Sanders and Issler's "Jesus in Trinitarian Perspective" (Book Review)

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Whereas the author does “little more than glide over the surface of a long and complex history” (p. 113), he expects the reader to have some knowledge of certain complex concepts, such as understanding Marian theology and who the Jansenists were. Even though the book is clearly a synopsis of the order’s history, O’Malley provides a valuable section following the epilogue for further reading targeting those who wish to study the subject more closely and in depth. This book would be a good choice for readers seeking to gain a cursory understanding of the Jesuits.


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Jesus in Trinitarian Perspective explores the triune nature of God, with emphasis on the person and work of Christ. It does this through a detailed study of Scripture, history, and philosophy, ambitiously accomplishing its goals in only 225 pages of text.

Though the arguments are thorough, erudite, and, I believe, very compelling, the dense writing (not to mention subject matter) will prove a barrier for some who desire to explore the topics while lacking the background, terminology, or patience to read through this work (labeled by its cover as, “An Intermediate Christology”). However, there are helps provided to make it more understandable, including: chapter summaries, “big ideas” to glean (called “Axioms for Christological Study”), and a list of key terms at the beginning of each chapter.

Notwithstanding the caveats mentioned above, I would highly recommend this work as a handy reference for understanding what Scripture teaches – and how philosophy and church history support the Scriptures – regarding the Triune God, especially as He relates to the incarnation and the atonement. Throughout the work, the Scriptures are treated as inerrant and authoritative, and the contributors are clearly competent in their disciplines, well aware of the issues and contrary viewpoints. As such, I have difficulty imagining a reader walking away unconvinced (or at least unchallenged) by the main tenets argued, and I believe that the church has received a gift in these studies – albeit one requiring patience and determination to truly appreciate.