

sign towards greater human flourishing in times of disagreement, this book provides both a valuable and detailed map of where we've come from as well as a compass suggesting a way forward.

Paul Weston

Ridley Hall, Cambridge, CB3 9HG

pdaw2@cam.ac.uk

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Bryant L. Myers, *Engaging Globalization: The Poor, Christian Mission, and our Hyperconnected World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), pp. xxi + 282. \$26.99.

In this multifaceted and helpful book Bryant Myers asks 'how the Christian church and Christians will respond to globalization?' (p. 187). Myers thinks 'of globalization as an outcome and a family of processes'. Its outcome is that ideas, people, diseases, goods, money, crime, etc., move more rapidly and freely around the world than before, creating a 'new global imaginary' (p. 37). Its processes include technological advances, the information revolution and the ascendancy of liberal capitalist economics, changes in international political governance and a certain evening out of culture. These changes impact many areas of life and yet 'there is little evidence that Christians and their churches are devoting much energy to understanding globalization, biblically assessing its values and promises to us, and preparing our people to respond' (p. 5). Myers' book arose from a course at Fuller Theological Seminary. Its published form retains much of the structure and pedagogical intention of its original form, for example, in its use of diagrams, graphs, boxed quotations from key sources and discussion questions: it is an excellent classroom resource.

Myers' perspective on globalisation is summed up with appealing simplicity: 'Materially it is a good story; morally and theologically, not so much' (p. 103). The material is presented in six stages. In section 1 Myers sets the scene, partly by asserting several guiding 'theological affirmations'. In section 2 he introduces ways of construing globalisation, noting also some preliminary challenges. Section 3 proposes that there have been 'two eras of globalization', the first beginning at the dawn of history, a second taking off with the Industrial Revolution and the rise of British imperialism. Since 1989, this second era has undergone a reboot that has led to 'a new expression of globalization' (p. 99). All this has (sections 4–5) impacted significantly on human lives – with good (e.g. increased life expectancy) and bad (e.g. increasing gap between rich and poor) consequences. The final section 6 explores globalisation and the

church and its mission. How might Christians help reshape some of the underlying assumptions of globalisation, giving it a richer anthropology, a more ethical approach to the exercise and consequences of power, helping to develop a moral/ethical vision for a globalised world that, for example, takes ecological and environmental issues far more seriously?

There is a great deal to appreciate here. Myers avoids linked traps into which so many Christian commentators on social and political ethics fall. First, he does not claim that Christians have answers to the complex problems thrown up by globalisation: ‘What is the future of globalization? Will it move toward its promised land, remain an ambiguous Western phenomenon, or will it fall apart ... ? I have no idea, and neither should you’ (p. 142). The second is that he is clear salvation is what God does while the church is called simply to participate: ‘we are not expected to “be successful” or “change the world”. This is the work of the Holy Spirit’ (p. 190).

Myers’ understanding of what is taking place in globalisation and skill in analysing its processes is exemplary; this takes up the better part of the first five sections of the book, which would need only light tweaking to lose all Christian content. But he also intends to ask ‘theological questions for God’s people’ (p. 4). Early, Myers writes modestly that: ‘I have never taken a formal class in theology. I learned my theology “on the road”, in bits and pieces’ (p. xviii), and it is in its *theological* analysis that, by comparison with the rest of the book, the conclusion lacks clarity and depth. No claim is made to offer a ‘systematic theology’, but Myers identifies ‘theological affirmations’ to help us ‘to delve deeply, critically, and Christianly into the topic of globalization’ (p. 15). God is creator, sustainer, redeemer and restorer of creation; God is relational. Human beings are relational, called, reasoning, creative, moral, covenanted with God and interdependent. So God is, and we are: but if what is needed is deeper, more critical Christian thinking in relation to globalisation – and it is – a series of ‘theological affirmations’ won’t serve. We need instead *theological analysis*: of anthropology (Kelsey can help); of the roles of church and ‘governing authorities’ (Augustine and Luther can help); of justice (Aquinas can help); of love (Augustine again, Wolterstorff) etc.

And it would help to stop describing members of the first-century Church in Jerusalem as ‘former Jews’ (p. 187) and implying that Paul stopped being in the business of being Jewish when God sent him to preach Christ to Gentiles (p. 190).

Stephen J. Plant

Trinity Hall, Cambridge, CB2 1TJ

sjp27@cam.ac.uk