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DiIulio's "Bring Back the Bureaucrats: Why More Federal Workers Will Lead to Better (and Smaller!) Government" (Book Review)

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Part five (chapters 24–28) is entitled “From Exegesis to Proclamation” and these essays attempt to move the reader beyond the historical and theoretical issues of interpretation toward the application of the biblical text in proclamation – both contextualization and preaching. Chapter 24, while not designated “theological interpretation,” more or less fits into that recent trend, and – along with the following chapter – could have been placed in parts two or three. The last three chapters (26–28) properly deal with sermon preparation and preaching.

The after matter includes a lengthy glossary of terms in biblical studies, a helpful (but now dated) bibliography of biblical reference books, and a short index.

Comparing this title with more recent comprehensive introductions, it seems to fall short at two places: first, while the many authors are theologically and methodologically in the same camp, there is no guiding interpretive paradigm as with some textbooks by two or three authors (e.g., Grasping God’s Word [Zondervan, 2012] and Invitation to Biblical Interpretation [Kregel, 2011]) and of similar length. And, as a result of the many authors, the essays are uneven with some skewing technical and others overlapping in content. So, other than attempting to be logically ordered, the essays don’t feed into a controlling interpretive paradigm, and thus make it more akin to a handbook on interpretation. Second, the book may be too long for most introductory courses on interpretation, but not comprehensive enough for graduate theological students. As such, I doubt many who teach hermeneutics would use this book only or in its entirety. At best, professors may select a few of the better essays from it, but would not require the whole volume. Shorter, non-specialist introductions to biblical interpretation (like Robert Stein’s A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible [Baker, 2011] or Robert Plummer’s 40 Questions about Interpreting the Bible [Kregel, 2010]) might serve beginners better.
intends to follow this book with another, more in-depth study of “American political development” (p. xii). Here, DiIulio makes a persuasive argument for hiring more highly qualified and trained bureaucrats in order to tame the “Leviathan by Proxy” (p. 21). His phrase refers to the government mess composed of overworked bureaucrats as well as myriad contractors who are not held accountable for poor performance or for lobbying congress for their own interests (p. 16). He suggests that having more bureaucrats would lead to better management of monies and increased security (pp. 64, 68). Besides increasing the number of official government workers, he proposes that the executive and legislative branches perform their constitutional roles rather than – as they are currently doing – trade them with each other (pp. 93-97). In the final chapters, E. J. Dionne Jr. and Charles Murray offer their liberal and libertarian (respectively) critiques. While all agree that the American government requires dramatic improvement, they disagree on the nature of the problem and the solutions (p. 131). DiIulio ends by summarizing their responses and further clarifying his position. Recommended for public libraries, universities, and anyone interested in political science.


Reviewed by Hannah Bitner, Librarian, Calvary Bible College and Calvary Theological Seminary, Kansas City, MO

Charles Quarles presents Buried Hope or Risen Savior: The Search for the Jesus Tomb as a response to Simcha Jacobovici’s documentary The Lost Tomb of Jesus, which aired in 2007, and the book that accompanied the documentary, The Jesus Family Tomb. Both the documentary and book claim the tomb of Jesus has been found along with His ossuary.

An introduction from Charles Quarles explains the background of the Talpiot tomb, the documentary, and why a response is needed. Next, experts from the fields of archaeology, Jewish ossuaries, statistics, and New Testament studies each write a chapter in response to the claims made by Jacobovici. Finally, a conclusion by Darrell Bock summarizes each scholar’s arguments along with his own observations.

Steven Ortiz begins the response to Jacobovici’s findings by examining the idea that the original excavation process left much to be desired. Craig Evans looks at the burial rites during New Testament times and claims about markings on the tomb and ossuary being early Christian symbols. David Bauckham addresses the assertion that the names found in the Talpiot tomb were virtually unique to the family of