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Resensies / Reviews

Conradie, Ernst & Lombard, Christo. 2009. **Discerning God's justice in church, society and academy: Festschrift for Jaap Durand.** Stellenbosch: Sun Press. 241 p. Price: R180,00.
ISBN: 978-1-920338-06-0.

Resensent: J.M. Vorster
Skool vir Kerkwetenskappe, Noordwes-Universiteit

Hierdie bundel artikels is 'n huldigingsbundel vir Jaap Durand wat verbonde was aan die Fakulteit Teologie van die UWK. Benewens enkele akademiese en wetenskaplike artikels bevat die bundel ook 'n bekendstelling van die persoon asook prikkelende kort gedagtes oor temas wat Jan Durand in sy veelsydige akademiese besinnings aan die orde gestel het. Die akademiese artikels wat besondere vermelding verdien, is die volgende:

- Metaphor, mystery and paradox: orientations for christian spirituality – Denise M. Ackermann
- Oor eenheid, geregtigheid en versoening by Jaap Durand – Russell Botman
- In praise of courage – John W. de Gruchy
- Public theology in South Africa: lessons from the theology of Jaap Durand – Nico Koopman
- Inclusion and exclusion: some remarks on the use and abuse of a theological trajectory – Bernard Lategan
- Belhar as public theology – honouring Jaap Durand – Christo Lombard
- “In die geskiedenis ingegaan” – Dirkie Smit

Al hierdie artikels borduur voort op gedagtes wat Jaap Durand oor die jare ten opsigte van die sosio-politieke en kerklike problematiek in Suid-Afrika geskryf het. Konsepte soos eenheid, geregtigheid,

versoening en die moontlikhede en reikwydte van in teologiese betrokkenheid hierin word aan die orde gestel.

Benewens die aktualiteit van die bundel bied dit ook 'n goeie oorsig oor stormagtige tye in die Suid-Afrikaanse kerklike- en samelewingsgeskiedenis. Denkers oor die toekoms van Suid-Afrika kan met vrug gebruik maak van die lesse uit die geskiedenis. Terselfdertyd bied dit insigte van deurwinterde teoloë wat bydraes tot die bundel gelewer het en goeie boustowwe om mee te werk in die ontwikkeling van 'n Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing waarin die foute van die verlede nie herhaal word nie. Juis omdat dit tans lyk asof die nuwe Suid-Afrikaanse demokrasie in soortgelyke slaggate begin trap, is die lees van die boek en die prinsipiële begronding van kernwaardes vir sosiale opbou en die rol wat die kerk daarin speel, belangrik. Daarom kan hierdie bundel van harte aanbeveel word.

Pillay, Miranda, Nadar, S. & Le Bruyns, C., eds. 2009. **Ragbag theologies: essays in honour of Denise M. Ackermann – a feminist theologian of praxis.** Stellenbosch: Sun Press. 297 p.

Price: R225,00. ISBN: 978-1-920338-16-9.

Reviewer: Y. Dreyer
Department of Practical Theology,
University of Pretoria

This collection of essays honours South African practical theologian, feminist and liberation theologian, Denise Ackermann, for whom a feminist theology of praxis "does not begin with transcendental notions. It begins with the messiness of human experience" (p. 272). The metaphor "ragbag theologies" describes her theological journey. The focal points of her journey are mirrored in the book: being-in-the world (Part 1: "Cloths of context"), being-in-relationship with God (Part 2: "Cloths of spirituality") and being a critical, systematic academic who reflects on what it means to be in the world and to be in God (Part 3: "Cloths of theology"). The last section (Part 4: "Using and re-using our cloths") considers her legacy with a view to the way forward.

Part 1: "Cloths of context" is situated in the messy context of South Africa and Africa during the span of Denise Ackermann's career – through apartheid and the time of transition, to the present post-apartheid era in South Africa and the postcolonial era in Africa. Chapters 1, 2 and 4 reminisce in a personal way on her participation

in the activist women's group, the Black Sash, the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians, and the Anglican Church respectively. African theologian Mercy Oduyoye addresses the struggle of women and ministry (ch. 3), and Anlené Taljaard explores Ackermann's academic oeuvre (ch. 5).

Part 2: "Cloths of spirituality", starts on a personal note with Sarah Rowland Jones' speech, delivered at the reception dinner in honour of Denise Ackermann in 2008 (ch. 6). Health practitioner Marion Nixon focuses on the connection between healing, wholeness and holiness (ch. 7), after which the "demarginalisation" of children is addressed by Lyn Holness (ch. 8). Melissa Marley examines the Eucharist theology of Denise Ackermann (ch. 9). Azila Reisenberger, lecturer in Bible and Hebrew literature and rabbi, traces the process of transmitting ideas and concludes that, in spite of the many problems concerning understanding, the text can and should be read in a liberating way. In chapter 11 Daniël Louw, South African practical theologian with a systematic theology background, endeavours to "bring about a paradigmatic change in the gender debate" by exploring christian eschatology. He moves from "feminism" as "genderism", beyond the culturally determined stereotypes connected with the term *femininity*, to the concept of *feminine* which "signifies human identity and human dignity" (p. 110). Roman Catholic systematic theologian Susan Rakoczy brings together the two themes of ecofeminism and feminist spirituality (ch. 12). Old Testament scholar Douglas Lawrie explores "The risk of spirituality" (ch. 13), which he unpacks as "the condition of standing with your nerve ends exposed in a place from which there is no line of retreat and in a meeting of which you are not master" (p. 135).

