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Bryce's "Fingerprint of God: The church is a living body" (book review)

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Book Reviews



Bryce, R. (2018) *Fingerprint of God: The church is a living body*. Dallas, TX: Brown Christian Press. 184 pp. \$21.95 ISBN 9781612542690

In *Fingerprint of God*, Ron Bryce, a practicing emergency room physician, uses his knowledge of the human body as a metaphor for the Church. Bryce takes what Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 12:27 “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it,” and analyzes the Church as a living body as opposed to a business or organization. He claims that there are similarities between the Body of Christ (the Church) and the human body because they reflect the nature of the God who created them both. It is due to this “Divine Imprint” that the Church exhibits the characteristics of life. Where man can fashion organizations and businesses, only God can create life, and that is why we should view the Church as a living body.

Using his medical experience and knowledge, Bryce takes the attributes of a living human body to illustrate how the Church is supposed to work. When he discusses the church, he is as concerned with the local individual church as he is the universal Church. The same attributes and needs that make a living person and the same ills that affect the body also make up the local church. Bryce discusses how each body part has its own function and may look differently but all body parts must work in harmony with each other for the body to function properly. For instance, in the chapter “Unity amid Diversity”, he uses cells to describe that a healthy Church is both diverse and united. Whereas, there are a number of different cells that work together to keep the body working properly, it is essential for a healthy Church to have a diverse group of members with diverse talents working in unity.

Bryce has done an admirable job assisting people in their understanding of how the Church can be seen as a living body. His assertion does hold merit; the Bible describes the Church using human imagery. For instance, along with the body of Christ, the Bible uses the image of the bride of Christ as an illustration of the Church. In the book of Hosea, Israel (the Old Testament Church) is represented by Hosea’s unfaithful wife Gomer. However, Bryce would have made a stronger argument if he would have drawn upon traditional theological views concerning the doctrine of the Church and its relationship to the body of Christ. There are better resources than

Fingerprint of God if one is looking for a deeper understanding of the doctrine of the Church and its connection to Christ. That being said, with discussion questions at the end of each chapter, *Fingerprint of God* would be a thought-provoking book for small groups and is accessible to undergraduates and above.

Reviewer

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