

people, but to become more rigorous in our pastoral dealings with straight people. We need, that is, to recover a Christian understanding of human sexuality as primarily oriented towards procreation, not towards pleasure, and to restate an ethic that takes this orientation seriously” (pp. 167-68). Holmes concludes his essay with a helpful call for pastoral accommodation: “Churches that believe same-sex partnerships to be wrong might nonetheless find space within their life for people living in such partnerships out of pastoral concern” (p. 190). Accommodation, he insists, is not affirmation, “it does not mean pretending ethical standards do not exist. As with divorce in the West and polygamy in parts of the global South, however, pastoral accommodation might mean making space for imperfect patterns of life whilst maintaining a clear witness to perfection” (p. 191).

Sprinkle’s concluding essay summarizes the arguments of each of the authors and issues a call for further discussion. His final words both summarize this book and should set the trajectory for ongoing conversations: “Being a Christian goes beyond just holding on to Christian views, but to expressing those views in a Christian manner. Only then will people be able to see Christ not just in the *content* but also in the *tone* of our doctrine” (p. 226).

This book is a helpful summary of the current state of evangelical views on homosexuality, the Bible, and the church. It makes an important contribution to the literature and it advances an important conversation. Both the affirming and traditional views are presented clearly and the tone of the conversation between the participants is appropriately clear and Christian. Particularly important is that these writers, according to the editor, “have worked out their views in the context of real people. Straight people who want to know more about same-sex relations should get to know gay and lesbian people. Experience should not dictate our ethics, but it should shape the way we integrate our ethical views into real life” (ibid.). This book is highly recommended.

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Pastoral Theology: Theological Foundations for Who a Pastor Is and What He Does. Daniel L. Akin and R. Scott Pace. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2017. 335 pp., \$29.99, paperback.

Daniel L. Akin is the President of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina, where he also serves as the Ed Young Sr. Chair of Expository Preaching, and Professor of Preaching and Theology. R. Scott Pace is the Rev. A. E. and Dora Hughes Chair of Christian Ministry, Chair of the Christian and Cross-Cultural Ministry Department, and Associate Professor of Applied Ministry at Oklahoma

Baptist University in Shawnee, Oklahoma. Akin's many previous literary works include being an editor of the Christ-Centered Exposition Series (Holman Reference, 2013–2017), as well as authoring eight volumes within that series, *1, 2, 3 John* in the New American Commentary (Holman Reference, 2001), *Vibrant Church* (Lifeway, 2008), *Engaging Exposition* (B&H Academic, 2011), and *10 Who Changed the World* (B&H, 2012). *Pastoral Theology* is the first popularly published piece in the literary work of Scott Pace.

In *Pastoral Theology*, Akin and Pace determine to present the reasons behind pastoral ministry and give theological support for the practice. The pursuit of integrating theological understanding and practice within pastoral ministry partially echoes the work of Derek Prime and Alistair Begg in *On Being a Pastor* (Moody, 2013); however, Akin and Pace delve much deeper in this endeavor. *Pastoral Theology* provides a focus on the theological foundations underpinning pastoral ministry in contrast to that found in more purposefully comprehensive and practically focused works such as John MacArthur's *Pastoral Ministry* (Thomas Nelson, 2005), R. Kent Hughes and Douglas Sean O'Donnell's *The Pastor's Book* (Crossway, 2015), or Mac Brunson and James Bryant's *The New Guidebook for Pastors* (B&H Academic, 2007). Moving beyond a purely practical approach to pastoral ministry, Akin and Pace stress the need for pastors to be biblically grounded in the Lord's service, recognizing the need for theological anchors to sustain them during the difficult times of pastoral ministry.

Akin and Pace declare that pastoral ministry is not simply an accumulation of orthodox theological tenets but a theologically driven practice that "allows doctrinal truth tethered to the gospel to inform our understanding and infuse our undertakings" (p. 10). The goal of this book is to guide pastors to answer the "Why?" of pastoral ministry and "determine its corresponding responsibilities in light of theological truth" (p. 12). The book is systematically divided into three main sections, with chapter one serving as the introduction and the last being a short conclusion, serving as a brief overview of the entire work. The first section, titled "Trinitarian Foundation," consists of chapters 2–4 and discusses the triune nature of God and the import each person of the Trinity brings to the pastoral office. The second section is titled "Doctrinal Formulation," consisting of chapters 5–7, and studies three areas impacting pastoral ministry: the nature of man, the nature of the church, and the nature of the church's mission in this world. The third section, "Practical Facilitation," comprised of chapters 8–10, builds upon the previous two sections and culminates in a discussion of three functional areas of pastoral ministry, namely, the pastor as shepherd, the pastor's responsibility to faithfully preach the Word of God, and the duty of the pastor to lead his family well.

