

Editorial

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It is a story often told but no less illuminating for the repeated telling, how theology in modernity came to be fragmented into siloed subdisciplines, struggling to talk to each other and alienated from the life of the church. Against this backdrop, recent decades have seen a series of attempts to reverse the trend. We might notice here three 'turns' that are indicative of the shift: the turn to theological interpretation in biblical study, the turn to culture in systematic theology, and the turn to ethnographic tools in Christian ethics and practical theology. These attempts may still be in their relative infancy, may be more-or-less convincing in any particular performance, and – let us be honest – are daunting in their demands. Doubtless the kinds of rigorous integration called for are impossible to achieve by any one person alone (and that may be a very good thing, reminding us that the theological enterprise is not about self-sufficiency or 'mastery'). But such rigorous integration is surely imperative. We need theological enquiry which proceeds un-blinkered, and we need the theological enterprise to be joined-up enough that it is adequate to the vocational task of animating the witness of the church.

It is within this space and with such an aspiration that *Theology and Ministry* conceives its modest contribution. In this issue, we see how pursuit of this conviction about integration is capacious enough to incorporate approaches which think towards practice on the basis of biblical exegesis, and approaches which reflect theologically on the basis of attentiveness to the actual practices of actual churchgoers.

We begin with the former. First, Sebastian Rab draws our attention to the Fourth Gospel (especially John 14.2–3) and the abundant Christological meaning of the temple theme found there. Rab sets before us a rich and relational Johannine vision of Christian hope, and shows something of its profound pastoral salience in a reflection on the implications for funeral ministry (the text being a common reading at funerals).

In the next article, Paul J. Wilson evaluates another scriptural picture that is often invoked with an eye on contemporary practice: the notion that Jesus was a refugee. Analysing such readings – and the perspectives of those who demur – Wilson shows how this interpretation can claim some exegetical accuracy, but he also suggests wider ways in which the Bible can inform ethical responses to migration.



Staying with approaches which seek to interpret Scripture carefully for the sake of the church's ministry, our next article sees Anthony Bash address 'Remorse, Emotions, and Moral Transformation'. With particular reference to 2 Corinthians 7, he demonstrates how St Paul contributes the language and theological conceptuality of what is later termed 'remorse' – a term to be distinguished from repentance and regret. Finally, Bash extends this illuminating discussion to a sketch of how the New Testament conceives the transformation of dispositions more broadly.

Continuing along an adjacent theme – and linking up with contributions to previous issues of this journal – Robert Russell's essay considers theological resources that can frame Christian practices of forgiveness and reconciliation. Russell addresses both more philosophical matters – theodicy and free will – and the implications for strategies of pastoral counselling.

Our final article turns a different aspect of ecclesial life. You have likely read academic theological accounts of what is involved in the celebration of the Eucharist – but have you ever wondered what people in your church actually think is happening when you gather to share communion? Oliver Blease's article provides a valuable window on just this critically underexplored dimension of lived theology, as he presents a qualitative study of experiences in a number of local parishes' Eucharistic worship, distilling the key concerns and commitments of those who participate.

Our book reviews this time each in their own way highlight recent contributions located at the interface of Christian experience and academic theological enquiry – biblical, historical, spiritual, or practical. Rachael Phillips reflects on Esau McCauley's already-influential *Reading While Black* and Sarah Strand offers summary and evaluation of a groundbreaking collection of essays on *Evangelicals Engaging in Practical Theology* (edited by Helen Cameron and Helen Morris). Cara Lovell, herself a recent contributor to this journal on the theme of vocation, reviews Lynn McClery's *How do you know it's God? The Theology and Practice of Discerning a Call to Ministry*. Finally, Michael Simants walks us through Romanian theologian Corneliu C. Simuț's *Concise Introduction and Guide to Spiritual Formation*.

We commend this issue to you, then, confident that there is something for everyone – and, more, with the hope that there is provocation and inspiration here both for further theological enquiry and for faithful and fruitful ministry and mission. In this vein, it is a pleasure to launch this issue on our new website which we trust offers a cleaner, clearer, and simpler interface to access these pieces and all past issues. Thanks, as ever, to our all of our contributors, our peer reviewers, and our (newly expanded) editorial board. Thanks, also, to our new editorial assistant, Courtney Reeve.