

most striking and startling parallelism of Augustine and Kierkegaard is their common conviction that the ultimate object of desire is the self-giving love of God" (392).

This is a provocative conclusion, for it moves Kierkegaard away from "the dominant Lutheran nonteleological understanding of faith" (22) and puts him into further conversation with Catholic theologians such as Hans Urs von Balthasar. In this sense, Barrett's work might be considered part of a recent upsurge in interest in Kierkegaard's relation to the Catholic tradition. Whether or not this shift will become central to the reception of Kierkegaard is yet to be determined. Nevertheless, in so skillfully linking Augustine and Kierkegaard, Barrett has by no means impeded the growth in Catholic scholarship on Kierkegaard.

CHRISTOPHER B. BARNETT
Villanova University

Music at Midnight: The Life and Poetry of George Herbert. By John Drury. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014. x + 396 pages. \$35.00.
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At the time of this writing, John Drury's *Music at Midnight: The Life and Poetry of George Herbert* has already attracted much critical praise in the mainstream press in Britain and the United States. Clearly Drury has succeeded where most critical studies do not even attempt to fail: as crossover reading for a literate general audience. This is good news because the name and poetry of the singular George Herbert will be even better known. For this accessible success, we owe John Drury a debt of gratitude.

Drury's book is a worthy addition to the Herbert shelf because it shares the spirit, and the sound, of the poet himself. Drury's learned, witty, and also easy style makes the book propulsively readable, and he sheds much light on the relationship of Herbert's life and contexts to particular poems. One of the book's chief pleasures is its profound sense of place. Clearly, Drury has retraced Herbert's original steps, which with his deep, wide historical reading enables him to re-create a you-are-there sense of location in late Elizabethan Wales and Oxford, or Jacobean Charing Cross and Cambridge—an immediacy augmented by many illustrations and a generous sheaf of full-color maps, portraits, and photos. While Drury recognizes the unreliability of Izaak Walton's hagiographical early *Life of Herbert* (1670), he nevertheless borrows Walton's chief technique: to imbed discussions of specific Herbert lyrics in discussions of particular moments and events of the poet's biography.

Yet Drury avoids Walton's overconfident reading of the poems as potted autobiography; for it is usually impossible to know just when a particular poem of Herbert's was composed. Instead, Drury uses what can be known about Herbert's circumstances to illuminate hundreds of poems—a practice that makes *Music at Midnight* a welcome antidote to the factually accurate but virtually lifeless Herbert biography published a generation ago (1977) by Amy M. Charles, who barely glances at the poetry that makes that life of continuing interest.

Because *Music at Midnight* is so pleasantly readable, so poetically attuned, and so generally well informed, it is surprising and disappointing to observe some rather glaring blind spots. The first of these is Drury's failure to engage or even notice Cristina Malcolmson's relatively recent *George Herbert: A Literary Life* (2004). Malcolmson's well-evidenced thesis is that Herbert's life and work (poetic and pastoral) were animated by a socially engaged Anglicized variant of Calvinism that sought to integrate deep spiritual experience with transformative cultural interventions reaching from the parish to the kingdom to the global church militant. While Drury acknowledges Herbert's commitment to Protestantism and biblicism, he still exhibits an old-fashioned distaste for Calvinism; he would do better to drop genteel stereotypes of a doctrinaire, antiaesthetic Puritanism as Herbert's antithesis.

The historical scholarship of the past generation has given much more texture and depth to the theological and ecclesiastical landscape of Tudor-Stuart England, discovering a Luthero-Calvinist common ground, rooted in biblicism and in Augustine, that provided a center where Conformists and Puritans often met—a center that collapsed in civil war soon after Herbert's death. The second blind spot, resulting, one presumes, from Drury's neglect of much recent scholarship, is his cavalier dismissal of Herbert's "Church-Militant"—surely not a great poem, but a very important one in view of Herbert's global, and rather apocalyptic, vision for the international Protestantism described by Malcolmson.

These omissions relate to the book's slight regard for theological interpretations of Herbert. In Drury's vocabulary, "theology" and "love" function usually as opposing terms, with Herbert praised frequently for avoiding the one and embracing the other. Indeed, at important points in Drury's argument, an apoplectic Jehovah/God the Father himself is contrasted to "love" as personified in the sacrificial Son of God. It is important to Drury that Herbert be on the correct side in this rather Marcionite cosmos, that stable scriptural authority and divine judgment themselves be undermined and condemned by the antiauthoritarian, nonjudgmental Prince of Peace.

No doubt Herbert, like the Psalms, achieves some of his strongest effects in poems, like "The Collar," that lament and protest the apparent hostility of

God—after all, he entitled five poems “Affliction.” But, as with the Psalms, virtually all of Herbert’s laments end with reconciliation and praise, as a speaker’s perspective is restored on the joyful morning after a long nightmare of doubt. Drury—an Oxford University chaplain himself—may well be right that most modern readers of his book do not hold with biblical infallibility or his church’s Thirty-Nine Articles, but need he assure us that Herbert wrote such great poetry *in spite of* them?

Nevertheless, *Music at Midnight* is well worth the price of the candle, and at its frequent best is very good indeed. As the title suggests, Herbert presents us with the paradox of beauty in the midst of darkness, of harmonies heard and indeed sweetened by surrounding dissonance. Drury goes far to explain why Herbert speaks powerfully to believer and skeptic alike. Not since the seventeenth century has Herbert been as widely read and admired as he is today—as a priestly poet, yes, but also as a poet’s poet. And Drury helps us to see him also as a people’s poet, as a voice of the laity. Better than any biographer yet, Drury accounts for the essentially psalmic nature of Herbert’s *Temple*, not as literal Psalm paraphrase, but as a congregation of varied voices, running the gamut from joy to despair and from lament to serenity, yet all, somehow, within the house of God.

CHRISTOPHER HODGKINS

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Embracing the Human Jesus: A Wisdom Path for Contemporary Christianity. By David Galston. Salem, OR: Polebridge, 2012. vii + 271 pages. \$24.00 (paper).

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Biblical scholars have produced numerous books that enrich our understanding of the Jesus who lived in first-century Palestine. Few, however, have pursued the question raised in this book: “How does one take the historical Jesus to church? Can it be done?” (10). Informed by participation in a church community exploring new options in Christianity in light of the changing religiosity in Canada and the Western world, David Galston believes that Jesus needs to be given back his humanity. Hence, the book’s title and its aim: to articulate Christianity on the platform of the historical Jesus in the hope that other communities might seek to “take the historical Jesus to church” (6).

The Jesus that this book would have Christians “take to church” is simply human, like anyone else, not the lordly and divine Savior modeled on Roman imperial language. He is rather a wisdom teacher whose “voiceprint,” if not his exact words, is here reconstructed out of the “authentic” Jesus tradition