In Part 3: "Cloths of theology", Sarojini Nadar reflects on the work of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (ch. 14). Dirkie Smit (ch. 15) rather surprisingly (also to Denise) relates her work to John Calvin's. Both theologians sought "to discover what is worth living for in the midst of troubled times" and are lauded for their "own commitment to personal and public change and transformation" (p. 157). John de Gruchy's contribution (ch. 16) engages Ackermann's work, *After the locusts: letters from the landscape of faith* (2003. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), also in the form of a letter. With the insights of philosophers Lévinas and Ricoeur, James Cochrane (ch. 17) searches for "an adequate contemporary public theology". Old Testament scholar Juliana Claassens connects her contribution on keeners or wailing women with the prominent place of "lament" in Ackermann's work (ch. 18). She focuses on the role of lament in the

Book of Matthew. Women as a transformative force in the Johannine community is the topic of Daan Cloete's essay (ch. 19). Miranda Pillay (ch. 20) uses the feminist methodology of retelling a woman's story that has "hitherto been immersed and smothered in social, cultural and ideological approaches alien to the experiences and life-worlds of women" (p. 14), to retell the story of Luke's Mary as an "ordinary peasant woman". Ernst Conradie explores the relationship between God and the world "between pantheism and deism" (ch. 21). US New Testament scholar Herman Waetjen (ch. 22), calls Ackermann's feminist theology of praxis "a spirituality of theosis because it is constituted on the basis of the incarnational reality of God's Spirit". He explores the theology of John and Paul and concludes that "[t]he objective of the Christian faith is not deification! The objective of the theosis of incarnation that effectuates union with God is the redemption of human beings and the world ..." (p. 249-250).

Part 4: "Using and re-using our cloths" gives the last word to Swedish theologian Karin Sporre (ch. 24) who reflects on postapartheid challenges, and to Denise Ackermann (ch. 25) who in her self-reflection asks where she as theologian was "found wanting" and what she had "left untried".

This Festschrift honouring a South African practical theologian includes short personal essays as well as South African, African and international academic contributions from different Judaeo-Christian traditions and from fields such as practical theology, feminist theology, biblical studies (both First and Second Testament), and systematic theology. Consistent with the personhood and theology of Denise Ackermann, this tribute to her can be useful "at the entrance of the academy, or it can be used at the entrance to a home, a church, perhaps even a shack" (p. 15). In the theology of praxis presented here, learned academic reflection is willing "not only to put itself to the test within a community of equals, but also to offer itself to a wide community of colleagues, churches and an interested public" (p. 259). A theology of praxis indeed.

Kater, M.J. 2010. **Kom en zie. Deel 1.** Apeldoorn: Theologische Universiteit. 395 p. Prys: €33,95. ISBN: 978-90-75847-28-4.

Resensent: P.H. Fick

Skool vir Kerkwetenskappe, Potchefstroomkampus,
Noordwes-Universiteit

Hierdie boek is die eerste vrug van 'n proefskrif in Dogmatiek/Sistematiese Teologie aan die Teologiese Universiteit te Apeldoorn en Kampen. Soos die titel aandui, is die onderwerp die pre-eksistensie van Christus in die werke van drie teoloë uit die tweede helfte van die twintigste eeu: Karl-Joseph Kuschel ('n Rooms-Katolieke teoloog van die Tübingen-skool), Wolfhart Pannenberg ('n Lutherse teoloog) en Colin E. Gunton ('n teoloog uit die "reformed"-tradicie). Hierdie teoloë verteenwoordig verskillende posisies binne die triniteitsleer wat strek van modalisme (Kuschel) tot triteïsme (Gunton). Die oogmerk van hierdie studie is om die relevansie van hierdie teologiese beskouings vir die Dogmatiek van die 21ste eeu aan te dui. In hierdie eerste deel is die skrywer in gesprek met die drie genoemde teoloë. Dit word gedoen teen die agtergrond van die kernvraag of die belydenis oor Christus in die ekumeniese belydenisskrifte uit die vierde eeu nog verstaanbare uitdrukings is om die geheim van Jesus Christus in die twintigste eeu onder woorde te bring. Die boek bestaan uit vyf hoofstukke: 'n inleiding, die Christologie van Kuschel, Pannenberg en Gunton onderskeidelik en 'n samevattende slothoofstuk.

Kater wys in die inleidende hoofstuk daarop dat vrae oor die persoon en werk van Christus te maak het met die hart van die christelike geloof. Dit is ook in 'n teosentriese teologie belangrik om oor die preëksistensie van Christus na te dink, veral omdat die verhouding van die ewige God met die wêreld in temporele kategorieë uitgedruk word. Hy is daarvan oortuig dat 'n studie oor die preëksistensie van Christus egter nie dieselfde is as 'n studie oor sy Godheid nie. Tog behoort die verhouding tussen Gees en Woord besondere aandag te kry. Hy wys kortlik op enkele teoloë uit die afgelope aantal dekades soos J. Grenz, H. Berkhof, J. Macquarrie, W. Marquardt, R.W. Jenson, P. Schoonberg en A. van de Beek se Christologiese uitgangspunte ten einde op die diverse vrae rondom die tema te wys.

