

## FAMILY AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS

In this book, Petruschka Schaafsma offers an innovative appraisal of family. Eschewing the framework of worry and renewal that currently dominates family studies, she instead explores the topic through the concepts of 'givenness' and 'dependence'. 'Givenness' highlights the fact that family is not chosen; 'dependence' refers to being intimately included in each other's identities and lives. Both experiences are challenging, especially in a contemporary context, where independence and freedom to shape one's own life have become accepted ideals. Schaafsma shows the impasses to which these ideals lead in several disciplines – theology, philosophy, sociology, social anthropology and care ethics. She moves constructively beyond them by tapping literary, artistic and biblical sources for their insights on family. Grounded in a theological approach to family as 'mystery' rather than 'problem', she develops an understanding of the current controversial character of family that accounts for its ordinary and transcendent character. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

PETRUSCHKA SCHAAFSMA is Professor of Theological Ethics at the Protestant Theological University, the Netherlands. She runs a research programme in ethics and theology on the meaning of family as part of a project on morality in times of pluralism and polarisation, and she is the editor of *The Transcendent Character of the Good*.



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Christian ethics has increasingly assumed a central place within academic theology. At the same time the growing power and ambiguity of modern science and the rising dissatisfaction within the social sciences about claims to value neutrality have prompted renewed interest in ethics within the secular academic world. There is, therefore, a need for studies in Christian ethics which, as well as being concerned with the relevance of Christian ethics to the present-day secular debate, are well informed about parallel discussions in recent philosophy, science, or social science. *New Studies in Christian Ethics* aims to provide books that do this at the highest intellectual level and demonstrate that Christian ethics can make a distinctive contribution to this debate – either in moral substance or in terms of underlying moral justifications titles published in the series.

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*(continued after the index)*



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