

that an unapplied text is a text that the interpretive community fails to understand.

He applies this hermeneutic to the modern issue of homosexuality. Our relationships with LGBTQ people foster awareness of our own personal purity codes. What the Bible says about homosexuality and Christian application of it should create *shalom* for people who have been historically oppressed. In short, a community's hermeneutic of justice should shape lives that testify to the glory of God.

A second edition of this monograph might address further the kinds of guardrails that help ensure valid interpretations. In my view, Blevins provides an overabundance of examples when fewer would accomplish his purpose. Still, I am enthusiastic about this text as it introduces biblical interpretation to undergraduates in a sensitive and pastoral way. Some seminary students may find the book helpful as they strive to grasp the art of interpretation. Blevins's text is also accessible for lay groups of ambitious thinkers or clergy covenant groups in search of new ways to perform the story we love to tell.

JEFF KISNER
WAYNESBURG UNIVERSITY
WAYNESBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

Reading Theologically

edited by Eric D. Barreto

Foundations for Learning. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014. 145 pp. \$14.00. ISBN 978-1-4514-8342-0.

READING THEOLOGICALLY CLAIMS that the act of reading "is always about the cultivation of deep wisdom" (p. 12). The book delivers on this implicit promise through a collection of essays from seminary educators who describe the wonder of theological reading through a series of eight adverbs, exploring what it means to read basically, meaningfully, biblically, generously, critically, differently, digitally, and spiritually. The book's major claim is that reading shapes

us—as human beings and as disciples of Jesus Christ. Each essay offers strategies to improve theological reading. The essays, while of varying quality, consistently offer clear, accessible suggestions for developing habits of reading theologically that will shape the reader's mind and habits and improve theological acumen. In particular, the excellent introduction and the essays on "Reading Basically," "Reading Critically," and "Reading Differently" are noteworthy and deserve special attention.

The book acknowledges that "reading challenges us" (p. 10), and that readers should not be abandoned to read alone. Reading is a "practice" (p. 13) that is "communal" (p. 19) and "transforms" (p. 23) readers "spiritually" (p. 22). Learning and (re)learning to read is hard work. Readers must develop a "critical eye . . . that asks the hard questions of a text" (p. 77). By probing racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual assumptions, readers expose implicit and explicit reasoning in a text. Texts cannot be separated from context; thus, as James McCarty notes, "To do theology well, then, requires the ability to think with people in different contexts" (p. 95). The act of reading invites us to enter the experiences, perspectives, and ideas of others. These essays help to train readers to better understand texts and better implement what texts say.

The book is distinguished by both clarity and depth. It will be helpful for those new to engagement with theological texts, as well as for those whose reading habits have atrophied under the pressures of ministry. In short, anyone who wants to become a better reader of theological texts—or anyone teaching classes with these goals in mind—would find this book a tremendous resource. At a time when the habits of reading are slipping away, the volume is a welcome reminder of the value and importance of reading for theological formation, and also provides tangible suggestions and strategies for reading more deeply.

TIM HARTMAN
COLUMBIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
DECATUR, GEORGIA