

BOOK NOTICES

NEW TESTAMENT

BRUCE, F F, 1984 *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon and to the Ephesians.* (Series: *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*) Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans. ISBN 0-8028-2401-3. 442 pp incl. indices. Available at Lux Verbi, Cape Town price R24.60.

Colossians was the first Pauline epistle on which F F Bruce ever wrote a commentary. Now, nearly thirty years later, Bruce has completely rewritten his original commentary, and presents it here with his entirely new commentaries on the epistles to Philemon and to the Ephesians.

The study of Ephesians and Colossians together confirms his belief that Ephesians continues the line of thought followed in Colossians - in particular because it draws out the implications of Christ's cosmic role (set forth in Colossians) for the church, which is his body. At the same time Ephesians constitutes the crown of Paulinism, gathering up the main themes of the apostle's teaching into a unified presentation *sub specie aeternitatis*. The letter to Philemon, with its close association to Colossians, is appropriately included in this volume as well.

In carrying out the policy of keeping the *New International Commentary on the New Testament* up to date, the publishers and editor realize that, without such a policy, the adjective "new" as a description of the series would soon become absurdly irrelevant. This second replacement volume in the series takes the place of the original *NICNT* volume on Ephesians and Colossians, written by E K Simpson and F F Bruce (1957) and Jac J Müller's commentary on Philemon found in Müller's volume on Philipians and Philemon (1955).

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

SAMUEL, Vinay & Chris SUGDEN (Eds), 1983 *Sharing Jesus in the Two Thirds World.* Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans. ISBN 0-8028-1997-4. 281 pp. Available at Lux Verbi, Cape Town. Price R23,00.

The mansions of self-assured contemplative theology conducted in the austere inner chambers of Western universities is rapidly crumbling. This book marks another crack in that edifice.

Two thirds of the world's population live in situations of poverty, powerlessness and oppression. What does it mean to proclaim Jesus Christ in this "Two Thirds World"? It was this question that was the focus for the First Conference of Evangelical Mission Theologians, held in Bangkok in 1982. This historic meeting marked the first time that theologians of evangelical conviction from the Two Thirds World had met at their own initiative to discuss what Jesus from Galilee means in their own contexts and in their attempt to fulfil his mission.

With twenty-five participants drawn from twenty-two countries, the conference provided more than just a forum to present papers; it was a fellowship of persons, testing and affirming insights gained from diverse cultural and theological backgrounds to deepen their understanding of Christ.

This book contains the fourteen papers presented at the conference along with a record of some of the discussion that followed each. Twelve of the papers were presented by evangelical theologians from the Two Thirds World; the remaining two represent Western viewpoints.

The papers and discussions reflect a unity of commitment to Christ and his mission rather than a uniformity of outlook. But evident throughout is an earnest attempt to help the church in the Two Thirds World to bear a more biblically faithful, spiritually authentic, and culturally relevant witness to Jesus Christ.

An excerpt from the Contents: The Liberating Options of Jesus (Norberto Saracco - Argentina), Biblical Christologies in the Context of African Traditional Religions (Kwame Bediako - Ghana), Christology in an Islamic Context (Nazir Ali - Pakistan) and Miracles, Methodology and Modern Eastern Christology (Ronald Sider - U S A).

GENERAL

RAWLINS, Clive L, 1984 *William Barclay. The Authorized Biography*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, ISBN 0-8028-3598-8. 791 pp incl. indices. Available at Lux Verbi, Cape Town, price R48,20.

Perhaps best known for his Daily Study Bible, which has sold more than a million copies in several languages, William Barclay

emerges from Clive L Rawlins's carefully researched and detailed authorized biography as a true "man of the people", who could yell with the loudest at a football match and sing with tears running down his face at a Sunday service. He was a Church of Scotland preacher whose real pulpit was his desk and typewriter: the continued popularity of his numerous books attests to Barclay's belief that the story of Jesus, plainly told and anchored to a simple acceptance of biblical narrative, has an extraordinary power over people in all walks of life.

Rawlins portrays Barclay as essentially a man of a generation now past, formed in that mould by his talented parents, in whose household he grew up as an only child. Never lacking in anything, and gratified by early academic success at school and at the university, Barclay spent his early years in a world of enjoyment and growing personal self-confidence. The faith he had learned at his mother's knee was nurtured by his influential father, who took the young Barclay along on his many preaching engagements.

Barclay's faith was soon projected into professional ambitions through a sense of call to the ministry. This easy commitment was rudely challenged by the death of his beloved mother, almost on the eve of his ordination. Thereafter, his faith and understanding of providence were locked in combat with the realities of the world.

His long period of strenuous apprenticeship (fourteen years of pastoral service in a dockside parish) developed his appreciation of everyday things - a theology of the common life. The clash between this and the free-churchmanship of his upbringing - historically rooted and conservatively perceived - created tensions within both his personal life and his theology which he never quite overcame.

The extraordinary success and wide recognition Barclay gained through his many popular books and TV and radio appearances did not come without anguish and suffering. In addition to the painful death of his mother, his daughter died tragically in her twentieth year, and Barclay's own health broke down irreparably at the height of his success. Sorrow, therefore, is part of the texture of William Barclay's life, and of his writings. His is a story of great privilege but also great suffering, of one who found the answer to his questions and disappointments in the good news of Jesus Christ.

Because most of William Barclay's papers were destroyed at the time of his death, this book is based on Rawlins's painstaking original research of virtually every aspect of Barclay's life and work. The result is a fresh perspective on one of the most influential Christian authors and teachers of our time.