

For Morrow, the American bishops are also complicit in the slow demise of the sacrament. When, also in 1966, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops issued its “Pastoral Statement on Penance and Abstinence,” it withdrew imperious language mandating the sacrament through some abstract and coercive obligation. Rather, the pastoral favored more voluntary terms where the accent was on personal freedom. It advocated for a conversion of heart through the careful guidance of the priest-confessor. By then, also, “the conventional list of sins had changed” (5). What made for a contrite heart was also, arguably, based more on interior feelings or experience than on right reason’s more objective criteria, which neatly triggered absolution even though penitents frequently backslid into recidivistic behaviors. This did not make the job of the priest any easier.

Though she does not explore either Saint Anselm’s penal-substitution theory or its more contemporary manifestations, Morrow makes a valiant attempt at situating self-imposed sufferings as a means toward the expurgation of sin. Borrowing from Robert Orsi, who has written about pain disciplining the ego, Catholic practices as variegated as novenas, Lenten fast and abstinence, regular Friday abstinence, first Friday devotions, parish missions and the like are all meant to generate attentiveness to sacrifice and the sublimation of self in favor of God. In so doing, Morrow surveys a deep and creative wellspring of Catholic activity in response to sin.

The book should be in graduate and seminary libraries and may do well in seminars on American Catholicism or liturgics.

PATRICK J. HAYES

*Redemptorist Archives of the Baltimore Province*  
Philadelphia, PA

*From Every Tribe and Nation: A Historian’s Discovery of the Global Christian Story.* By Mark A. Noll. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014. xvi + 204 pages. \$23.00 (paper).

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Noll’s book is the third volume in the series *Turning South: Christian Scholars in an Age of World Christianity*, edited for Baker Academic by Joel Carpenter. The point of each volume is to record and explore the work of Evangelical scholars on the historical and current growth of Christianity in the Global South. Until recently the Evangelical historians, Noll among them, had been working almost exclusively on Anglo-American evangelicalism. This is no longer the case.

If you are curious about how a Christian historian grows intellectually, this is your book. Noll is a leading figure in a wave of American historians of evangelicalism that gathered momentum over the past half century in Christian colleges and then broke upon the secular academy, and to this day shows no sign of receding. By the nineties Evangelical students were populating Catholic doctoral programs in historical theology and in several of those universities outnumbered the Catholics. They brimmed with curiosity about early and medieval theology and church, and not only about the Reformation and Anglo-American evangelicalism.

At first sight this book is concerned with the huge growth of Christianity in the Southern Hemisphere and Noll's own gradual focusing of his interest on that global expansion. Noll is a historian of himself as well as of evangelicalism, a man who is acutely conscious of his own consciousness. He tells us here the tale of the spread of the gospel and in doing so recounts the dynamic changes in his own intellectual horizon, and how and when and by what agents this change has taken place: he started out as a historian of early American Protestantism and has ended as a historian of the worldwide church.

Three things strike me in the narrative as a whole. First, there is the influence of a strengthening Christian faith on Noll's vocational choices (i.e., what is he going to do with his life?). Second, there is the profound influence of a cloud of Christian witnesses, academic and otherwise, on his scholarly and spiritual development. If you ever wanted an example of the communal nature of the Christian life, practical and intellectual, you will find it here. And finally, because of the influence Bernard Lonergan has had on the reviewer's own life and mind, I find Noll's narrative fascinating as a case study in Lonergan's generalized empirical method (*Insight*) and the "transcendental imperatives" (*Method in Theology*). To live is to change, and the academic changes by raising ever broader and deeper questions.

Chapter by chapter Noll takes us on a journey from his Baptist family and church, where he learned at the feet of missionaries who graced his family table and congregation, through his education (especially at Wheaton College, where he later taught history), his gradual drifting into the study of Protestantism, and his decision to join the Dutch Reformed Church and his marriage to a daughter of that highly theologically minded community. Luther confirmed his understanding of the Christian gospel. Noll finished his doctorate with a dissertation on early American Protestantism, taught at Wheaton for decades, wrote and published torrentially, and completed his academic career in an endowed chair at the University of Notre Dame previously held by George Marsden, who had been a significant influence on Noll throughout his academic career.

If you were to draw up a bibliography of important figures who moved Noll toward the study of global Christianity, from the Canadian George Rawlyk to Lamin Sanneh of Yale University, you would have the markers of the movement of Evangelicals from church history of an older sort to the history of the church in a postmodern world. Noll himself is a model of Christian intellect in that world.

WILLIAM M. SHEA  
*College of the Holy Cross*

*Wisdom's Feast: An Introduction to Feminist Interpretation of the Scriptures.*  
 By Barbara Reid. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2016. vii + 154  
 pages. \$16.00 (paper).  
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To borrow the author's metaphor, this book provides a *feast* of biblical interpretation accomplished through the lens of feminist thought. Reid articulates her hope for this work, which is "to open up new possibilities for the flourishing of all—women, men and all creation through analyzing the detrimental effect of some traditional biblical interpretations and exploring new directions by reading with the mind, eyes, and heart of a woman." As such, this book is indeed a success.

Well schooled in the art of biblical interpretation, Reid invites the reader to look again at the Scriptures and to see it with new eyes. Her thoughtful text analysis and cross-referencing breaks open the Word. The new taste of this wisdom feast comes from her detailed feminist reading of the Bible.

Reid is not afraid to address even the most controversial passages. She notes that when considering verses about women being subject to their husbands or silent in church, one cannot simply dismiss the meaning as irrelevant, for these verses are a part of the canon. Careful examination of context and authorship provides new insights into the meaning of the passages and their relevance today. Reid is particularly good at drawing out an understanding of the Scriptures from a feminist point of view.

Her exegetical skill ensures that the interpretation is balanced and at the same time creative and transformative. For some women, reading this book will affirm what they have thought for a long time, namely, that God harbors no gender bias and Jesus approaches all people as children of God. Others may find this new approach to traditional interpretation thought provoking and exciting.

As an introduction to feminist interpretation of the Scriptures, this text is rich with new ideas and metaphors that touch the heart. The chapters take the