

pre-eminence of penal substitution that the authors seek to avoid. Joel Green and Mark Baker's *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross* is a more important book, but the first edition dates from 2000 – more than twenty years ago. Tom Wright's *The Day the Revolution Began* is a fairly recent publication (2016), but it is also a more popular treatment of the topic. By contrast, the works that have had the most impact in the past fifty years are passed over in silence. (Here I am thinking of contributions by the likes of Jürgen Moltmann, Joanna Carlson Brown and Rebecca Parker, Colin Gunton, Kathryn Tanner, Eleonore Stump and of biblical scholars like Michael Gorman and David Moffitt.)

No one textbook can cover all the bases, and this work does a good job of providing readers with an overview of many of the most important historic accounts of atonement up to the twentieth century. I certainly profited by reading it and will recommend to students that they consult it – perhaps before reading some more recent work on the topic.

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Aaron P. Edwards, *Taking Kierkegaard Back to Church: The Ecclesial Implications of the Gospel*

(Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2022), pp. xiii + 195. £21.00/\$26.00

Carl S. Hughes

Texas Lutheran University, Seguin, TX, USA (chughes@tlu.edu)

To seek the 'ecclesial implications of the gospel' in a figure who did not attend church for the last four years of his life, described the church as a hospital slowly poisoning its patients, compared the clergy to cannibals living off the flesh of true Christians, and refused to take communion on his death bed is a bold project. Yet Edwards reminds us that Kierkegaard had seminary training in practical theology, came close to ordination more than once, and wrote nearly half of his writings in the form of sermons (some of which he actually preached). In this book, he reads the former dimension of Kierkegaard through the prism of the latter. He even tries to imagine 'what a Kierkegaardian pastorate might have looked like' (p. xii). The book offers a resolutely theological reading of Kierkegaard as well as a practical application of his thought to Christian life today.

The book's scope is at once historical, exegetical and constructive. It contextualises Kierkegaard in relationship to Luther and Calvin and Barth, expositis his views on a range of theological topics, and enlists him in attacks on relativism, postmodernism and other tendencies the author perceives as threats to the church today. Edwards identifies as an Evangelical Christian and is committed to a high view of scriptural authority, an emphasis on individual guilt and forgiveness and a lived affiliation with the church. At times, it is difficult to distinguish the author's own views from those he attributes to Kierkegaard. Although Kierkegaard rarely, if ever, speaks in any of these terms, Edwards assures us of Kierkegaard's belief in the unity and perspicuity

of scripture, the fundamentally objective nature of Christian truth, the total depravity of sinful human beings, and the need for christological atonement to ward off divine wrath. In my view, the author's investment in construing Kierkegaard as an advocate for Evangelical doctrine can sometimes lead him to give short shrift to what makes Kierkegaard's theological voice unique. If Kierkegaard is best described as part of the mainstream of Protestant orthodoxy, then why is his writing – with all its polyphony, indirection and irony – so different in form from that of the likes of Luther and Calvin and Barth, to say nothing of Evangelical theologians today?

The book is at its most speculative (and polemical) when it applies Kierkegaard to contemporary controversies. Edwards' reading yields confident pronouncements against post-modern theology, the emergent church movement, the 'new homiletics' of Fred Craddock, and even online worship. Interrogating what Kierkegaard's view of contemporary religious phenomena would be can be valuable as an intellectual exercise, but Edwards' applications of him seem unlikely to persuade many who do not already share Edwards' own views.

In the last chapter, Edwards develops a 'tentative Kierkegaardian ecclesiology' with a clear-eyed acknowledgement of Kierkegaard's negative comments about the institutional church (p. 157). He concludes that 'far from being anti-ecclesial... Kierkegaard's reflections remain vital to ecclesiological discussions in the twenty-first century' (p. 177). Reading this, I found myself torn between admiring the intrepidity of Edwards' against-the-grain analysis (which includes a nuanced and original account of the Kierkegaardian theme of the individual) and wondering why we need to look to Kierkegaard for ecclesiology at all. Given that he explicitly renounces systematicity, describes his work as a corrective rather than a norm, and characterises himself as one voice in a vast and diverse theological choir, might it be more 'Kierkegaardian' to accept that the theme of Christian community is deficient in his authorship and look for more fulsome and sympathetic treatments of it elsewhere? Surely one can affirm Kierkegaard's value as a living resource without being obligated to treat him as an authority on every aspect of theology.

Even if Kierkegaard's insights on the subject of the church are limited, however, this book succeeds in showing that he is worth engaging as a conversation partner on this score. Like Kierkegaard himself, the book is a resource even for those who, like me, do not agree with the author's every conclusion.

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Mouchir Basile Aoun, *The Arab Christ: Towards an Arab Christian Theology of Conviviality*

trans. Sarah Patey (London: Gingko, 2022), pp. xv + 384. \$70.00

Najib George Awad

Center for Comparative Theology and Social Issues, Universität Bonn, Bonn, Germany
(nawad@uni-bonn.de)

Mouchir Aoun, the Lebanese Greek Orthodox theologian and philosopher, produced the first draft of this volume in Arabic twenty years ago. It appeared in French version