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Witherington's "Making a Meal of It: Rethinking the Theology of the Lord's Supper" (Book Review)

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Love Letters from the Edge is similar to Sarah Young's popular meditation books *Jesus Calling* and *Dear Jesus*. However, it aims at a much narrower audience.

Love Letters from the Edge is appropriate for libraries serving Christian counseling, trauma treatment, and women's issues programs, and for those that collect Christian meditation books.

Making a Meal of It: Rethinking the Theology of the Lord's Supper,

by Ben Witherington III. Waco, TX: Baylor Press, 2007. 160 pp. \$29.96.

ISBN 9781602581906

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Ben Witherington, who is no stranger to the shelves of libraries in theological higher education, offers in this slender volume a deep and expansive view of the practice of the Lord's Supper. The reader is brought through an engaging theological-historical exploration of the Lord's Supper with the goal of better understanding the practice in the present proceeding from the historical context. This book is particularly helpful towards growing an understanding of the history and heritage of the sacrament and seeing the broader context of the practice. Locating the Lord's Supper in the historical context of a meal allows Witherington to explore the historical practices as well as some of the early church's issues and controversies in order to draw some conclusions for what that means for current present practice. Witherington pursues the sacramental view which sees things whose meaning is only completely fulfilled if they promote the good of communion with God and with other people. It is through this view that the reader is encouraged to engage with the Lord's Supper "as an active sacrament ... of taking, eating, drinking" (p. 134). Witherington's historical and theological analyses are enhanced by personal reflection and insight which increase the accessibility and relatability of this book. The author offers specific suggestions, particularly in the last chapter, to help believers re-view the Lord's Supper. That is, by partaking in the meal one must recognize the connection with Christ and also with each other, understanding the idea of communion as not only vertical but also horizontal. The taking of communion is not an isolated or merely spiritual act. Rather it should proceed out from and as a reminder of existing relationships both corporately and to Christ as Savior. The reader is reminded that believers commune with each other as well as with God and thus need to be caring for those relationships regularly, not just once a week. This book is an excellent reminder and encouragement to engage in and practice the Lord's Supper as a way to "learn to be better dinner guests, waiting on one another, communing together with one eye on heaven and one on each other" (p. 142).