In die tweede hoofstuk gee hy 'n uiteensetting van Kuschel se uitgangspunte. Vir Kuschel is die eskatologie bepalend vir die protologie. Die verhoogde Christus is nie (meer) aan ruimte en tyd gebonden nie. Vanuit sy modalistiese Godsbeskouing is *Christus praesens*

vir hom *Spiritus praesens*. Daarom moet daar gedink word aan die universele teenwoordigheid van Christus as Gees en in die Gees. Hy sien 'n preëksistensieteologie en 'n Christologie van die maagdelike geboorte as *komplementäre Theologoumena* wat elk-een van sy eie voorstellingskema uitgaan. Uit sy oortuiging dat skepping en verlossing een is, is dit duidelik dat hy 'n universele versoeningsleer aanhang. Die skrywer lewer legitime kritiek op Kuschel se Christologie wat in werklikheid ebionities van aard is. Hy wys ook tereg op die winspunt van Kuschel se teologie, naamlik dat hy klem lê op die krisis van die nood van die mens se bestaan in verhouding tot die spreke oor die preëksistensie van Christus en dat die preëksistensie steeds meer 'n saak van aanbidding as van refleksie is.

In die derde hoofstuk bespreek hy Pannenberg se beskouing van die preëksistensie van Christus vanuit die hele spektrum van sy teologie. Pannenberg maak grootliks gebruik van filosofiese begrippe om die belang van refleksie oor hierdie onderwerp aan te toon. Dit wek inderdaad die indruk dat sy teologiebeoefening eers op die akademie en daarna op die gemeente gerig is. Hoewel sy teologie gevolglik 'n sterk rationele karakter het, is daar tog ook verskeie eksistensiële momente daarin te bespeur. Die geskiedenis neem 'n prominente plek in Pannenberg se teologie in – ook die openbaring van die preëksistensie van die Seun leer 'n mens uit die geskiedenis van Jesus ken. Die skrywer vra tereg of Pannenberg voldoende die feit verdiskonter dat 'n mens die kerugma nodig het om die feite te leer verstaan. Daar bestaan ook tale vrae rondom Pannenberg se beskouing van die selfonderskeiding van die Seun ten opsigte van die Vader. Die skrywer merk ook in Pannenberg se teologie, wat hy 'n "eskatologiese panenteïsme" noem. Daarbenevens is daar by Pannenberg 'n universalistiese soteriologie te bespeur. Daarmee hang saam dat sy onderskeid tussen God is Gees en die Gees as die derde Persoon van die Drie-eenheid nie helder is nie.

In die vierde hoofstuk word die preëksistensie van die Seun in die teologie van Gunton bespreek. Die keuse het op hom gevval, omdat hy binne die angelsaksiese teologie 'n geweldige stimulus gegee het aan die sogenaamde "trinitariese renaissance". Vir Gunton het dit nie gegaan om 'n antwoord op die abstrakte vraag hoe 'n mens tegelyk ook God kan wees nie, maar hoe die liefde van God vlees en bloed word en nog altyd 'n realiteit in ons wêreld is. Gunton gaan uit van die *contingent rationality* van T.F. Torrance. Hy handhaaf verder die verband tussen skepping en verlossing en vir hom is die

Seun as Middelaar van albei van belang. Gunton sien geen plek vir die *filioque* nie. Die Seun is vir hom in die eerste plek die ontvanger en dan eers die gewer van die Gees. Die inkarnasie is die uitdrukking van die realiteit van die ewige bestaan van die Seun. Juis die "in Christus"-geskape wees onderstreep dat dit binne die ontologie en dus ook binne die teologie daarom gaan dat daar behoorlik plek gegee word vir die sogenaamde *otherness-in-relation*.

Die laaste hoofstuk het die gepaste opskrif: *De (dis)harmonie van een drielank*. Uit sy ondersoek het dit vir die skrywer duidelik gevlyk dat al drie bogenoemde teoloë aandag gegee het aan universele implikasies van wat hulle in hulle teologie na vore gebring het. Tog spreek hulle nie eenstemmig nie. Wanneer hulle praat oor die eksistensie van Jesus, die triniteitsleer, die eskatologie, die onderskeid tussen kenorde en sinsorde, die onderskeid tussen Skepper en skepsel, die verhouding ewigheid en tyd, die Ou-Testamentiese en intertestamentêre literatuur en die taal waarin daar gepraat word, loop die weë soms uitmekaar.

Hierdie boek is 'n belangrike dogmatiese bydrae tot die debat rondom die lokus van die Christologie en is inderdaad 'n werk wat op die rak van 'n dogmatikus hoort.

Vorster, J.M. 2008. The challenge of contemporary religious fundamentalism. Pretoria: Unisa. 202 p. ISBN: 978-186888-526-8.

