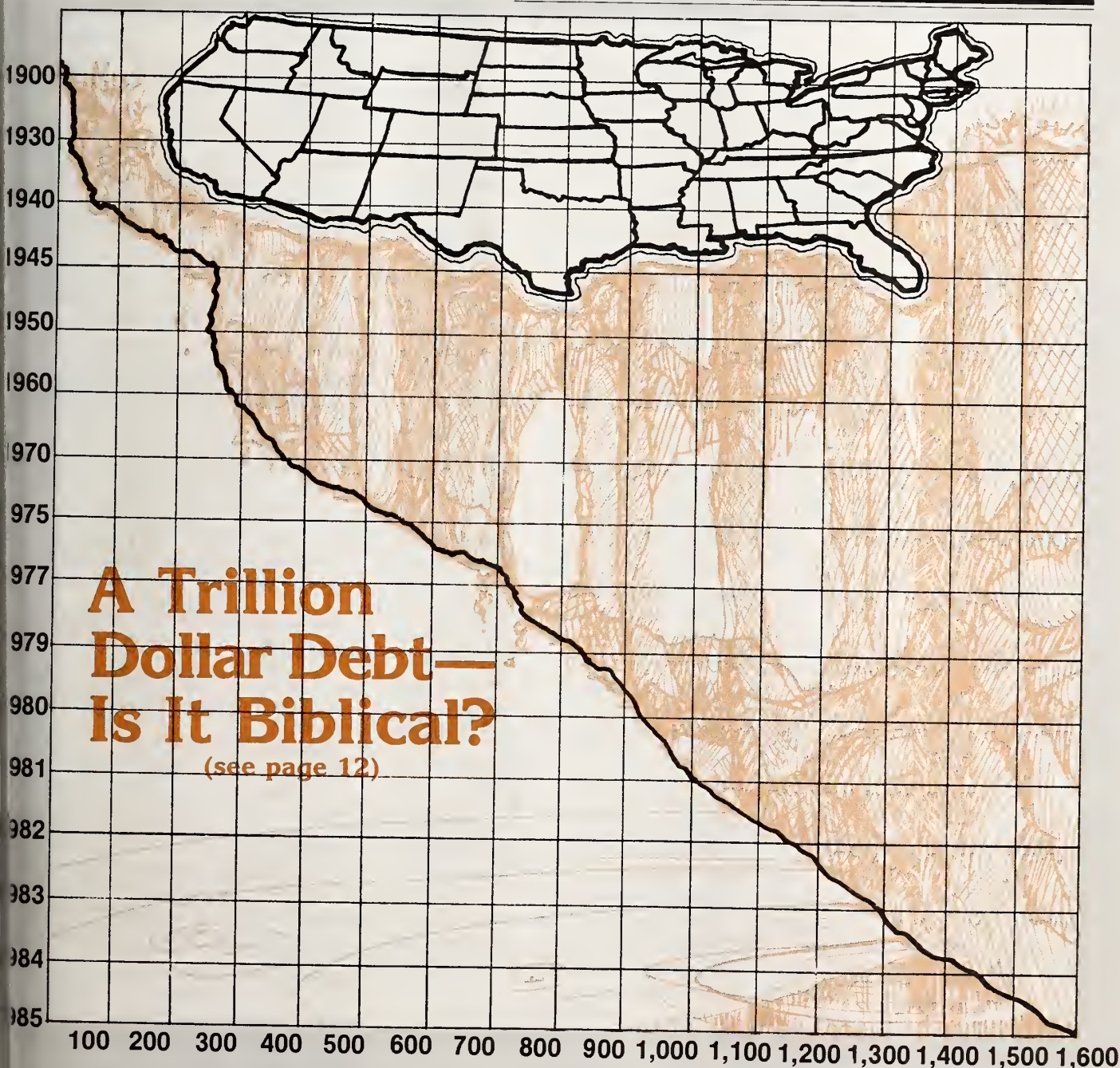


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IS LOYAL TO SCRIPTURE AND THE REFORMED FAITH



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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOR FEBRUARY 27
CIRCLE BIBLE STUDY FOR MARCH

always careful, and some of the author's wording is cloudy enough to obscure his meaning.

Dr. Moule's forthright opposition to Biblical inerrancy, his denial of the principle of *sola scriptura*, and a persistently functional understanding of the spirit (e.g. "a useful word when monotheism is struggling to formulate both the transcendent aloneness of God and yet also, paradoxically, his accessibility to man") all contribute to regarding this book as a largely unhelpful contribution to the field of pneumatology.

