

provided additional credible arguments against the authenticity of the two biblical texts that provided the strongest proof for the orthodox understanding of the Trinity.

What is most interesting, however, is that Newton sent his “Historical Account of Two Notable Corruptions in Scripture” to Locke with the request that Locke have this work translated into French and published sans Newton’s name. However, “the whole translation process took so long that he came to his senses and suppressed them” (370). Newton considered publishing this work once more. In 1709, Newton asked Hopton Haynes to translate the discussion of 1 John 5:7 into Latin. However, “this was an even less propitious time to publish the work and it too was held back” (370). It appears that Newton’s preference for private correspondence won out. As Iliffe notes, “It was after all, merely, a letter to a friend” (389).

Iliffe’s 522-page tome is devoted not to Newton’s mathematical or philosophical work (though there is significant discussion of these areas as well; thus the title *Priest of Nature*) but to Newton’s heterodox understanding of a foundational Christian belief: the Trinity. Iliffe’s work proves his own observation that Newton’s “extensive writings on the Trinitarian corruption of Christianity are among the most daring works of any writer in the early modern period” (11). Furthermore, Iliffe contends that Newton’s heretical writings are on par with those of Richard Baxter and Nehemiah Wallington, and they would demand careful study even if they were not written by the same person who penned the *Principia*. Indeed!

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The Spirit of Methodism: From the Wesleys to a Global Communion.
 By Jeffrey W. Barbeau. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press
 Academic, 2019. xxii + 199 pp. \$20.00 paper.

The title of this book indicates the topic involved. The main topic is not Methodism as a historical institution, the Wesleys as the originators of the movement, or the global communion that grew out of it in the present day. Neither is it primarily a story of the tensions and conflicts that have plagued it from the beginning. The primary focus, as becomes obvious toward the end, is that which is common throughout and still binds it together, as it has from the beginning—the Spirit. One must take the title in its full double entendre sense, as was no doubt intended. It is the story of the movement of the Spirit and the disjuncture that always results from such divine involvement within any human history. In this particular case, the context of the story is the three centuries of Methodism as it spread around the globe.

The tendency in this age is to boil the Wesleys and other leaders down to a given formula, based on the theological slant desired derived from a few favorite quotations from certain sermons, notes, treatises, hymns, or actions. By thus impersonalizing the leaders, many “non-believers” can be excluded and the movement seen as a simplified unity. It is much more difficult, but more productive, if we look for what is common among us and binds us together, as this book attempts to do.

Flexibility is found beginning in the Wesleys and then within subsequent history of the movement. Diversity then is partially a result of the various balances between the five dualities enumerated on pages 155–159. Diversity has always existed within and among the various branches of Methodism, not just when it spread to America on its way around the globe. Within the insular British Isles, in North America, or around the world, one can see wide differences within a common framework. The author would like to see that common thread as the work of the Holy Spirit.

Albert C. Outler, an ecumenist at heart, as he grew in knowledge of Wesley and became more mature himself, gradually saw John Wesley's focus on the work of the Holy Spirit. In his last public address, he spoke movingly about Wesley's death and his focus on the work of the Spirit, wishing that Methodism, and thus Christianity itself, would somehow recapture that dynamic aspect of God's work in the world instead of relying upon the quadrilateral or other human inventions (156–157).

I have heard Bishop Bonino say that Wesley is like a grandfather to Methodists in Latin American—where the children (past age) disregard him as irrelevant, the new generation listens to him with new understanding. It has been my pleasure in the last fifty years—through involvement with the World Methodist Conference, speaking on five continents, and teaching three generations of rising preachers—to witness the spread of this work of the Spirit. The author of this small book has largely captured the complicated and varied history of Methodism around the globe.

The growth of the holiness movement as it related to Methodism in South American Christianity is dealt with rather kindly, if gingerly. In one trip to Brazil to speak for a week to a seminary, I was asked to faithfully describe the beginnings of Methodism in the Wesleys as scriptural in order to counteract the Pentecostal bishops' emphasis on their gold teeth, given them supposedly as a gift of the Holy Spirit as a sign of their authority.

Additionally, other strengths of the book include its focus on theology and commonality. The bibliography used by the author is beyond the scope of what is considered in most basic courses in a United Methodist seminary, both geographically, theologically, and institutionally. An index and endnotes are added to help the reader into the literature, terms and movements are briefly described in sidebars, and several traditional illustrations and portraits illuminate the text.

The shortcomings of the book are the necessary brevity of descriptions and the omissions of whole traditions, much less of individuals who would make contributions to the story. The story is distilled into three parts of about fifty pages each: (1) the Wesleys and British Methodism, (2) the spread to North America, (3) Methodism around the globe.

As an introduction to the present shape of world-wide Methodism, the author does a yeoman's job in choosing the material and interpreting it in a useful approach for the present age. I would recommend this book for anyone who is interested in broadening his or her own view of the origins and spread of Methodism and who wonders what it is all about in the breadth of its diversity.

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