One strength of this book is the emphasis placed upon the qualifications of a pastor being found not primarily in his skill but in his

character and its harmony with the holy nature of God. Akin and Pace assert:

The prerequisites for the office are not to be understood primarily as the ability or aptitude needed to perform certain ministerial tasks. First and foremost, the required characteristics establish the pastor as a representative of the One whom he ultimately serves and to whom he must give account (Heb 13:17). Simply stated, the pastoral requirements derive from the attributes of God (p. 19).

Akin and Pace's approach requires those considering the office of pastor to recognize the calling to pastoral ministry is more than a task to be accomplished. A consideration of the character of God, in light of the pastoral office, draws us to the conclusion that "His holiness deserves and demands practical righteousness from us that reflects our positional righteousness in Christ" (p. 48). Ultimately, while a high view of the holiness of God shines a spotlight on the inadequacies of his ministers, a simultaneous understanding of God's grace, as found through Christ, should always conclude in an attitude of thankful humility.

Another strength of this book is the authors' discussion regarding the doctrine of the church and how, on an extremely practical level, it impacts the concept of congregational membership. Understanding the theological nature and mission of the church in the New Testament should impinge upon the manner in how the pastor understands local church membership. A proper ecclesiology will help him to see that "Prioritizing congregational membership...will facilitate healthy church growth, provide proper motivation for our people's involvement, and enable our churches to fulfill God's specific mission for us" (pp. 162-63).

Of particular note is a discussion in chapter 8 regarding the need for the minister to cultivate the heart of a shepherd and model the person and ministry of Christ. This understanding of shepherding will help the pastor to overcome frustration and bitterness; knowing the nature of Christ as the Shepherd should encourage him toward more devoted service. Akin and Pace state, "[Christ's] constant care reveals his passionate and unfailing love for his sheep...Consequently, as pastors we are responsible to offer continual watch-care and unconditional affection for his people, while also providing their spiritual sustenance" (p. 230).

The weaknesses of this book are minimal and should not detract from its benefit to the field of pastoral ministry. As with any work on a subject this encompassing, there are numerous additional implications and issues to be addressed in pastoral theology. However, the authors recognize this truth, "[Our] goal was not to provide a comprehensive theology or an exhaustive handbook for ministry" (p. 296). Therefore, even a potential weakness in this work can serve as an opportunity for further discussion within the area of pastoral theology.

The singular stated objective of *Pastoral Theology* to show that a proper theological foundation is necessary for a proper view and execution of the pastoral office is thoroughly investigated and soundly accomplished. This book is written primarily for readers who are either involved in pastoral ministry, in ministry training, or considering pastoral ministry; however, the benefit to local churches should not be discounted either. In a course on pastoral theology, this could be a primary text, and in any other pastoral ministry course it would serve as a substantial secondary requirement. I enthusiastically recommend this book to anyone considering pastoral ministry or churches seeking to better understand the nature of the pastoral office.

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The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Home. By Jack O. Balswick and Judith K. Balswick. 4th ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014. 403 pp., \$29.99, paperback.

Jack O. Balswick is senior professor of sociology and family development at Fuller Theological Seminary. His wife, Judith, is senior professor of marital and family therapy at the same institution. Jack specializes in gender roles and sexuality and family ministry. Judith specializes in human sexuality, family therapy, and family communication. Together they have authored six books including this one. They have both separately published several other works. The work at hand is now in its fourth edition. The book is divided into seven parts, each with a specific area of focus. The text begins by looking at theological and social perspectives on the family. From there it moves on to focus on marriage as a foundation. It then discusses parenting and developing family values. The next section deals with gender roles. Finally, the last three sections deal with communication, social dynamics, and the family in society.

The text provides a comprehensive in-depth look into the Christian home by helping readers develop an understanding of love, marriage, vocations, having children, raising children at each stage of life, becoming empty nesters, and eventually facing retirement. In addition to discussing such a wide range of issues from a biblical perspective, the authors incorporate additional data and analysis to strengthen their claims and show evidence that supports their positions. One insightful section explains what makes a family cohesive as a unit and what kinds of atmospheres create a weak family unit. The authors show how strong families have a balance between individuation and mutuality. Individuals are encouraged to develop their own persons, but they continue to act for the benefit of others. These families tend to encourage healthy

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