

Komline argues that Augustine presents the incarnation as a theological drama in which Christ takes on a human will in addition to his divine will. It is through this human will that Christ demonstrates the effects of grace. While Christ also works to convert our will by grace, this must be joined to the work of the Holy Spirit. Hence the next chapter, in which the author brings the human will into relationship not only with the Spirit but with the whole triune God. While the Spirit enables the reformation of our will, our graced wills come to reveal something about who the Spirit is within the Godhead. This last piece allows Kantzer Komline to provide a nuanced reading of the relationship between the human will and the Spirit as divine will in *On the Trinity*, especially regarding the nature of love.

The final chapter, 'The Eschatological Will', treats the perfected will of the future life. As is to be expected, this will experiences true freedom at last, free from the burden of choice, free finally in its inability to sin. This ideal Christian will is possessed in common by all the saints, but, the author emphasises, each will bears its own history of grace in order to rejoice eternally in its salvation.

Only in her conclusion does Kantzer Komline put Augustine into his intellectual context beyond his own immediate circumstances and polemics. Though this final reflection allows her to highlight what is unique in Augustine – namely, 'theological differentiation, theocentrism, and the connection to love' (p. 430) – this reader would have liked to see more such intellectual contextualising throughout the argument. Indeed, in a book that surpasses four hundred pages, such analysis of philosophical and theological precedents surely could have found a place.

And yet, let these quibbles not distract from the immense service Kantzer Komline has done to scholarship on the trickiest of Augustinian themes. This work should be mandatory reading for any serious student of Augustine, and even the non-specialist who has to teach a class session on the bishop of Hippo will be aided by the lucid interpretations that the author provides. Kantzer Komline's *Augustine on the Will* deserves to be read and referenced as authoritative for quite a long while.

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Ashley Cocksworth, *Prayer: A Guide for the Perplexed*

(London: T&T Clark, 2018), pp. ix + 226. £19.99.

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The intention of this book is not so much to teach people how to pray as to explore prayer from a theological and doctrinal perspective. As Cocksworth remarks in the introduction, 'courses on prayer are more likely to be offered by churches than by universities' (p. 1); but Cocksworth represents an increasing number of theologians whose commitment is to 'kneeling theology', which is the title of chapter 1 of the book, exploring the work of Evagrius of Pontus.

Evagrius brings into sharp focus the thesis that Cocksworth explores throughout the book: prayer is the place of genuine theological discovery, where human and divine converse, where the divine character discloses itself and, in doing so, shapes the thought

and life of the praying human being. Evagrius takes it for granted that genuine theological insight comes as a result of God's self-disclosure in this place of conversation, which strips the human partner of illusions of control and possession, and so readies them for the task of theology in all its richness.

Briefly and schematically, Cocksworth outlines the gradual sundering of the bond between theology and prayer that Evagrius took for granted. But he also notes the returning swing of the pendulum, represented by scholars such as Sarah Coakley, Rowan Williams and Nicholas Lash, whose theology Cocksworth explores illuminatingly. Each takes for granted that prayer, practised and studied, is a theological resource, deepening rather than dissipating intellectual challenge. Cocksworth follows the thread of Coakley's argument, that prayer refuses easy foreclosure in systematic theology, requiring attention to texts and practices that have been sidelined as 'unsystematic'. This takes a different but related form in Cocksworth's outline of Williams' theology of 'dispossession', which resists easy and tidy systemisation of the divine in favour of a contemplative practice of waiting on God. Finally, Cocksworth looks at the theology of Lash, which he describes as 'Amen' theology, aware that it is always joining in an ongoing dialogue, not starting at the beginning, but addressing ourselves, with others, to the God who invites our address. Each theologian is outlined with tantalising brevity and considerable insight, allowing different but overlapping themes to emerge strongly.

Cocksworth then moves on to what is undoubtedly the meat of the book, which is an exposition of the trinitarian nature of prayer, and the role prayer played in shaping doctrinal statements. He argues that underlying doctrinal controversy, for example in the challenge of the Arian heresy, is the need to clarify and remain true to what it is we do when we pray. The divinity of Son and Spirit was already grounded in prayer before it was defended in creeds. From this helpful exploration, Cocksworth continues into a chapter on christology. Under the headings of Jesus as 'pray-er' and 'prayer', Cocksworth illuminates the Chalcedonian definition's description of Jesus as 'fully human, fully divine'. Prayer as a practice enabling union between human and divine is located in the reality of this union of humanity and divinity in Christ.

