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Book Review: Taking Every Thought Captive: Forty Years of the Christian Scholar's Review

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Don W. King (ed.)

Taking Every Thought Captive:

Forty Years of the Christian Scholar's Review

Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 2011 pb 384pp \$25.00

ISBN: 978-0-89112-547-1

King's introduction provides the answer to the most compelling and perhaps perplexing question that comes to mind when one picks up a book of articles published from 1970 through 2010. Why? After all, in the day of search engines and electronic data banks, it does not require much of a hunt to unearth older and out-of-print articles. Furthermore, in the academy we often overlook anything with a publication date beyond ten years ago simply because it becomes "historical" and newer scholars have offered alternate perspectives while building upon the contributions of our more distant colleagues, as they should. However, King makes it clear that his purpose lies in the pursuit of the finest contributions over the last forty years, hence the purpose of this collection of articles bound into a single edition. According to King, *Christian Scholar's Review* published over 600 manuscripts during that time period, and he has chosen twenty-four to include in this volume. With that understanding, one might assume the book holds a treasure trove of the very best in Christian works.

The two-part organization of the book lets readers choose between articles that give attention to issues of Christian higher education or those that focus on disciplinary integration with faith. Readers will recognize the names of those, such as Marsden and Noll, who have shaped the faith-integration conversation, both inspiring and provoking emerging Christian scholars. Others, such as those writing in specific content areas, may not be as familiar to those who have dedicated careers and scholarship to only faith and learning integration within Christian institutions. The bifurcation of Christian scholarship into the two classifications offers fuel to those who argue that we actually have no objectively defined agreement on the demarcation of Christian scholarship and faith and learning integration, but the delineation does help readers find the sources that interest them or relate to their fields.

Marsden's article, "The State of Evangelical Christian Scholarship," written in 1988, has not changed. Poor humor aside, the pivotal work shows its age in metaphor, and the inclusion in this volume continues the backlash against mainstream culture. Henry resumes that theme with his comments about atheism, not AIDS, as "the worst affliction of the modern age" (p. 29). The editors do include work that, while not a lament on current cultural and religious challenges, argues for a singular model of Christian education along with the "willingness to not only assert the superiority of our traditions" (p. 74), as Marsden implores, but also to define faith and learning integration. For example, the article written by Wolterstorff in 1980 supports a call for a single motivating factor that scholars can use to distinguish the worth of Christian scholarship that he defines as "the contribution of scholarship to the cause of justice-inshalom" (p. 47). Furthermore, Hasker attempts to map faith integration to disciplines, demonstrating singular thinking in this area. The excellent contribution by Hauerwas departs from the aforementioned topics and concentrates on virtues. Although not contributing to ways Christian scholars can enhance practice, the work does provide inspiration we can bring into our work as Christian educators.

The second half of the book contains thirteen articles written from the perspectives of the disciplines. Philosophy, natural science, and history ordinarily provide content that easily connects with issues of faith. Contributions from writers in mathematics and business make this section of the book more inclusive than initially anticipated. That said, Mouw's article, from the discipline of philosophy, is in direct juxtaposition to those in the first part of the book. Mouw advocates for a wider perspective and warns Christian scholars away from ethnocentrism in their work by asking for an honest evaluation of our own cultural and philosophical unrighteousness. Chaplin's article comes from the discipline of political science and supports Mouw in the statement that "not all liberal thought is secular." Chaplin recognizes and argues in favor of diversity, or pluralism, within Christianity. These last two articles alone are worth the price of the book.

King's attempt to delineate excellence through the sampling of twenty-four consummate articles leaves the reader a bit underwhelmed, perhaps because we have read many of these articles before they appeared in this volume. Not only have we made these arguments part of our own contributions to the conversations about Christian education and scholarship, but as a profession we have not made great strides in this area in comparison to the scholarship other disciplines. We still wrestle with identifying qualifiers for Christian scholarship, perhaps because of the homogeneous perspective some have on Christianity, and writers still present the integration of faith and learning either as having to be done in a singularly right way, or as a personal struggle with faith attempting to reconcile different ethical perspectives and philosophies. Christian scholars in this era of change are searching for opportunities to read the work of those who have contributed substance to their fields and tangibly improved God's world today. We are still waiting.

Amy Lynn Dee