Resensent: J.H. van Wyk

Navorser: Skool vir Kerkwetenskappe,
Potchefstroomkampus, Noordwes-Universiteit

Hierdie boek maak die eerste deel uit van 'n nuwe reeks boeke wat deur die *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* uitgegee word. Laasgenoemde tydskrif word gepubliseer deur die Kerkhistoriese Werkgemeenskap in Suidelike Afrika waarvan prof. Christina Landman tans die redakteur is. In die voorwoord maak sy melding daarvan dat die manuskrip deur twee wetenskaplikes, naamlik dr. Pierre Jordaan (SA) en prof. Bram van de Beek (Nederland) gekeur is.

In die boek gee Vorster aandag aan die fenomeen van fundamentalisme vanuit 'n theologies-historiese perspektief, maar hy wys ook op die kerklike, godsdiensstige en politieke implikasies wat hierdie benadering meebring. In vier hoofstukke word die probleem ontleed

en in die vyfde word op die vraagstuk gerespondeer, terwyl elke hoofstuk telkens met 'n samevattende konklusie afgesluit word.

Hoofstuk 1 behandel die vraag wat onder fundamentalisme verstaan moet word. Teologiese, psigologiese, politieke en sosiologiese perspektiewe word gebied.

Die volgende definisie word geformuleer:

Religious fundamentalism is a pattern of reasoning that breeds radical ideologies by way of singling out certain fundamentals of a religion and elevating them to absolutes. These absolutes form the paradigm of the ideology, which develops in reaction to what it perceives as a threat to its own identity, and which reacts if necessary by way of radical and militant methods.

Hoofstuk 2 ontleed die kenmerke van hedendaags fundamentalisme, en die volgende aspekte word hier genoem: letterlike teksgebruik, tradisionalisering, kasuïstiese etiek, reaksionêre tendense (vooroordeel en onverdraagsaamheid, "oppositionalisme"), vorming van 'n "in-groep" en inteling, klem op sterk leierskap en neiging tot geweld.

Hoofstuk 3 bekyk die redes vir die opkoms van hedendaagse godsdiestige fundamentalisme en die volgende word hier aangevoer: globalisasie, modernisme en sekularisasie (van die nasostaat), postmodernisme en die verlies aan identiteit.

Hoofstuk 4 oorweeg die nadelige gevolge wat hierdie soort fundamentalisme vir menseregte inhoud ten opsigte van menswaardigheid, gelykheid en vryheid, die reg op lewe en vroueregte.

In die slothoofstuk reageer die skrywer op hierdie fundamentalisme vanuit die volgende perspektiewe: erkenning van die probleem; erkenning van die onvermydelike ontwikkeling van die sekulêre staat; erkenning van die essensie en positiewe rol van godsdiens; erkenning van die holistiese karakter van godsdiens; 'n aktiewe plurale opsie vir godsdiensvryheid; toepaslike sosiale en wetlike strukture en die verantwoordelikheid van godsdiens.

Dit is duidelik dat die outeur wyd gelees en diep nagedink het oor die verskynsel van godsdiestige fundamentalisme en veral ook oor die gevare wat daar mee saamgaan. Die uiteensetting en evaluering van hierdie besondere verskynsel is duidelik en in 'n hoë mate verantwoord – sonder dat 'n mens met elke formulering hoef saam te stem.

Die gevarkante van fundamentalisme word ook duidelik aangetoon. Die gevare is dikwels subtel, veral wanneer Christene in hulle poging om Skrifgetrou te wees die Bybel konteksloos hanteer om 'n bepaalde standpunt of ideologie te regverdig en sodoende in bibliosisme verval. 'n Goeie voorbeeld hiervan is hoe die Bybel op bibliosiese wyse misbruik is om apartheid te regverdig met verwysing na tekste soos Genesis 11:1-9, Handelinge 17:26 en Openbaring 21:3. Só gesien is fundamentalisme net so Skrifondermynend as die modernistiese benadering waar die Bybel as bloot godsdienstige boek hanteer word.

Dit is verder 'n belangrike greep dat die skrywer nie net op die christelike vorm van fundamentalisme wys nie, maar die voorkoms daarvan ook by die Joodse en Moslemtradisies aantoon. Daarmee lewer hy 'n holistiese benadering tot 'n wêreldwye verskynsel. Veral Moslemekstremisme besit die potensiaal om die pilare van die totale wêreldsamelewing om te ruk.

Natuurlik sou daar ook 'n aantal kritiese vrae aan die outeur gestel kon word. Wat die christelike teologie betref, sal 'n mens moet erken dat die Modernisme tans 'n ewe groot gevare vir die kerk inhoud as fundamentalisme (en ek dink hier byvoorbeeld aan die "teologie" van die Nuwe Reformasie). Die outeur verwys terloops hierna (p. 51, 52, 108-109), maar dit word nie verder bespreek nie. Natuurlik was dit nie die doel van die boek nie (miskien vir 'n latere boek?), maar dit is belangrik dat die hedendaagse teoloog vir albei die *ismes*, naamlik dorre dogmatisme en glibberige vryheid, op sy hoede sal wees. Waaraan ons tans 'n groot behoefte het, is 'n verantwoordelike kontekstuele omgang met die Bybel, veral vanuit die sentrum van die Skrifopenbaring in Jesus Christus.

