

Theologie und Politik im Denken Karl Barths (1977)) are absent. Supposing an American readership, which the book does, Barth's social democratic political views might well be sensitive; but without considering them, it proves difficult fully to grasp what's going on in his critique of modernity and his developing attitudes to National Socialism.

doi:10.1017/S0036930622000151

David McLachlan, *Accessible Atonement: Disability, Theology, and the Cross of Christ*

(Waco, TX: Baylor, 2021), pp. xiii + 194. \$39.99.

Daniel Rempel

School of Divinity, History and Philosophy, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, UK
(d.rempel.19@abdn.ac.uk)

While still a relatively young field of study, disability theology has made significant strides in the theological world, assessing, describing and interpreting the lived experiences of people with disabilities. While often providing exquisite theological accounts for inclusion and human worth, disability theology has largely shied away from larger doctrinal questions, particularly those having to do with sin and the atonement, principally for the ways that traditional understandings of these doctrines have prohibited people with disabilities from full integration into the life of the church. In *Accessible Atonement: Disability, Theology, and the Cross of Christ*, David McLachlan, a Baptist minister and Associate Tutor at Spurgeon's College in London, represents what could be described as a 'new wave' of disability theology that refuses to shy away from engaging these central doctrinal loci, arguing that experiences of disability should not be seen as 'special cases' of human experience and doctrinal formulation but rather affect how we understand all aspects of doctrine.

The driving question of *Accessible Atonement* is simply, 'What does the atonement at the cross have to say about disability?' However, what is important here on a methodological level is that McLachlan is not trying to construct a sort of 'special-interest theology, or a special reading of Scripture, which only applies to, or "works" for, those particularly concerned with disability' (p. 3). To do so, he suggests, would continue to assert that people with disabilities are theological outsiders, exceptions to the accepted doctrinal norm. Rather, McLachlan asks 'in what way our main Christian account of the cross and the atonement might allow itself to be disrupted and reformed, encompassing from its roots upward all of humanity, inclusive of disability' (p. 3). In this reading people with disabilities no longer are special cases or theological outsiders but rather the means by which discussions about the atonement gain a greater breadth, encompassing more aspects of the total human experience.

Accessible Atonement is separated into two parts, each containing three chapters. Part I, 'Current Interactions', sets up the terms of engagement for the book, particularly the ways that McLachlan will speak about disability and the atonement, and the lack of

literature connecting the two. Chapter 1 argues that disability theology falls roughly into four different major themes: theological anthropology, theology of access, hermeneutics and soteriology. While these groupings are in no way a definitive assessment of the discipline, they do operate as a helpful pedagogical tool for demonstrating the lack of engagement disability theology has had with a theology of the cross. Chapter 2 then moves the reader into a brief sketch of popular models of atonement which will guide the interaction between disability and atonement. What McLachlan is not doing is attempting to reify pre-existing theories of atonement and assess which best encompasses the disability experience, but rather he seeks to get his reader to think more broadly about the implications of the atonement, and by using the language of 'models' he insists that sacrifice, justice and victory are helpful lenses by which we can understand better what happened on the cross. Chapter 3 then interrogates these models via disability, noting that while there are similarities between the language used in disability theology and that used in models of atonement, they often seem to 'speak past' each other rather than leading to a robust model of atonement that takes disability seriously. To remedy this, McLachlan turns to Frances Young's suggestion that the atonement accomplishes a 'double reparation', in which Jesus is the perfect sacrifice of obedience in which God takes responsibility for the 'gone-wrongness' of creation. McLachlan then extrapolates Young's work to move his reader towards his constructive vision of 'atonement-as-participation' in which Jesus participates in our humanity as our sacrifice, while humanity then participates in Jesus' sacrifice through our own worship.

Part II is where McLachlan moves from 'setting the terms' towards his constructive vision of how rethinking the atonement through disability may look. Chapter 4 is devoted to extrapolating the notion of atonement-as-participation that he introduced at the end of part I, and is the heart of what makes *Accessible Atonement* a new and exciting contribution to the field. It is McLachlan's argument that, at the cross, not only does Jesus take upon himself the sin of the world, but also that it is on the cross that God participates in the contingency and risk of creation, in which Jesus overcomes all that is alienating and fulfils all that is good. The significance of this is that for McLachlan, while atonement-as-participation deals with the problem of sin, it also encompasses much more, in that through this model, atonement-as-participation affects all aspects of life, whether identified as disabled or not. Chapter 5 then attempts to answer whether or not atonement-as-participation 'enables the cross of Christ to take on that foundational and critical role in developing a distinctively Christian theology of disability' (p. 105). The final chapter brings back the models of sacrifice, justice and victory and attempts to parse out what these themes may mean as participation.

Accessible Atonement is a welcome contribution to the field of disability theology, attempting to engage one of the most important Christian doctrines from a disability perspective. The claims that McLachlan makes herein are preliminary, providing ample possibility for further engagement. Yet, if we take these preliminary claims seriously, we will be forced not only to wrestle with our understandings of disabled experiences, but also our understanding of the atonement and all that it encompasses.

doi:10.1017/S0036930622000023