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## Kostenberger, Bock, and Chatraw's "Truth Matters: Confident Faith in a Confusing World" (Book Review)

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### **Truth Matters: Confident Faith in a Confusing World,**

by Andreas Köstenberger, Darrell Bock, and Josh Chatraw. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 2014. 188 pp. \$9.00. ISBN 9781433682261

*Reviewed by Robert Burgess, Digital Resources Librarian,  
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX.*

The debate over biblical inerrancy and authority of scripture has been at the forefront of Christian academia for over a century. It has become an even more popular topic among the general population with the publication of *The DaVinci Code* by Dan Brown. Modern liberal religious scholars, such as Bart Ehrman, have gained lots of attention with their claims that the gospels were fabricated and full of errors. Many scholars have claimed that the divinity of Jesus was not ascribed to Him until several centuries after the crucifixion. The authors wrote this book in response to these claims in order to help teenagers understand the various arguments and how they can trust the Bible. Andreas Köstenberger and Darrel Bock are esteemed evangelical scholars and New Testament professors at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and Dallas Theological Seminary respectively. They have both written extensively on the New Testament canon. Josh Chatraw is a pastor of preaching and students at First Baptist Church in Dublin, Georgia.

The focus of this book is to be an apologetic book for teenagers who will soon be leaving their conservative homes and churches to go to college where their views on the Bible will most likely be challenged by professors in an academic environment. The authors address many philosophical and doctrinal issues such as the justice of God, perceived contradictions, the copies of the original New Testament texts, Biblical canon, and assurance in salvation. Each chapter is written in a concise and engaging style that will maintain the interest of young readers. The authors present many well-researched and informed responses to liberal criticisms; however, at times the authors focus specifically on Ehrman. The book would be stronger if it also combatted claims of other New Testament critics. The chapter explaining suffering in the world with a just God would have been improved if it could have included arguments by famous atheists and agnostics such as Richard Dawkins and Bill Maher, who have become increasingly popular in both academic and popular audiences.

The authors clearly accomplish their goals established in the introduction. The task of addressing concerns about the authority of Scripture in modern culture is never easy. Also, the authors are able to cover a lot of material with brevity. Youth ministers could use this as an informative and interesting book study series for teenagers. The book would also serve as a good tool for discipleship of teenagers by ministers or

parents. Each chapter includes discussion questions that allow the reader to review what they learned in order to evaluate the information they have been given. It is also a valuable purchase for any student who graduates from high school. This fall, the authors are publishing an expanded and more academic edition to this book called *Truth in a Culture of Doubt: Engaging Skeptical Challenges to the Bible*.

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**The United Methodist Deacon: Ordained to  
Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice,**

by Margaret Ann Crain. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2014. 134 pp. \$16.99.

ISBN 9781426776113

*Reviewed by Mary Ann Buhler, Director of Library Services,  
Manhattan Christian College, Manhattan, KS.*

After having been the organist at a Baptist church for 17 years, in 2004 I started playing organ at a Methodist church. As a boy my father was a member of a small Methodist church, but until I joined this church I had virtually no experience with that denomination. Therefore, when I saw this book in the list of books to be reviewed, I jumped at the chance to find out what a Methodist deacon does.

The author, Margaret Ann Crain, is a professor of Christian education at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. In addition to drawing upon her own experiences as a Methodist deacon, she interviewed numerous deacons about how they became interested in becoming a deacon and how they served once they became ordained. Throughout the book she gives real-life examples drawn from the conversations that she had with those deacons.

After providing the history behind the office of deacon, Dr. Crain discusses how a deacon is different from a regular pastor, and then delves into exploring their duties. While deacons are ordained, they do not just work in a church, but provide the bridge between the world and the church. For example, some are teachers or college professors, while others may work with the poor or serve as a social worker at a local hospital.

Of course, this relatively easy-to-read book would be excellent for a Methodist church or college library. Because of its thoroughness, it would be an excellent resource for anyone interested in becoming a deacon. Besides the Methodist connection, though, it would be valuable for any library desiring to provide information about the Methodist hierarchy.