'n Volgende kritiese vraag handel daaroor dat ons in die post-apartheid Suid-Afrika te onkrities praat van 'n *liberale* demokrasie. Dat ons vandag in Suid-Afrika oor 'n demokrasie (in plaas van oligargie) beskik, is 'n baie groot winspunt, maar dit is 'n ope vraag of 'n *liberale* demokrasie met sy individualistiese vertrekpunt die beste politieke model vir ons land is – 'n saak waarop die Stellenbosche filosoof Johan Degenaar die aandag gevestig het. 'n Liberale demokrasie werk goed in 'n homogene samelewing, maar lewer groot probleme in 'n plurale samelewing wat uit verskillende bevolkings- en kultuurgroepes bestaan. Die dilemma word ook duidelik in die Grondwet van 1996 weerspieël, wat enersyds sy vertrekpunt neem in *individuale* menseregte (gelykheid, menswaardigheid, vryheid), maar andersyds ook baie duidelik kulturele regte van groepe erken, egter sonder om die verband tussen hulle uit te spel.

Waar daar tydens die apartheidbedeling klem gelê is op die *verskeidenheid* van kulture ten koste van die *eenheid* (van 'n Suid-Afrikaanse nasie), word daar tans in die postapartheidsbedeling klem gelê op die *eenheid* (Suid-Afrikanisme) ten koste van die *verskeidenheid* van kulture. "Nasiebou" word sodoende 'n allesopslorpende konsep waarvoor selfs kerke hulle moet beywer. In 'n plurale samelewing soos ons s'n moet daar egter 'n juiste balans tussen eenheid en verskeidenheid gevind word; die een nie ten koste van die ander nie: nie net eenheid nie, want dan word dit eendersheid, maar ook nie net verskeidenheid nie, want dit word alte maklik verskeurdheid.

Persoonlik kies ek vir die model van 'n *plurale* demokrasie – hoe moeilik dit ook al mag wees om hierdie model te laat werk in 'n plurale samelewing. (Ek moet byvoeg dat die skrywer die gedagte van pluraliteit self ook aanwend wanneer dit by godsdiensvryheid kom – p. 165-176.)

'n Volgende saak waarna ons krities behoort te kyk, is die verwysing na 'n *sekulêre* staat (cf. p. 158, 168), omdat hierdie term onduidelik en selfs misleidend kan wees. Die omskrywing van *onpartydige* staat, dit wil sê 'n staat wat nie enige groepering promoveer, degradeer of elimineer nie, sê duideliker wat die werklike stand van sake in Suid-Afrika vandag is.

Om saam te vat: Koos Vorster het met hierdie boek 'n belangrike bydrae gelewer oor 'n kommerwekkende verskynsel wat teologie, kerk en samelewing ontsier en dikwels bedreig. Daarom wil ek die boek graag vir studie en nadenke aanbeveel vir almal wat in teologie, in die kerk en in die samelewing belangstel.

Fokusresensies / Focus reviews

Rudolph, Fanie. 2009. **Die kleipot het gebreek: hoe om as Christen met depressie te leef.** Wellington: Lux Verbi.BM. 127 p. Prys: R79,95. ISBN: 978 07963 0497 1.

Resensent: G.A. Lotter

Vakgroep Praktiese Teologie,
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Hierdie boek van dr. Rudolph – wat eintlik ’n outobiografie is – het ’n mens weereens intens laat besef hoe ernstig depressie is en dat mense wat buite staan, moeilik die diepte en omvang daarvan kan besef. Fanie Rudolph is predikant in die NG Kerk en is in 2006 met depressie gediagnoseer nadat hy (soos in baie gevalle veral by mans) dit té ver laat gaan het. As gevolg daarvan het hy op twee geleenthede in die hospitaal beland. Tussen alles deur het hy ’n dagjoernaal gehou, wat vir die leser ’n beeld gee van sy afdraande pad en ook sy worsteling met hierdie siekte. Daar is steeds agterdog by die gemiddelde mens oor die feit dat dit ’n (fisiële) “siekte” genoem word, en binne christelike kringe is hierdie agterdog des te sterker omdat ’n mens dikwels hoor iemand moet “net bid”, of vermaan word omdat hulle “geloof so swak is”. Enigiemand wat nog twyfel of depressie ’n siekte is, behoort hierdie boek te lees om iets te verstaan van die wroeging en stryd wat die skrywer deurgegaan het, soos ook baie ander Christene wat aan depressie ly.

Die boek is verdeel in tien kort, dog sinvolle hoofstukke met ’n bibliografie aan die einde. Die formaat is ideaal omdat dit die lees vergemaklik.

Wat my veral beïndruk het en waarom die boek sterk aanbeveel word, is die feit dat die skrywer deurgaans die hoop lewendig hou. Dit kom daarop neer dat hy nooit in totale vertwyfeling en hooplosheid verval nie. Sy getuienis is deurgaans dat *God hom vashou*, al voel of dink hy dalk self dit is nie eers so nie.

