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Kalantzis and Lee's "Christian Political Witness" (Book Review)

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Christian Political Witness,

edited by G. Kalantzis and G.W. Lee. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014.

239 pp. \$26.00. ISBN 9780830840519

Reviewed by Micah W. Kubic, Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, Kansas City, MO

In *Christian Political Witness*, Kalantzis and Lee present twelve essays originally written for the 2013 Wheaton Theology Conference. Each of the essays approaches a different aspect of the relationship between church and state, critically analyzing what it means to be Christian within a political context. The fundamental premise of the book is that “Christians must remind themselves that the primary locus of Christian political activity is the church” and that “the church’s politics cannot accommodate the privatization of religion [...] and the church is called to public witness” (p. 11). The contributors argue that an engaged church is urgently needed in the West, where the church is perceived to be in retreat and many religious leaders have fruitlessly sought to reverse this trend by de-emphasizing political issues. The book makes clear that such de-emphasis runs counter to the mandates of scripture, to the actual practices of the early church, and to the scale of the threats offered up by modern life. The essays presented in *Christian Political Witness* come from conflicting religious, theological, and ideological perspectives, but this serves to better demonstrate that political witness is not an ancillary element of the Christian life, but rather central to it. Particularly worthy of attention is the essay by Timothy Gombis, which convincingly refutes conventional wisdom about the supposedly apolitical, “other-worldly” theology of Paul. Also of note is David Gushee’s contribution, which notes the lack of a strong social teaching tradition among evangelical Christians. Gushee makes a strong argument for evangelical Christians to join Roman Catholics and mainline Christians in developing such a tradition, and sketches out some thoughts on what the central tenets of evangelical political witness should look like. Not all of the contributions are so erudite or persuasive, but *Christian Political Witness* is a significant contribution to the literature.

Christians in an Age of Wealth: A Biblical Theology of Stewardship,

by Craig Blomberg, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013. 271 pp. \$24.99.

ISBN 9780310318989

*Reviewed by Jeffery S. Gates, Information Services Librarian,
Cedarville University, Cedarville, OH*

In the pages of this well-researched, but readable, book from the *Biblical Theology of Life* series, evangelical theologian and prolific author Craig Blomberg discusses the place and purpose of wealth and material possessions in a Christian’s life. The author begins with the history and background of giving among Christians in the