Dr. Pache's study, coming from a clearly evangelical commitment, is a vastly superior work to that of Dr. Moule. In a real sense, it is a "systematic theology" of the Holy Spirit, as it puts together Biblical references to every aspect of the Spirit's person and work, and considers them in a logical and interesting order.

The theology, however, is hardly that of historic Calvinism! Dr. Pache's Arminianism is everywhere evident (e.g. "God intervenes to pardon, regenerate, and sanctify us only when we place ourselves in His hands . . .") as is his dispensationalism ("It was at Pentecost that the Church was founded").

Misleading statements abound (e.g. ". . . the work of regeneration (is) never . . . completed within [some]"), as do many other examples of flawed doctrine, thus making the book of dubious value for one seriously asking the many questions which the author attempts to answer. How much we are in need of a counterpart to this book, with the same readability, yet from a Reformed perspective.

Of these books, *Perspectives on Pentecost* is in a class by itself. Richard B. Gaffin Jr., professor of New Testament at Westminster Seminary, presents us with a thorough exegetical and theological introduction to the meaning of Pentecost in the history of redemption and for the Church in its calling. He carefully distinguishes between the *gift* of the Spirit and *gifts* of the Spirit, then offers some basic perspectives on the latter.

The treatment is an exegetical sirloin steak rather than an anecdotal pudding, but the value is in kind! The bulk of Dr. Gaffin's material is a careful, Scripturally reasoned treatment of the meaning of prophecy and tongues and the question of their ces-

sation.

Dr. Gaffin holds to a traditional Reformed position (i.e. revelatory gifts ceased with the completion of the canon. Prophecy and tongues are revelatory gifts and have, therefore, ceased), but he defends the position with far greater theological precision than many. If one disagrees with the "cessation view" he must reckon with this presentation.

The reader will wish, however, that the thoughts in the author's final chapter ("Quenching the Spirit?") were expanded. "Charismatic Christians challenge the entire church with the need for searching attention to worship and congregational life that ministers to the *whole* believer and involves *all* believers," he writes. Constructive responses to this challenge, within the boundaries of the Reformed faith, must be regarded as one of our greatest needs today. *Perspectives on Pentecost* is an invaluable beginning.

Every Reformed pastor should have this book, read it, and recommend it to others. †

NEW TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES, Vols. I and II, by John A. Bengel. Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1905 pp. \$39.95 set. Reviewed by the Rev. Thomas E. Troxell, instructor, Redeemer Theological Seminary, Mesa, Ariz.

Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752) was a German pietist pastor whose monumental *Gnomon Novi Testamenti* has now been reissued by Kregel. His careful and reverent study of the New Testament led to the formation of some critical skills which became the basis for later New Testament study.

It was Mr. Bengel who first rated the many variant readings of the Greek text. He also sought to standardize the punctuation and introduced paragraphing to the Greek text. In spite of his orthodoxy many looked on him as an enemy, seeing him as "tampering" with the text.

This present edition is a reissue of Kregel's 1971 edition originally published as *New Testament Word Studies*. John Wesley had the honor of introducing the author's work to the English speaking world. Indeed, Mr. Wesley's own *Notes Upon the New Testament* owed a great debt to Mr. Bengel's work.

There can be no question that this work is of continuing value to all who

are serious New Testament students. The carefulness of thought and sincere love for the Word have given this work the accolade "classic."

While not recommended as a set to be purchased for starter purposes, it is a welcome addition for those who desire to increase their libraries. Here is material for Sunday school teachers, pastors, students, and for all with a few dollars to invest in good books. †

COMMENTARY ON EPHESIANS, by J. Armitage Robinson. Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, Mich. 314 pp. \$12.95. Reviewed by the Rev. Thomas E. Troxell, instructor, Redeemer Theological Seminary, Mesa, Ariz.

This commentary on the Greek text, a reprint of the 1904 edition, is for the general Christian community. Those not skilled in Greek will benefit from a short (14-page) introduction followed by the author's translation and exposition of the text. Here is solid material for personal Bible study, Sunday school teaching, and preaching.

For those who can use the Greek text, the second part of this commentary includes notes on the text, extended notes on words and phrases, notes on variant readings, and an index of Greek words. A subject index fills out the remaining pages.

Joseph Armitage Robinson (1858-1933) was educated and later taught at Cambridge. He served for a time as domestic chaplain to Bishop J. B. Lightfoot, himself a commentator of great worth. The author's great renown as a scholar and preacher resulted in his serving as dean of Westminster Abbey (1902-1911), where he influenced both government and church.

Those seeking to fill out their libraries with solid exegetical and practical commentaries could well purchase this volume. †

Editorial—from p. 23

where it went and where it is going.