’n Ander aspek is dat hy ook erken dat “sy stryd voortgaan” en dat hy nie finaal daardeur is nie, maar dat God hom ook daardeur dra. Die maklikste sal natuurlik wees om aan te toon dat “die probleme nou verby is” en dat “dit goed gaan”, maar hy pretendeer dit nie. Hierdie is dus ’n realistiese beeld van depressie en hoe die siekte verloop. Kyk hoe goed beskryf hy dit:

Depressie is 'n siekte wat jou hele menswees vernietig. Om so uitmekaargeslaan te wees is bykans onbeskryflik. Ek dink dit is dalk selfs onmoontlik om hoegenaamd hierdie vernietigende gevoelens te verduidelik aan iemand wat dit nog nie self ervaar het nie. (p. 28.)

Wat ook soos 'n refrein in die boek na vore kom, is dat mense met depressie ook mediese hulp moet kry en nie probeer om daarsonder klaar te kom nie. Die mediese ondersteuning by depressie (of dit ernstig is of nie), is onontbeerlik en hierdie feit kan nie genoeg beklemtoon word nie.

Mans is veral hier skuldig (volgens persoonlike waarneming), omdat hulle altyd "sterk" moet wees en nie tekens van swakheid behoort te vertoon nie en daarom nie maklik 'n mediese dokter raadpleeg nie. Dit is waarskynlik die rede waarom mans later heeltemal "in duie stort", omdat die saak te ver gegaan het. Iets wat Rudolph nie vermeld nie, maar 'n mens se eie ervaring met betrekking tot pastorale ervaring jou geleer het, is die feit dat baie Afrikaners vanweë die klein genepoel (en dit word nog kleiner as mense van dieselfde groepe of kerke onder mekaar trou!) geneig is tot 'n vorm van oorerflike depressie. Iets wat dr. Rudolph regkry in die boek is om aan te toon hoedat depressie gevölge en 'n impak het op alle lewensterreine: van jou drome wat nie waar kan word nie, tot die effek wat dit op die gesin en verhoudings het. Dit is ook uiters belangrik dat die huweliksmaat en gesin saamgeneem moet word in die proses van herstel, soos wat hy aandui. Al is dit vir almal swaar, moet dit gedoen word, omdat dit ook die gesin saambind en dit eerlik ook na buite gekommunikeer kan word (weereens: soos enige ander siekte waaraan iemand ly, is dit nie 'n "skande" of "swakheid" nie).

As deel van die troos wat die skrywer in die boek bied, is daar verwysings na Skrifgedeeltes en die Gesangeboek wat vir hom baie beteken het. Eendag kan iemand moontlik 'n hele boek skryf oor die troos en toepassings wat die Skrif gee met betrekking tot depressie!

Graag wil ek hierdie boek (waarvan die prys baie billik is) aanbeveel vir enige persoon wat iemand met depressie in die familie of vriendekring het. Selfs die persoon wat aan depressie ly, sal goed doen om die boek te lees, al is dit stukkie vir stukkie sodat hulle kan sien en hoor dat ander ook deur dieselfde ellende gaan, maar dat daar steeds hoop is.

Loader, William. 2007. **The New Testament with imagination: a fresh approach to its writings and themes.** Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 206 p. Price: \$16,00. ISBN: 978-0-8028-2746-3.

Reviewer: R.G. Branch
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William Loader, an Australian Research Council Professional Fellow at Murdoch University in Perth, Western Australia, has written a book that offers a reading of the New Testament in “a new way: through imagination and through sampling key passages” (p. ix). His book is geared to those who enjoy “camping in the New Testament” but are not professionals “and have not had the opportunity of formal theological education” (p. vii). Given these parameters, he has achieved his purpose and written, I may add, an outstanding book.

The New Testament with imagination: a fresh approach to its writings and themes is commendable for several reasons. Firstly, it is readable and very well written. Secondly, it combines scholarship and storytelling. Thirdly, it engages the imagination by making the reader a participant in a story set in the time period. Fourthly, the reader, as a participant, is learning lots of scholarly details along the way. Over and over again as a reader I found myself wanting to read more.

There are a few drawbacks: no footnotes, no internal citations at all and a very skimpy “For further reading” section (p. 197-198) that contains only seventeen books. A suggestion for the second edition for Loader and his editors to consider is this: cite but put all the notes in pages at the end of the book. This technique would not disrupt the flow of the prose. Within the notes, I hope that Loader will write more, for he is a fine writer. It would seem that his work is geared to a general audience and would be an ideal text for an evening Bible study for serious thinkers.

Loader introduces himself as one who has taught for over four decades (p. vii). His other books include *Sexuality and the Jesus tradition* and *Jesus and the fundamentalism of his day* – both published by Eerdmans. His techniques of storytelling and inviting participation via imagination are exemplary tools for engaging lay readers.

Chapter one, “Jesus and Capernaum: hope and change”, begins this way: “What would be the first thing you would smell when you woke up, if you were living in Capernaum in the time of Jesus?”

(p. 1). Then via the eyes, ears, nose, and mind of this newly-awakened person, Loader sets the scene (politically, socially, geographically and theologically) for the site of Jesus' chosen base of ministry. It is artfully done.

