

Millenium,” *Colloquium* 43.2 (2011), 147–68; “Story-Lines in the Book of Revelation,” *Australian Biblical Review* 61 (2013), 61–78; “The Epistemology of the Book of Revelation,” *Heythrop Journal* (June, 2013), 1–14; and “The Full Gospel and the Apocalypse,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 26.1 (2017), 86–109.

Early Pentecostals on Nonviolence and Social Justice: A Reader. Brian K. Pipkin and Jay Beaman, eds. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2016. 194 pp.

In 1917, the prominent Pentecostal publication *Weekly Evangel* (now known as the *Pentecostal Evangel*) published a statement entitled “The Pentecostal Movement and the Conscription Law” that claimed that

From the very beginning, the [Pentecostal] movement has been characterized by Quaker principles. The laws of the Kingdom, laid down by our elder brother, Jesus Christ, in His Sermon on the Mount, have been unqualifiedly adopted, consequently the movement has found itself opposed to the spilling of the blood of any man, or of offering resistance to any aggression. (93)

This position may surprise many in the current American political climate, when exit poll data from the recent presidential election suggest that the winning candidate—whose expressed views have very little in common with “Quaker principles”—garnered the vast majority of the white evangelical vote and has received very public support from leading Pentecostals. Indeed, “Pentecostal” is a word that has not been conjoined in the popular imaginary with either “pacifism” or “social justice” for quite some time. *Early Pentecostals on Nonviolence and Social Justice* seeks to change that by compiling 39 excerpts from 17 leading early Pentecostal figures, spanning the years 1901–1940.

Each author, in his or her own way, makes a biblical and Spirit-oriented case against the prevailing militarism of the period preceding the “Great War” and leading into what would become WWII. The authors include Charles Fox Parham, the influential leader of early North American

Pentecostalism, Frank Bartleman, the evangelist and journalist known for his chronicling of the Azusa Street events, Aimee Semple McPherson, social activist and founder of Foursquare Church, and William J. Seymour, the famed pastor of the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles.

The excerpts vary widely in quality and in intent, with some representing thoughtful extended reflections on the relationship between Christianity and the state (e.g., Arthur Sydney Booth-Clibborn), others offering practical advice on how to approach conscientious objection (e.g., Donald Gee), and still others making prophetic statements about the signs of the times (e.g., Parham, Bartleman). The best of the offerings come by way of the Booth-Clibborn family (Arthur Sydney and his two sons, Samuel and William), Ambrose Jessup Tomlinson, Aimee Semple McPherson, and the lay preacher from Kentucky, Elbert Carlton Backus, whose approximately three-page contribution is worth the entire price of admission. I'll share just one especially timely statement from Backus, reflecting on Christ's statement about giving one's life for one's friends:

. . . let us pause just here to reflect that no love can possibly be Christian which is not universal in its scope. Christ loved ALL mankind, Christ died for ALL mankind, and although, in life, he . . . waged a fierce warfare, when he at last was ushered roughly into the presence of the Father, not one drop of blood stained his hands save what was all his own." (101–102)

The picture of Jesus one gets from these authors is unequivocally the infinitely loving, self-sacrificial lamb of God, slain for the sins of the world. The idea that this Man's teachings could be used to justify violence and oppression, even war, left these authors clearly bewildered. At one point, Gee remarks that "no Christian artist has ever represented the Galilean as commanding a machine-gun battalion or piloting a bombing plane. . . . [I]t has never been done simply because it is unthinkable." (136) Unfortunately, being "unthinkable" is a deterrent only for those who think; one can now easily find such "artistic" representations of the suffering Lord.

The few weak aspects of the book include the somewhat disproportionate focus on the work of Bartleman, whose views are occasionally

interesting but more often problematic theologically or sociologically (or both), and the need for more careful proofreading in several places. But these are overcome by the rest of the work, which easily accomplishes its stated task, which is to provide a first-hand account of Pentecostal nonviolence and social justice. I cannot think of a weightier issue confronting the Church currently, and many of the authors' warnings are surely as relevant today as they were a century ago. In a review of another work from 1930 included in the volume, the *Pentecostal Evangel* stated, "Those of us who drift along unconcerned now that the sun shines, need to be jarred by this book." (143) We could say the same.

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Biblical Theology: Past, Present, and Future. By Carey Walsh and Mark W. Elliott, eds. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2016. x + 233 pp.

A "selection of papers presented at the Biblical Theology section of the International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature over three years" (2012–2014; vii), with contributions from sixteen scholars, does not lend itself to a review of the entirety. The editors' organization of the chapters, however, provides an appreciated cohesion. Mark Elliott's "Introduction" is an *apologia* for the discipline of "biblical theology" (as distinct from systematic theology [dogmatics] or exegesis of isolated passages). "Biblical theology aims to see the big picture but to get there from an account of the details of exegesis of the biblical text. In that sense it can claim to hold the whole thing together" (x). Biblical theology, he continues, "will not abandon the spiritually important whole in order to stick with textual details or application, but will encourage the activity of shuttling between the two" (x). Not every biblical scholar cares for such "shuttling"; some question the relevance or possibility of "biblical theology." Whatever