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REVIEW OF DEREK BROWN, *ON
QUAKERS AND PASTORS* (BARCLAY
PRESS, 2019)

RUTHIE SEVERANCE

On Quakers and Pastors delves into the paradox of being a pastor of a Friends church. Quakers from all backgrounds may be interested, but this book is specifically aimed at Evangelical Friends pastors. Derek Brown highlights the balance needed in combining evangelicalism with Quaker beliefs such as equality, simplicity, and silence. Brown weaves history and theology throughout the book, providing context for the struggles many Friends churches have had in supporting pastors and defining pastoral expectations. He succinctly lays out Friends pastoral theology, making *On Quakers and Pastors* an easy-to-use resource for pastors and other church leaders, both to understand the theology of Friends and develop a set of unified expectations for pastors.

Historically, early Quakers made strong complaints against clergy. They referred to them as “hirelings” who focused more on accruing wealth and power than caring for their fellow believers’ needs. They saw a hierarchy that did not resemble the early church, which valued the priesthood of all believers. They were especially concerned that religious leaders showed no sign of valuing spiritual growth, either in seminary studies or within their congregations. Brown points out that using the context of early Quakers’ complaints against clergy can guide modern Friends in shaping the role of a pastor. He compares the guidelines that various yearly meetings have set for pastoral expectations and finds some consistent parameters. Some of the most important include authority without domination, sharing spiritual care with elders, and lay participation in worship. Each of these show that the pastor is meant to work in concert with the elders and others in the congregation, rather than being the sole spiritual leader. This differs from many other denominations’ pastoral roles and illustrates the Quaker commitment to equality within the church.

Brown realizes the tension that is caused when yearly meetings are not unified. By embracing historic testimonies and Christ-centered orthodoxy, yearly meetings can develop a uniquely Quaker identity, putting Jesus' commands into action. That shared understanding of Quaker tenets can empower local churches to freely meet the needs of their own communities. He admonishes churches that are filling ministry positions to value the spiritual equality that is a large component of Quaker identity, making extra effort to put women into leadership.

The last third of the book centers on three of the basic pastoral expectations: proclaiming, leading, and shepherding. The chapter entitled "Proclaim" includes preaching, as well as teaching, evangelism, and open worship. In each of these areas, Brown illuminates ways to remain true to Quaker heritage, fostering a community that listens for the Spirit and gives openly to all, without obligation or despair. The other two chapters envision a church that creatively partners with God, expanding the boundaries of His kingdom. Good leadership comes as pastors spend time seeking God's direction. That mission can unite and energize the church, giving them confidence in God's faithfulness, and to recognize the gifts of others and encourage each member of the body to glorify God with their gifts.

This book would have benefited from a stronger emphasis on the diversity of Evangelical Friends. Discussion about interracial congregations would allow current pastors to think about ways to minister to those who might feel inadvertently excluded by certain behaviors or attitudes. In the same vein, although I was glad that gender was specifically addressed, I felt that the chapter would have had more impact if it included observations from current female pastors. A church should reflect its community make-up and should show a Christ-centered way of working towards equality, so that all believers are emboldened to minister in God's kingdom.

Overall I enjoyed this thought-provoking look at Evangelical Friends. Although the book's main goal is to illustrate both the ideal and actual role of pastor in Evangelical Friends, the author is intent on providing the historical and theological background

needed to understand his premise, drawing from early Quaker theology and the fervent evangelicalism that swept America in the 1800s. As a result, we see not only the sometimes-fractured history of Evangelical Friends, but a vision of Friends' future that resembles George Fox's on Pendle Hill: a people from all places being gathered into a priesthood.