runaway slave interpretation of Philemon and his own suggestion (based on Allan Callahan's work) that Onesimus and Philemon are brothers, and James Perkinson also acknowledges his debt to Callahan in his own work on antebellum interpretation. Margaret Wilkerson, however, assumes Onesimus is no longer a slave, without providing a single supporting citation or footnote.

The unevenness here suggests that the book should be used with intentionality. While Fortress Press classifies the book as religion/New Testament, four of the authors, including Perkinson and Wilkerson, are not New Testament scholars. Additionally, Noel's, Johnson's, and Perkinson's essays are heavy with postmodern theory, including discussions of white normativity, Otherness, psychological analysis of hysteria, and stereotype theory. These are not easy concepts, so they should be handed out in small doses, perhaps by assigning only one essay from the book. But whichever essay is chosen, any of the essays will introduce students to the ways in which theologians use biblical scholarship, to contemporary biblical exegesis, and/or to how the histories of US race relations have influenced and continue to influence the interpretation of Philemon. As such, the book is useful for anyone teaching a course on Paul, biblical methodology, or contemporary theology.

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Biblical Blaspheming: Trials of the Sacred for a Secular Age. By Yvonne Sherwood. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. xiii + 387 pages. $99.00.
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Yvonne Sherwood, professor of biblical studies at the University of Kent, moved into a Biblical Studies Department from English literature in 1990. She found that literary criticism was present in her new department, but "the key figures spoke Greek, German, Latin and English, rather than French" (130). Sherwood's approach, by contrast, is shaped by French postmodernism, especially Jacques Derrida, who is cited more often in the index to her book than any other nonbiblical figure.

Biblical Blaspheming's opening chapter, the longest (ninety pages) and most central to the book's argument, exemplifies Sherwood's approach, always keeping one eye on the Bible and the other on contemporary British culture. She starts from (and frequently recurs to) the public response to an exhibition in 2009 at the Glasgow Museum of Modern Art, in which a performance artist tore up and ate pages of a Bible and put other pages "down

her clothes to embellish her breasts and genitalia" (9), while another exhibit invited visitors to write in a Bible, yielding scurrilous graffiti for the most part. From here, she traces the evolution in English law and culture from blasphemy as an offense against God to "hate speech" as an offense against *someone else's* religious beliefs. English blasphemy laws were abolished only in 2008, as "non-human rights compliant," while at the same time the law moved closer to treating religion as central to an individual's identity, and thus deserving the same respect as race and sexual orientation—an admittedly awkward fit, since one may change one's religion, unlike one's race and sexual orientation. The second main theme of the first chapter is how the Bible itself "'blasphemes' against modernised, benevolent versions of itself" (73). A target throughout the book is the modern "liberal Bible," left unread but venerated as a source of tolerance, inclusivity, human rights, "the amelioration and cultivation of the subject" (164), and of all that is respectable in modern political society.

The remaining nine chapters are more specialized studies that develop themes related, sometimes tangentially, to those of the first chapter. A chapter titled "Prophetic Scatology" likens the prophets to the Britart movement of the 1990s, which developed "a scatological aesthetics for the tired of seeing" (Jake and Dinos Chapman, quoted on p. 160); American readers are most likely to remember Chris Ofili's *The Holy Virgin Mary*, a black Madonna surrounded by pornographic cutouts and encrusted with elephant dung. Four-letter words not commonly found in *Horizons* reviews abound. Three chapters focus on the *Akedah*, the "binding" and (near) sacrifice of Isaac, or perhaps Ishmael, by Abraham. One chapter is a bitterly sardonic letter from Isaac to his father; another relates the event to contemporary BDSM (expanded as "bondage, discipline/dominance, sado-masochism" or the like); while the third traces the "pre-critical 'critique'" of this story within the biblical text itself and in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic tradition. In an entirely different vein, the chapter "On the Genesis of the Alliance between the Bible and Rights" traces the origins of the "liberal Bible" to the theopolitical conflicts of seventeenth-century England and argues that the biblical text itself justifies Robert Filmer's patriarchal-authoritarianism equally well as it does John Locke's democratic theory.

True to postmodern form, Sherwood deftly dodges any attempt to categorize or pigeonhole her, even as a postmodernist (e.g., 220). If she is a Jew, a Christian, an atheist, a Scientologist, she does not let on. Of what value is *Biblical Blaspheming* to readers such as the present reviewer and much of the audience of *Horizons*, who read the Bible as the word of God within a faith community? The book is often illuminating regarding both the Bible and modern culture. Like Flannery O'Connor, Sherwood reminds us that

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the Bible and its God do not sit well together with human ideas of respectability or political correctness, and that it sometimes takes a prophet to shock us into realizing that fact. We come away also with an enhanced awareness of the inescapable yet fruitful tension between text and tradition. After a while, however, *Biblical Blasphemies* comes to seem, as a French philosopher might put it, *de trop*, and I can't imagine using more than bits and pieces of it in teaching.

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Ecclesiology and Exclusion: Boundaries of Being and Belonging in Postmodern Times. Edited by Dennis M. Doyle, Timothy J. Furry, and Pascal D. Bazzell. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2012. ix + 334 pages. $38.00.
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Sometimes reading the proceedings of a conference is better than being there. One can never attend all the simultaneous sessions at a conference, but one can read all the papers when they are collected in a book. This volume collects over thirty papers from the Fifth International Conference of the Ecclesiological Investigations Research Network held at the University of Dayton in 2011. The papers are of varying length and quality, but it is easier to skim through an uninteresting essay than it is to skip out of a boring presentation—another advantage of the printed format. Topics cover a wide variety of ecclesiological exclusions including those that affect racial groups, immigrants, women, homosexuals, religious movements, sacramental practices, and interfaith activities.

Three sections include multiple essays on recent books. In the discussion of Gerard Mannion's *Ecclesiology and Postmodernity*, Dennis Doyle compares exclusivist, inclusivist, pluralist, and neoexclusivist orientations as categories for locating various ecclesiologies past and present. Paul Lakeland focuses on the grace of self-doubt as essential for ecclesiological honesty in inter- and intra-church dialogue. And Mark Chapman insightfully describes postmodern pluralism in the Anglican Communion.

In the discussion of Brian Massingale's *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church*, Leslie Picca examines the difficulties in using categorical terms such as black, white, African American, and color-blind. And Agbonkhianmeghe Orobator, writing from an African perspective, reviews the history and impact of institutional racism in American Catholicism.