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Review: Recent Homiletical Thought: An Annotated Bibliography, V 2 (1966-1979)

Paul R. Fink
Liberty University, prfink@liberty.edu

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IN REVIEW

FOR PASTORS

Walvoord: A Tribute
by Donald K. Campbell
Moody Press
1982, 353pp., $15.95
Reviewed by Donald R. Rickards
Professor of Cross-Cultural Studies
Liberty Baptist College
Lynchburg, Virginia

This delightful handbook of scriptural truth will be treasured by all fans of Dallas Theological Seminary and of John F. Walvoord, in whose honor these essays are presented. Some articles while good are quite predictable (those by Saucy, Johnson, Constable, Pentecost, Minirth/Meier, Geisler, Lightner, Hodges, and Toussaint).

Others of the articles call for comment. Hoehner's article on the "Purpose of Tongues" leaves one wondering why he limited his exegesis to an ill-defined passage in 1 Corinthians 14, when a few more verses would have answered the questions he raises. Howe includes insightful models in his article on Creation and Evolution, an important issue today. Zuck's article is not new in deriving meaning from the biblical text, but does give a variety of ways to apply truth. This is one of the chief values of this volume, and all who minister the Word at any level will be grateful for it.

Nunez gives an excellent summary on Universalism, including both historical and contemporary aspects and both Vatican II and Liberation Theology. This, too, is an issue of current importance and adds value. In a day of theological confusion, Hannah is refreshing in his treatment of the historical development of the doctrine of Christ. Glenn offers a Case Study in Hermeneutics that raises the wrong question and gives the wrong answer. The question: Can the New Testament citation be used to determine the original text, the meaning of terms, and the exegetical and theological significance of the text for the original hearers or readers (italics mine)? Obviously, the answer is no, if you include the italicized words. Just as obviously, the answer is yes if you are speaking of the text's meaning for twentieth-century readers. Since Peter tells us that the prophets were unable to determine the meaning of messianic passages, and Paul states that the "mystery" was not previously known, twentieth-century readers of the Word of God enjoy the whole Word of God in deriving a specific interpretation.

There is one article on the Scriptures themselves ("Inerrancy," by Wilmer) and one on the person of Christ (by Hannah) but none on the Father nor on the Holy Spirit, unfortunate omissions in our time! On the other hand, three articles touch on dispensationalism (none of them by Ryrie) and three on hermeneutics, two areas of theology which Dallas views as important.

This reviewer commends especially Ryrie's article on "Contrast Views on Sanctification" and Bruce's article emphasizing theological training for all missionaries. Nonetheless, it is tiresome to continue to read of the endorsement of Chafer's explanation of the "filling" of Ephesians 5:18 as not quenching nor grieving the Spirit and walking by Him, an explanation that is application and not exegesis.

Whether or not the reader is attached to Walvoord and to the seminary of which he is president, he will be refreshed and stimulated by the material offered in this book, not least of which is the biographical sketch of Walvoord by Campbell.

Recent Homiletical Thought: An Annotated Bibliography, Volume 2
by A. Duane Litfin and Haddon W. Robinson, Editors
Baker Book House
1983, 249pp., $16.95
Reviewed by Paul R. Fink
Professor of Pastoral Ministry
Liberty Baptist College
Lynchburg, Virginia

In the preface (the most interesting part of the book) the authors reveal their own work: "Bibliographies have always the excitement of a telephone directory." Such a statement recognizes reality and anticipates a "no-hurt" reception. Litfin and Robinson, however, have taken an important task in hand and have made a very valuable contribution to preachers and preaching.

The authors follow the example of William Toohey and William Thompson who in 1967 issued the first volume of...
Recent Homiletical Thought, 1935-1985. Like them, Litfin and Robinson have topically arranged their sources in three categories: (1) books, (2) periodical articles, and (3) theses and dissertations.

Annotations are limited to books and periodicals. In keeping with their purpose, the authors only describe the works in their annotations. Buyers of this book would probably be influenced by the names of the authors, both of them professional homileticians: Litfin, associate professor of pastoral ministries, Dallas Theological Seminary; and Robinson, president and professor of homiletics and speech, Denver Conservative Baptist Seminary. These professionals would have been more helpful had they indicated which books, in their opinions, are "essential," so the preacher whose funds are limited could use their book as a guide for acquisitions.

Gennie the Huguenot Woman by Bette M. Ross
Fleming H. Revell Company 1982, 189pp., $10.95

This fascinating historical novel of a pious young Huguenot woman who flees the religious persecution of France to take up a new life in Pennsylvania, will be of special interest to anyone who enjoys information about the turbulent early days of our nation.

The setting is 1744-1747, where a movement is afoot in Pennsylvania to recruit a regiment to join the Northern colonies to help the English, who are in open warfare against their rivals, the French in Quebec. The betrothal of Gennie, an indentured servant, to the young Thomas, who joins this regiment, ends in tragic disappointment. During her years of testing, only her deep-rooted faith in her Saviour brings her through a desperately hopeless situation.

The reader will be encouraged by the tremendous courage displayed by this woman, and by her steadfast commitment. This is a tender love story written with historical accuracy, enhanced by an informative map of the Northern colonies and Canada during the mid-1700s.

Whispers of His Power by Amy Carmichael
Fleming H. Revell Company 1982, 256 pp., $10.95

Anyone acquainted with the life and writings of Amy Carmichael will not be disappointed in this volume. The same deep devotion to her Lord and commitment to His will and direction will encourage and bless the reader in whatever circumstances he may be. This dear saint, who spent several decades as a missionary in India and in later years was an invalid, imparts in these daily (short) devotional studies some great truths she learned through a lifetime spent living in the presence of her Lord.

100% Beyond Mediocrity by Fred Hartley
Fleming H. Revell Company 1983, 180pp., $5.95

This is a book I would not hesitate giving a young person searching for a life complete with joy and obedience. Well written in a language of youth, it does not emphasize the "don'ts," rather the areas of a Christian's life that need strengthening and that can be brought into harmony with parents, and most of all, with God. I especially liked the chapter on authority—a weak spot in Christian parenting.

A teenager doing the "homework" at the end of each chapter may not happen in every case, but the Think, Act, Read instructions could be very helpful, especially the Bible memorization.

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