For chapter two, "Jesus and conflict: death and resurrection", Loader invites readers to imagine themselves back in Galilee at the time of Jesus, specifically during Jesus' final Passover week. Loader successfully writes (imagines?) the talk swirling about Jesus. "Lots of stories are circulating about people who have found their feet again. Healing is not just about limbs and bodies. It is also about minds and hearts," his imaginary character says (p. 27).

In chapter three, "Paul amid the turbulence of the church", Loader invites the reader to imagine him-/herself as a woman "on a ship on your way from Corinth to Ephesus" (p. 63). The woman is a key member in the church in Corinth who offered her home as a house church (p. 64). On board she has time to reflect on the problems in the church. Consider this example of her musings: "Poor Paul will have his hands full just dealing with Corinth, let alone other communities. He has already written to you all once, warning about sexual immorality. But now there is the fellow who is living with his father's wife ... If she is a young widow, then the two of them are about the same age. That needs sorting out. Some Christians have gone so far as to take each other to court – not exactly good publicity for the new faith." (p. 65.)

In chapter four, "The gospels: putting the story together", the imaginary person is a scribe, a member in a community of Christians about a half century after Jesus' death and resurrection (p. 105). This scribe notices that the work of Mark, surely "a gospel to treasure", nevertheless "did not quite match the needs of Matthew's communities who had a much stronger Jewish background" (p. 107).

In chapter five, "John and beyond: faith and the future", Loader does his most sensitive work, I believe. His imaginary person is an old person, a long-time member of a christian community, who is facing aging issues. Here, Loader gives a choice. "You could find yourself ignored, pushed to the side, spoken to as if you were a child, or, perhaps, loved and respected for your wisdom and experience." (p. 143.) In this way, Loader tackles issues facing christian communities in the late first century. Churches (house churches) are splitting, the message that "God is love" is changing to see Jesus "as a kind of heavenly being without real flesh and blood" (p. 143-144). The old person thinks that people need to be reminded that true

bread is “the life which Jesus gives and the life you celebrate when you eat the bread and drink the wine together” (p. 144).

The way Loader weaves facts, culture, political gossip, geographical information, social mores and the biblical text together paragraph by paragraph made me keep on reading. After each imagination entry, Loader supplies “a selection of passages to which this section alludes” (p. 6, 34, 73, 115, 151). This is helpful for the reader who wants to see the biblical texts and figure out how Loader put together the material.

After setting scenes with his stories, Loader uses his own voice and develops themes. For instance in the chapter “Paul amid the turbulence of the church”, Loader looks at Galatians 1-2 in sections called Writing letters, The Galatians and their problems, Paul and his credentials, Paul and Peter in conflict, and Paul, Christ, and Scripture (p. 74-80). One can hear his teacher’s voice behind his words as he goes over the epistle’s greeting and Paul’s frustration with the Galatians (p. 74-75). Paul explains to the Galatians the basis of his authority and has shown them “that while his authority is not derived from the apostles, his gospel, and so his authority, has been recognized by them”, Loader writes (p. 78).

Loader carries this mode – story and then explanation of selected issues – throughout his work. However, this section on Paul and indeed throughout the book, I read with two minds: the academic side of me wanted extensive documentation and my reader side simply enjoyed Loader’s views and style.

Now for a bit on form and layout. The font is readable, the paper weight good, and the margins quite adequate for notes and scribbles. The book includes four Appendices (p. 188-196). The first, “The New Testament writings in overview”, gives a diagram of Loader’s view of origins and a timeline from AD 30 to 85 and beyond. In Appendix B, Loader gives his view of “Matthew’s use of Mark in outline”. He uses arrows showing Matthew’s input from Mark, and capital letters showing Matthew’s use of Q. Perhaps it makes sense to those interested in such things, but I found it somewhat hard to follow.

Writing in his own voice, Loader concludes by stating his view that what makes people keep reading the New Testament is its content. New Testament texts “often address issues that are at the core of what it means to be a human being and a human community in this world before God” (p. 186).

Loader (p. 186) believes that the New Testament texts must be listened to and not forced into a mould “so that we listen to them only selectively, only looking for an authoritative word from God”. Instead, he advocates an open ear policy. He encourages allowing the texts to speak and to be evaluated “without our pre-judgements and prejudices, positive or negative” (p. 186).

The book is very well written. Loader is a gifted writer and storyteller. Yet throughout I kept wishing for citations. Loader’s work follows a trend in biblical scholarship that worries me: the author is considered the expert so trust him. Consequently, while I found the book to be loaded with quotable material, I will not use Loader as a first source because of his decision not to cite.

Greidanus, Sidney. 2010. **Preaching Christ from Ecclesiastes: foundations for expository sermons.** Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
340 p. Price: \$26,00. ISBN: 978-0-8028-6535-9.

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For a layperson it is interesting to see how theologians analyse the Bible for the sake of their sermons. Similarly, reading the Bible as text or as a literary text in particular is also something worth exploring, particularly nowadays when students often have no sense of biblical allusion in literary texts.

In his preface Greidanus points out that the modern theologian and/or preacher cannot merely rely on giving “theocentric” sermons on Old Testament books but should rather emphasise a “Christo-centric” approach. He also points out that the old church fathers often resorted to an allegorical reading of the Old Testament and Ecclesiastes in particular.