Whatever skills stood me in good stead as I went on to cope with the rigors of a Ph.D. in church history under another hard but fair taskmaster, Ray C. Petry at Duke University, I got from Dr. Robbie. May the Lord raise up others like him.—G. AIKEN TAYLOR. †

Keep Balanced!

A balanced view of God, a balanced view of the Bible, a balanced view of Jesus Christ, is obtained only with balanced spiritual eyesight.

Some people, of course, are totally blind as far as spiritual truth is concerned. But even among believers there are many who see only imperfectly, intermittently and partially.

We see this limitation, for instance, with regard to the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. Some Christians see in God only an arbitrary dictator who sets His own course and is unmoved by the pleas of His people. This is wrong. God is stern, indeed, but He loves and listens to His people and is concerned with their plight.

There are others whose view of the church is greatly distorted. They believe theirs is the only true church and anybody who does not belong to their own denomination cannot belong to Jesus Christ. They take the position, "If you are not of us, you are not of Christ."

Oh, my friends, dark spots in our hearts can bring division and bitterness, can put us out of fellowship with wonderful Christians who may belong to some other church than ours.

Expand your view, become a far-sighted Christian instead of a near-sighted Pharisee.

There are Christians who overemphasize the doctrine of baptism, believing a person cannot be a Christian unless he is baptized in their own group and by their own ministers. If that were true, Christ did not tell the truth to the thief on the cross when He said, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43).

Watch out for overemphasis on a particular doctrine with which some other genuine Christian may differ. We must be extremely careful lest we limit God.

Take the Puritan doctrine, for instance. There are some people today who won't read anything but Puritan writers, as if modern writers and preachers who lived after the Puritan era have had nothing to offer to the understanding of the Word of God.

The Puritans had their times and

today theologians and Bible teachers have their own time. Take an enlarged view of the spectrum of Christian history with regard to the Word of God and of Christ as having different members in His body, all of whom must appreciate one another.

We are different, but the hand, the foot must appreciate the guidance of the eye and ear to avoid danger. We are to work together. Have no blind spot in your heart, the Lord warns.

We must belong to a church that preaches the Gospel, but belonging to Jesus Christ first of all is the important thing. When instructive symbols are perverted into instruments of priestcraft, the light that is within us is turned into darkness. Aids to faith can be degraded into the machinery of superstition.

Don't deify any teacher; don't deify any minister. Remember, Jesus Christ stands above all. Outward modes of instruction and of worship may be very helpful. They may be

means of bringing us closer to God, but they never may become ends in themselves. If a system of doctrine is allowed to usurp the confidence of the soul, it may produce disease and death.

A student may turn his light into darkness by starting to be critical, first with the things that may truly be criticized, and then proceed to belittle those things that are beyond criticism. He is like a little boy with a new knife; he must cut something or other.

Finally, our light may be perverted through the loss of the full assurance of faith. Assurance, however, must never be counterfeited by presumption. We must never take for granted that we are children of God, without Scriptural warrant, or assume the appropriation of privileges that are not ours according to the Word.—*SPIROS ZODHIATES, of AMG International, in PULPIT HELPS. The material is adapted from Dr. Zodhiates' latest book, CONSCIENCE.* [†]

William Childs Robinson 1897-1982

When news of "Dr. Robbie's" death on November 21 began to spread throughout the church, something unprecedented in this office began to happen. For the first time since I have been at this desk, testimonial letters began coming in from former students who wanted to express their love and appreciation for their beloved former professor. I published one of these letters in the January 12 *Journal*.

Prominent men—some of them associated with this ministry—have died and have been remembered. Because of our severe space limitation, eulogies of any kind are simply out of the question. But there was something "different" about Dr. Robbie and the unusual number of statements received bears testimony to that fact.

He taught some 40 classes of students at Columbia Seminary, Decatur, Ga. Church history was his field, but some of us also sat at his feet in polity and apologetics.

Until you caught on to what he was

trying to do with your lazy mind, he seemed acid in his comments and infuriating in his style. Many a student squirmed into a puddle of jelly as Dr. Robbie stood in front of him and eyeball-to-eyeball dwelt lingeringly on his lack of appreciation for the influence of precise theological formulations on the course of history—or for original sources as the place to get reliable information.

But he believed what he taught and when he finished with you, you believed it too. Those of his students who went on to graduate study were prepared for the disciplines of research, historical analysis—and theological precision.

It took me about six months of my first class in church history to "catch on." Dr. Robbie did not waste time with pabulum, he started with strong meat. It was the strong meat of classical Reformed theology, laid over the fascinating story of the church as an overlay, in order that we might understand where the church began,

(Continued on p. 14, col. 3)