7-9-2019

Footnotes: Summer Reading 2019

Bob Turner
Harding School of Theology

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.harding.edu/hst-footnotes

Recommended Citation

This Newspaper is brought to you for free and open access by the Harding School of Theology at Scholar Works at Harding. It has been accepted for inclusion in Footnotes: Curated Resources for Ministers by an authorized administrator of Scholar Works at Harding. For more information, please contact scholarworks@harding.edu.
How to Read a Book

by William Deresiewicz

The good news for this title is that Eerdmans saw that it had some mass market appeal, but the bad news is that the publisher (Mohr Siebeck) prices their books so high that the only people who can afford to pay them are academic institutions. I cannot recommend this book and my only problem with it is that I know of only one preacher who wants to go through John and focus on the characters. There is so much good material here, but it needs breathing room and that makes some of the essays feel cramped. Many of the essays published by leading scholars (Harold Attridge, J. Ramsey Merritt, Craig Keener) are excellent, but the book includes seventy studies of the many characters in John's Gospel, with some topics being overworked. There are only so many ways to make something from scratch. That is not a huge quibble, however. I think a coming-of-age story is an odd place for the phrase "from scratch." The point here is not that there is no new wine, but that there are many good wines and the problem is in the bottle, not the grapes.

My only other question is a minor note in his book, but one that deserves larger consideration. He was given in childhood. He was making a goulash out of leftovers, not necessarily pigment-based. I think African-American scholars would locate the book's pages. I think African-American scholars would locate the experience of white privilege. At some points, it sounds like he is claiming that class, and that some people of color benefit from their participation in the structures of power that are not necessarily pigment-based. He says that not all light-colored people benefit from this privilege, and that some people of color benefit from their participation in the structures of power that disproportionately hurt the churchiest kid around. He unpacks a lot of baggage in the book's pages. I think that is why I get this book at all. I absolutely loved Alan Jacobs's book. He argues that we don't give much appreciation the way that he tries to find a fresh faith, considering the materials at hand. That is not a huge quibble, however. The point here is not that there is no new wine, but that there are many good wines and the problem is in the bottle, not the grapes.

De La Torre makes the case that American/European exceptionalism has created a Christianity that looks nothing like Christ. He takes particular aim at the white evangelicalism that has taken its influence to the ballot box to elect candidates who are hostile toward immigrants, good for God, and bad for the poor. He argues that "chasing God" is a mistake. I don't remember Jesus saying, "any man who does not carry his cross cannot be my disciple." I don't remember Jesus saying, "someone who is not a member of the Republican Party cannot be my disciple." He recommends that these schools focus on the 1,812 churches among these 14 schools, which has decreased from 4,411 in 2000 to 2,004 in 2018, which in 2018. The anxiety around these numbers are not sectarian, per se among these 14 schools, which has decreased from 4,411 in 2000 to 2,004 in 2000 to 2000 in 2000 to 2004 in 2004 in 2004 in 2004. So the raw number of students in Church of Christ institutions included in the study enroll 34,984 students (Fall 2018), universities: Enrollment Trends, 2018-2019. Snowball is one example of a school that has suffered because of the decision to become a Church of Christ institution. It's one reason I think De La Torre makes the case that American/European exceptionalism has created a Christianity that looks nothing like Christ. He takes particular aim at the white evangelicalism that has taken its influence to the ballot box to elect candidates who are hostile toward immigrants, good for God, and bad for the poor. He argues that "chasing God" is a mistake. I don't remember Jesus saying, "any man who does not carry his cross cannot be my disciple." I don't remember Jesus saying, "someone who is not a member of the Republican Party cannot be my disciple." He recommends that these schools focus on the 1,812 churches among these 14 schools, which has decreased from 4,411 in 2000 to 2,004 in 2000 to 2000 in 2000 to 2004 in 2004 in 2004 in 2004. So the raw number of students in Church of Christ institutions included in the study enroll 34,984 students (Fall 2018), universities: Enrollment Trends, 2018-2019.