

studies and small groups. Though the title of the book sounds technical, the content of the book is not. The authors have done a thorough job making their terminologies clear so that readers from various backgrounds can benefit from this study. This includes those with no background in biblical studies as well as those doing post-graduate work in biblical studies. There is something for everyone.

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The John MacArthur Handbook of Effective Biblical Leadership. Edited by John MacArthur. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2019. 512 pp., \$27.99, hardcover.

Dr. John MacArthur is the pastor-teacher of Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, CA, and president and founder of The Master's University and Seminary. Grace to You is his vast teaching and preaching media ministry. MacArthur is expositor extraordinaire, defender of the faith, pastor-theologian, and author of 400-plus books and study guides. He is well-qualified to contribute and serve as general editor of this volume on effective biblical leadership, having pastored Grace Community Church for 50-plus years. The *Handbook of Effective Biblical Leadership* provides another installment of MacArthur's contribution to pastoral leadership alongside *Remaining Faithful in Ministry: 9 Essential Convictions for Every Pastor* (Crossway, 2019), *The Book on Leadership* (Thomas Nelson, 2006), and to a greater degree *Pastoral Ministry: How to Shepherd Biblically* (Thomas Nelson, 2005). In this contribution, there are three sections in which the reader views the Shepherd as Preacher (12 chapters), Leader (12 chapters), and Theologian (11 chapters). These chapters are a compilation of three previously released books by Harvest House from Grace Community's Shepherds Conference (1998–2016).

Many books on leadership focus on the qualities one needs or core values that one should hold. They may even emphasize laws to follow or principles to embrace as ministers relate to their congregations in biblical community. Some would even imbibe leadership principles touted by Fortune 500 companies, thinking that worldly wisdom is the way to please God. Instead of glorifying God as they lead, pragmatism prevails. MacArthur's approach incorporates a broad spectrum of proper preaching, *pastoralia*, and theology as foundational for all biblical leadership exerting one's influence as he moves people in the right direction. MacArthur describes his purpose for the man of God:

To be challenged and encouraged in areas of preaching, theology, leadership, discipleship, and counseling...Nothing is more urgently needed in today's church than ministers and leaders who are

committed to fulfilling their roles according to principles found in God's Word, and the contents of this book have been brought together to equip men like you in that very endeavor (p. 9).

Each chapter concludes with a pointed prayer pertinent to the essay. Notable contributors include Mark Dever, Steven Lawson, R. C. Sproul, R. Albert Mohler, and John Piper.

Part 1 is the Shepherd as Preacher. How does one lead from the pulpit? It all depends on the preacher's calling, his faithfulness, and his dependence on the Spirit. Dever reminds us of the preacher's calling, stating that "Anyone who claims to be called to ministry has to realize that he is God's messenger only as long as he gives His message" (p. 32). As the minister leads from the pulpit, MacArthur concludes, "you have been given a sacred trust—that of taking God's truth and making sure it gets safely into the hands of the next generation" (p. 50). Our views on preaching and God's Word will also determine how capably we lead with our preaching. Mohler illuminates this idea, "The Word of God comes as a matter of life and death. But the truth is that it is *always* a matter of life and death, and woe to the preacher who forgets this truth" (p. 86).

Part 2 is the Shepherd as Leader. Topics included are humility, purity, prayer, suffering, integrity, facing opposition with hope, guarding the gospel, the public reading of Scripture, and fellowship. In terms of purity, Ligon Duncan exhorts us that "you cannot love God and live like a pagan. Instead, you must love God and live like a disciple" (p. 209). Steven Lawson provides a much-needed word on guarding the gospel as a means of leading, "Ministry is simple—we ultimately must seek the favor and the approval of the Almighty God" (p. 286).

Part 3 covers the Shepherd as Theologian and such theological topics as Jesus' high-priestly prayer, the historicity of Adam, a literal six-day Creation, and the doctrine of justification. MacArthur is right, "The devolution of theology and biblical scholarship as a serious matter for Christians can be traced back to the absence of doctrine and careful biblical scholarship in the pulpit" (p. 347).

There are no limitations or weaknesses in the book, though some may take issue with the specificity of MacArthur's inclusion of *Why Every Self-Respecting Calvinist Must Be a Six-Day Creationist* or *Why Every Self-Respecting Calvinist Must Be a Premillennialist*. While one may question what either has to do with leadership, if one has read or listened to MacArthur enough, they will understand his desire to elevate the Word of God and its resultant theology.

One point of interaction to note is found in the chapter on *The Art of Crafting a Life-Changing Sermon* by Rick Holland. He (and MacArthur as well) elevates implication above application when he states, "Therefore, you want to apply sparingly yet implicate constantly" (p. 131). He further asserts that "If you're too specific in your sermon application, then you will rob your people of the opportunity to be

convicted by the Holy Spirit's implications" (p. 130). This is only true if the expositor derives their application(s) apart from the text. If the man of God has truly preached, then the Spirit will lead his implications and applications. Expository preaching entails the explanation and application of a text: without explanation, it is not expository, without application it is not preaching.

There are a pair of positives worth mentioning as well. First is Steven Lawson's *The Passion and Power of Apostolic Preaching*. One may feel compelled to give a gospel invitation after reading this chapter, "Too many men are tripping over their skirts in the pulpits because there is a feminization of the pulpit today. The problem with preachers today is that nobody wants to kill them" (p. 101). Then he reminds the preacher who is intent on leading, "Like Peter's proclamation, our preaching must be personal and directional. We must give the application that spells out what the sinner and the saint must do. Expository preaching involves persuasion, appeal, invitation, begging, pleading, warning, and exhortation" (p. 106).

The second positive is Phil Johnson's treatment on *The Extent of the Atonement*. While one may disagree with his points about Calvinism, Johnson is cordial and capable in how he presents his case for limited atonement (he sees *particular redemption* as more suitable terminology). He readily views this as "the most difficult of all the five points to understand and accept" (p. 430). In the end, he perceives the crux of the matter: "The earliest Christians firmly believed, as I do, that the death of Christ will accomplish everything God's hand and His purpose predestined (Acts 4:28)—no more, no less" (p. 434).

If one were to paint MacArthur's idea of leadership, it would be a holy man called by God, full of the Spirit, standing behind a pulpit with a Bible in his hand. He wants each of us "to think more deeply and purposefully about the calling God has given [us]" (p. 9). While one might expect something else on leadership, they should expect nothing less from MacArthur—every preacher should welcome this edition to his library. This fits well on the shelf next to the classic, J. Oswald Sanders' *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Moody, 2007) or John C. Maxwell's *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership: Follow Them and People Will Follow You* (Harper Collins, 2007). If you want a more recent reliable source turn to Eric Geiger and Kevin Peck *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development* (B&H, 2016). May we each lead like Jesus and "when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory (1 Pet 5:4).

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