritual direction in the early church. A focused study on the spiritual formation strategies of pastors, the work is driven by the underlying question: how was spiritual formation affected when ordained clergy became monks or when monks became ordained clergy?

After a helpful introduction that thoroughly sets the parameters for the study and reviews the key patristic literature in question, Demacopoulos in five chapters explores five pastoral models from the fourth to early seventh centuries. Beginning in the Christian East, the author investigates Athanasius's (chap. 1) efforts to bring the Egyptian monasteries under episcopal control, the growing tendency to ordain monks to the ministry in Egypt, and the Alexandrian bishop's early and inconsistent thought on ascetic discipline as a discipleship strategy. In chapter two, Demacopoulos carefully examines some key pastoral treatises and hagiographical sources to argue for Gregory Nazianzen's approach to spiritual formation—essentially a synthesis between the contemplative life of a monk and the active life of a minister. In the third chapter, the author begins to focus on the Latin West and considers Augustine's approach to spiritual direction. He argues that while Augustine was interested in asceticism prior to his ordination, he hardly advocated it as a means of spiritual growth during his episcopal ministry. In one of the book's more compelling chapters (chap. 4), Demacopoulos profiles John Cassian—a monk-priest who stood squarely between the Eastern and Western church traditions. Quite conversant with the Egyptian desert fathers, Cassian broke with the anchoritic approach and advocated that community (hence coenobitic monasticism) was a preferable context for spiritual growth. Finally, in chapter five, Demacopoulos presents Pope Gregory's approach as the most developed model for discipleship compared to the other paradigms presented in the book.

Demacopoulos's work is part of a recent stream of scholarship investigating the "monk-bishop" phenomenon, which arose in the fourth century. In the introduction, he shows his familiarity with the relevant works referencing his own work in light of Conrad Leyser's *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great*, Andrea Sterk's *Renouncing the World Yet Leading the Church*, and Claudia Rapp's *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity: The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition*. In addition to these works cited by Demacopoulos, Phillip Rousseau's books and articles on Pachomius and Basil of Caesarea and my own forthcoming *Augustine as Mentor: A Model for Preparing Spiritual Leaders* also explore similar themes.

What are perceived weaknesses of *Five Models of Spiritual Direction*? Though Demacopoulos's analysis of the relevant patristic texts cannot be disputed, there are some apparent factual oversights and interpretive problems in his treatment of Augustine's pastoral model (chap. three). First, he asserts that when Augustine established a monastery in Hippo at the time of his ordination to the priesthood in 391, his monks were all ordained clergy (p. 86). However, other texts from Augustine (*Letters* 31; 33.2; 64.3; 209.3; *Sermon* 356.4) suggest that laymen—including his friend Alypius who was not ordained until c. 394—were also part of the initial "garden monastery" experiment at Hippo. Second, Demacopoulos maintains that

Augustine did not “recognize monasticism as a legitimate preparation” for ministry (p. 87). How are we then to understand Augustine’s founding of the *monasterium clericorum* (clerical monastery located in the bishop’s house) in c. 395, which, according to Possidius (*Vita Augustini* 11.2–3), produced at least ten leaders for the African churches? Finally, Demacopoulos concludes that Augustine had a “casual interest in the mentoring of clergy” (p. 92). In my reading of Augustine, I have reached significantly different conclusions and have sought to show that the bishop of Hippo was quite deliberate about mentoring spiritual leaders through such strategies as: living in monastic community with fellow clergy for nearly forty years, writing some 100 mentoring letters to church leaders in his day, writing books intended to resource clergy, visiting his former Hippo disciples in their places of ministry in Africa, and often involving those disciples in the work of the African church councils (cf. Smither, *Augustine as Mentor*, pp. 135–213).

Despite these critiques, the most thoroughly researched and well-argued model is that of Pope Gregory. In the book’s longest chapter, Demacopoulos carefully surveys Gregory’s *Pastoral Rule*, *Life of Benedict*, homilies, and letters, giving considerably more attention to Gregory than to the other leaders addressed in the book. Though such emphasis is expected from a Gregorian specialist, Demacopoulos convinces the reader that the developing ascetic-pastoral model outlined in the book finds its maturity in Gregory.

In sum, *Five Models of Spiritual Direction* is a well-researched and well-written monograph on a largely neglected area of patristic studies. It should be listed as suggested reading in graduate-level patristics courses and seminars, especially for students studying early church pastoral mentoring and leadership. Though not popular reading, the work should also be consulted as a resource in the present “ancient-future church” debates and discussions.

Edward L. Smither

Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, Lynchburg, VA

Paul and the Dynamics of Power: Communication and Interaction in the Early Christ-Movement. By Kathy Ehrensperger. London: T & T Clark, 2007, 235 pp., \$140.00, hardcover.

In *Paul and the Dynamics of Power* Kathy Ehrensperger, Lecturer in New Testament Studies at the University of Wales, Lampeter, has continued to dialogue with and provide a corrective to radical feminist and deconstructive readings of Paul. In this, her second book (*That We May Be Mutually Encouraged*, T & T Clark, 2004), she builds upon the work of Schütz, Holmberg, and others in investigating the role(s) of power and authority within the apostolic ministry of Paul.

Rather than approaching the study through an investigation of the usual “power” terms and categories, Ehrensperger focuses on the “network of power” (p. 12) that existed in the group dynamics of early Christianity. The thesis of the work is that rather than exercising a *power-over* domination, Paul’s intention is to *empower* the early Christian communities, guided by Scripture and the work of Christ. While Paul and the communities remained in an asymmetrical relationship, this should not suggest permanent hierarchal domination or inequality, but rather an authority that empowers the community to find identity in a way of life that responds to the call of God.

Ehrensperger begins by providing a thorough discussion of contemporary theories of power, building upon the work of Derrida and Foucault. She argues that

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