The final two chapters are less well-integrated into the overall theme that Cocksworth has been pursuing of the indissolubility of prayer and theology, but they address important questions related to prayer; and they address them theologically, rather than purely practically. A chapter on 'Petition and Providence' looks at the vexed question of how human and divine freedom interact in prayer. A swift canter through Aquinas and Barth, refreshed by the addition of Kathryn Tanner and Jeremy Begbie leads to a summary of petitionary prayer and its relation to divine providence as essentially about the 'profound intimacy of the divine-human relation' (p. 172). As always, Cocksworth is a perceptive guide to the theologians he engages with, but this chapter feels a bit rushed as it moves into the final one, on 'The Christian Life and the Politics of Prayer'. Prayer, Cocksworth argues, is endlessly subversive, and calls the pray-er to rise from their knees and stand 'in solidarity with others' (p. 200) in the ancient 'orans' posture, with arms uplifted as we turn to God.

This is a richly thought-provoking book, but each chapter could have been a book in itself. Cocksworth's insight into the plethora of theologians he engages with is so good that one longs for him to give more time and space to develop his thoughts and draw out his suggestions and conclusions. The swift pace and the attempt to cover so much, converse with so many different voices, make so many points in such compressed space, leaves questions unanswered and some points unclear. For example, in the final chapter Cocksworth seems to be suggesting that personal prayer is more 'effective' than

liturgical prayer or eucharistic practice, because it can be done anywhere (p. 177). The point is not pursued, as the argument moves on, so it is not clear what Cocksworth is saying here about the relationship between ecclesial and personal prayer. Which have we then been discussing throughout the book? One or both?

It is surely a good thing that a book leaves you longing to take the author out for an extended lunch and press him for more detail on every point. His thesis, that prayer and theology cannot be separated, is at the heart of theological training and suggests that this book belongs on reading lists up and down the country.

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Ruth Jackson Ravenscroft, *The Veiled God: Friedrich Schleiermacher's Theology of Finitude*

(Leiden: Brill, 2019), pp. xviii + 293. €25.00/\$25.00.

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In *The Veiled God*, Ruth Jackson Ravenscroft surveys Schleiermacher's writings, primarily early materials, with a focus on a central theme. That theme is Schleiermacher's position on human individuality: its high intrinsic value and its inescapable embeddedness in the world of finitude. She capably traces the development of this position through Schleiermacher's early works, both well-known and obscure. On her account the young Schleiermacher takes exception to the 'uniformity' prescribed for human existence by Kant in particular, comes to his own 'highest intuition' regarding the value of human individuality and deepens his understanding of the social conditions that make for the flourishing of individuality as his writings progress. Ravenscroft also directs attention to Schleiermacher's deployment of multiple voices in his writings, which highlights his commitment to the importance of individuality-in-context by showing how consistently it is displayed in the very structure of his writings.

Ravenscroft states early on that one of her aims is to demonstrate 'the resolutely theological character of Schleiermacher's thought' (p. 4), and to show that for him 'the telos of *Bildung* and indeed the end of all life and language is necessarily theological' (p. 3). This theme is curiously underdeveloped in the body of the book. Theological themes naturally appear in discussions of particular works, and an early chapter surveys Schleiermacher's mature dogmatics in preparation for consideration of the preceding corpus. But the chapters do not argue for the resolutely theological character of every text, and the theme returns only elliptically in the book's Epilogue (p. 262). This is curious partly because there seem to be significant stakes involved. It would be a good thing for Schleiermacher's thought to be 'resolutely theological' if the idea that he builds a 'closed-off anthropological system' needs to be refuted (p. 25); but it would be a bad thing if it makes Schleiermacher a contributor to the 'history of (Christian) theological assumptions being imported into ... social-scientific fields of study, which has not only had disturbingly harmful consequences for the