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The division between biblical studies and systematic theology has been around since J. P. Gabler. For some, this "iron curtain" is to be welcomed—not so for the contributors of this slender volume. Rather these essayists hold that the wall between biblical studies and systematic theology forces a separation of that which inherently belongs together. In a short review such as this, it is impossible to treat each of the eleven essays (in addition to an afterword) individually. It is possible, however, to bring together some of the more significant common and interdependent themes of the book, thereby giving the reader an overall sense of this collection.

First, all the essays are exercises in theological hermeneutics. The question that forms the general umbrella under which the reflections take place is, "What effects should an interest in theology produce in the reading of Scripture?" (p. 1). More specifically, "our interest here is more focused toward the nature of a biblical hermeneutics appropriate to doing theology" (p. 2). In accordance with such an interest, much theological attention, both directly (M. Turner and S. Fowl) and indirectly (J. B. Green and R. Wall), is given to several subjects that occupy prominent places in contemporary hermeneutics: author, text, meaning, reader/interpreter, etc. The refusal to hand such matters entirely over to hermeneutical theorists results in a profound theological treatment of some of the more vexing problems of interpretation.

Second, though not everywhere discussed, in each of the essays there is the assertion that the NT documents are much more than mere historical sources for our knowledge of
ear early Christian life. They are certainly historical sources (historical criticism is not jettisoned), but the deeper nature of NT documents is understood as that of witness. That is, the documents themselves claim to point beyond themselves, and any interpretation that fails to take this explicit theological dimension into account will necessarily fall short of the subject matter. Perhaps Wall's second essay puts it most starkly: "If the subject matter of Scripture aims at God, so must its interpretation" (p. 179). So also, T. Hart, a systematician, avers that the Scripture is not an inert text, but instead is a "living voice" (p. 185), and, therefore, proper interpretation of necessity involves theological listening and discernment. Similar statements are peppered throughout the book and reveal a common methodological assumption of the collection that a correct method of interpretation should correspond to the nature of the object to be interpreted (cf. H. Gese and P. Stuhlmacher). Hence, as documents which are theological in nature, the NT writings require theological interpretation and engagement if we are to understand them rightly.

Third, these essays assume and assert that the Christian Bible in its canonical unity is coherent. Literary and theological diversity as well as historical distance within the canon are neither ignored nor easily dismissed. Neither, however, are these diversities seen as impediments to genuine unity, whether the emphasis is upon theological unity (J. Motyer), the ability of the biblical narrative to hold tensions together in a unitive story (J. Goldingay), or the mutually enriching canonical conversations (Wall).

Fourth, the Christian church is intimately and necessarily connected with the interpretation of the NT (and biblical canon). The church is the context within which biblical interpretation that is true to its subject matter is properly performed. The rules, or grammar, that govern "legitimate" interpretation are those that derive from the church tradition (e.g., regula fidei) and the overall theological and relational life of the church (see Thomas, Wall, Hart, Green). So, too, proper interpretation is to issue in an embodiment and instantiation of the biblical witness. Thus, right reading of the Bible forms and reforms Christian communities and enables them to engage in theological, political, social, and ethical witness to the world (S. Fowl, N. T. Wright).

Fifth, recalling Calvin's yoking of the Word and the Spirit, these essays affirm that the biblical text mediates the reality of God and that this same God is involved in right reading and interpretation. To bracket out the Divine presence is to shut out the very One to whom these texts point, the One who finally renders these texts meaningful and authoritative for faith and life (esp. Hart, Thomas).

Finally, the concluding essay on Galatians by N. T. Wright is outstanding in the way in which it lets exegesis and theology "stare each other in the face" (p. 205). Wright's essay is a preview of his commentary on Galatians in the Two Horizons Commentary...
series, of which Between Two Horizons is a foretaste. If this is to be the style and tone of the series, we have every reason eagerly to await further publication.

No book is perfect, and so I will mention two reservations. First, though historical criticism is not in principle rejected, one wonders if it is taken seriously enough. The weight of the questions posed by radical historical critics such as W. Wrede and W. Bousset have to do with problems raised by the NT texts themselves and, quite obviously, have serious implications for theological interpretation of these same texts. If NT studies and systematic theology are to move toward the same horizon, it would seem that greater attention must be given to the historical and textual problems set forth by these critics. Second, one occasionally gets the impression that "theological hermeneutics" and systematic theology are the same thing. They are, of course, of the same ilk, but they are not the same thing. Missing (even from the essays of the systematicians) is any sustained engagement or conversation with true dogmatic and systematic theologians (Barth, Brunner, Pannenberg, Jenson, Wainwright, etc.) and the way in which they read Scripture theologically as a witness to the one God. The concentration upon authors, texts, interpretation, and meaning, though helpful, frequently takes the place of penetrating through these hermeneutical problems to reflect theologically upon the God to whom these texts claim to point. Hopefully, as the NT texts themselves are treated these two imbalances will be remedied in the much awaited, much needed Two Horizons Commentary series.