What Greidanus then attempts to do in this very readable book is to interpret the message of Ecclesiastes for our times. One needs only to look at the topics and themes of his sermons to establish the relevance thereof: working together, working in a wicked world, worshipping, the love of money, enjoy life and take risks boldly but wisely. In our age of instant gratification and the search for pop

psychological solutions to problems (à la the gospel according to St. Oprah) these topics indeed sound relevant.

The author provides us with an insightful analysis of the structure of the Bible book and tries to elicit the central thematic concerns thereof. These include "all is vanity", "enjoy your life", "enjoy God's gifts". His overarching theme is: "Fear God in order to turn a vain, empty life into a meaningful life which will enjoy God's gifts." (p. 22.)

Responding to a colleague's remark that he was "trying to find Christ under every rock" (p. 25), Greidanus feels obliged to defend his decision and he provides his reader with seven ways in which to do so, among others the fulfilment of the prophesy with regard to the coming of Christ. He also opts for an analogical reading, namely replacing the teacher of Ecclesiastes with Christ.

Fascinating to me is the way in which he elucidates the structure of the original Hebrew version of the biblical text, showing parallelism, the structure of the text and the origins thereof. Each chapter follows the same pattern: text and context, literary features, textual structure, theocentric interpretation, textual theme and goal, ways to preach Christ, sermon theme and goal, sermon form and sermon exposition. Often, as Greidanus points out, the part of the book under discussion has a so-called chiasmic structure consisting of proverbs and anecdotes to convey the teachings of the teacher.

In the three appendixes at the end of the book, Greidanus gives us "ten steps from text to sermon", "an expository sermon model" and a meditation on Ecclesiastes 3:1-15. It is clear that the author used to be professor of preaching and that explains his logical and structural approach to a sermon. He even indicates the percentage of time to be spent on each aspect. It would be interesting to contrast his sermon model to the conventions of rhetoric and establish to what extent the two corresponded. I particularly enjoyed: "Write the sermon in oral style. Say it out loud as you write it." From fear of sounding flippant, I must acknowledge that I've never really looked at sermons in this manner.

I would recommend this book not only to preachers, but also to people, who do serious Bible study and who need a more intellectual approach to doing so. It is logical, clear, well structured and written in a language accessible to both preachers and laypeople alike.

Schulze, L.F. 2010. **John Calvin and “social ethics”.**
Potchefstroom: Calvin Jubilee Books Fund. 68 p. Price: R60,00.
ISBN: 968-0-86955-189-9.

Reviewer: B.J. van der Walt
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The commemoration of John Calvin's birth 500 years ago (1509) resulted in many publications during 2009 and 2010, also in South Africa. Examples are the translation into Afrikaans of Calvin's Commentary on the Book of Romans by S. Postma and the special edition of *Koers*, 74(4), 2009 containing the proceedings of the 8th SA Calvin Research Congress on "Calvin and catechism". During August 2010 the Tenth International Calvin Research Congress was also held in Bloemfontein.

For this occasion earlier publications on Calvin's viewpoint on socio-economic issues are also republished. Two examples are the republication (with an addendum) of B. Goudzaard's earlier IRS study pamphlet in *Tydskrif vir geesteswetenskappe* (2009). In 2010 the *Journal for Christian scholarship* (vol. 64) published a John Calvin commemorative issue. In 2010 L.F. Schulze's *John Calvin and “social ethics”* (completed in 1979, and first published in 1985) was reprinted by The Calvin Jubilee Books Fund. This book does not discuss Calvin's entire Christian approach to economics, but concentrates on his views about (private) property, interest and usury.

Since this piece is merely an announcement and not a review, a few general remarks about its contents follows.

The writer provides a well-documented review of Calvin's own view on the three main topics (p. 10-47). Two points of possible critique are the following. I have doubts about "ethics" that are today regarded as a panacea for all kinds of ills in different areas of life. I can, however, not share the writer's total rejection of social ethics – our social life also reveals an ethical aspect.

My second problem is the whole perspective from which the author views this sixteenth-century reformer (cf. p. 1-10 and 48-50). He tries his best to convince the reader that the Reformation should not be regarded as a revolution. The reader may be inclined to ask: So what if it indeed revealed revolutionary tendencies?

An explanation may be that Schulze's book originated at the end of the seventies when the communistic and apartheid-ideology strongly influenced our spiritual climate and thinking. Since these now belong to the past, the reprinted edition could have been more relevant for today if the writer could rather have indicated the implications of Calvin's views for the contemporary global neo-capitalist ideology. (Valuable in this regard are the writings of inter alia B. Goudzwaard.)

In conclusion something brief about the nature of the sixteenth century Reformation according to Vollenhoven:

A restoration of former times is not only impossible but is moreover contrary to the essence of any reformatory striving. For Reformation does not mean a return to (Christian) people and (ecclesiastical) situations, but rather a conversion to God. In other words, not a change on the horizontal plane of time but in the relationship to God and his Law which bears a vertical character. (*The problem-historical method and the history of philosophy*. 2005. p. 70-71.)

