

Stress Resilience, I would ask candidates for ministry and their references different questions than the standard subjects of favorite theologian, approach to Scripture and preaching ability. The authors went on to describe how Jesus' teaching and practices on "Loving One's Enemies" and "Forgiveness" demonstrate higher emotional intelligence.

I'm considering using these characteristics of Jesus' emotional intelligence in a sermon series to help our people grow in spiritual maturity. These are the qualities we need in the church if people are to grow in their relationship with God and in healthier relationships with others—including the neighbors we serve.

Oswald and Jacobson conclude the book with chapters outlining the "Six Marks of an Emotionally Intelligent Congregation" (pp. 104ff.) and the "Core Characteristics of Effective Pastors" (pp. 122ff). I would recommend this book because they not only describe the problems in the church today and the desired healthy leadership we need—they also give practical suggestions on how congregations and pastors can become more emotionally intelligent.

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REVIVING OLD SCRATCH: Demons and the Devil for Doubters and the Disenchanted. By Richard Beck. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016. Xviii + 192 pages.

Do you believe in the devil? Most progressive Christians living in the West, being heirs of the Enlightenment, tend to live in a largely disenchanted world that rules out the existence of angels, demons, and other spiritual beings. Without rejecting science, could it be that we're missing something? Richard Beck, a professor of psychology at Abilene Christian University, believes we are missing something, and this book is his answer to the doubters who embrace a disenchanted world view.

Reviving Old Scratch is an invitation to do battle with the Devil, despite the fact that "the Devil has fallen on hard times." Talking about demons and the Devil is something fundamentalists talk about, not sophisticated clergy. While there are good reasons to stay clear of sensualized forms of demonology (e.g. Frank Peretti), there also may be good reason to revisit this oft neglected topic.

In my opinion, Richard Beck is the kind of guide a person like me needs for entering unfamiliar territory. Beck has a strong record of authoring thought-provoking books. Beck is by training and profession a psychologist. He understands the scientific method and its challenges. He's also a keen observer of culture. Although he's not a professional theologian, he has a well-honed theological mind and good understanding of the Bible. By background he is Church of Christ, and while the Churches of Christ tend to be theologically conservative,

they're not usually given to wild apocalyptic visions. Thus, he offers us a trustworthy guide into important questions facing our times.

Beck writes this book—*Reviving Old Scratch*—as a corrective to Christian social justice work that gets unhinged from the Christian faith. He is a justice-oriented believer, but he's concerned that our often politicized visions can ultimately take us down dangerous paths. Too often we engage in spiritual warfare, without recognizing the spiritual powers and principalities arrayed against us. Thus, a good portion of the book addresses the identity of "Old Scratch," with "Old Scratch" being another name for the Devil. Beck discovered the true nature of "Old Scratch" while leading a Bible study at a prison. His concern over things like mass incarceration led him to the prison, but once there he discovered that his "disenchanted worldview clashed with the spirituality of the inmates who spoke about the Devil and demons all the time. Behind prison bars, Old Scratch is real as can be" (p. xvi-xvii). These encounters helped reconfigure his understanding of social justice.

There is much in this book that parallels the work of Walter Wink. While he may not reference Wink on every page, like Wink he has discovered the true nature of the powers and principalities. He discovered that the systemic nature of evil that corrupts even the best systems. So he calls for us to re-enchanted our world-view. This doesn't mean there's a demon under every rock, but evil is very much a spiritual reality. For Beck's message (I find this compelling), a "purely political vision of spiritual warfare is inadequate and often dangerous" (p. xvi). That is because, when we engage in political warfare while not believing in demons we may end up demonizing our opponents.

Beck divides the book into three parts. Part One, titled "Wickedness in High Places: Spiritual Warfare as Social Justice," sets out a framework for the rest of the discussion. He helps us name the issues at hand. For instance, in a chapter provocatively titled "Scooby-Doo, Where Are You!," he notes that Scooby Doo and friends often encountered spooky things, but in the end they always found a naturalistic explanation, but as Beck points out, in the Bible natural and spiritual intersect. Justice for the ancients had a spiritual dimension. To do battle against powers and principalities involves not only demon possession, but political struggle: "Our battle is not against 'flesh and blood'—individual human beings—but against *systemic and structural evil*" . . . "Spiritual warfare is resistance to empire, to the political and economic manifestations of Babylon in our own time and place" (p. 24). But, if we focus only on the human dimension we fall prey to Scooby-Doo, and miss the spiritual. He notes that Jesus wasn't really much of political activist, since he talked more about Satan than Caesar. Here's the rub. "when spiritual warfare is reduced to political struggle it's tempted toward violence" (p. 25).

Part Two has six chapters, in which Beck reminds us that Jesus is portrayed in the Gospels as an exorcist, but when progressive Christians snip out the spiritual stuff (like Jefferson), then we can fall prey to the tendency to engage in disenchanted social justice work that is "destined to be a battle against other human beings, against the Bad People—the Good people trying to wrest power away from the Bad People. When spiritual warfare loses its spiritual component our battle can't help

but become against flesh and blood” (p. 59). When this happens there is much less chance of a person being redeemed. They are the enemy and they must be destroyed. I see this occurring at this moment in our current political discourse. Justice will not be served if persons must be destroyed in the process.

In the eight chapters that form Part Three Beck unpacks his vision of spiritual warfare for those who are doubters and live in a disenchanted world. He speaks of this as resistance and sabotage. It is undertaken, however, in the spirit of loving God and loving humans. They are interconnected and can't be separated. Spiritual warfare is a battle in love. It is a battle undertaken by the Lamb of God who was slain. Those who engage in the work of spiritual warfare must recognize the often banality of evil. It looks mundane. It's tempting. It draws you in. You become a cog. Thus, we must test the spirits. Is the zeitgeist that of Jesus or not? Beck points to the realities of the segregated South. We may have overturned the legal foundations of segregation, but racism is still part of the American zeitgeist in both north and south. It is a spiritual problem that politics can rarely address. Thus, our calling is to resist the Devil. That begins internally, within our own being, addressing our own inner demons. This starts in worship and in prayer, which enables us to renounce the gods of this world. Spiritual warfare begins in our recognition of the degree to which we give allegiance to gods other than God. Thus, the Devil is in the marketplace, and Jesus engages in exorcism. The work of spiritual warfare involves loving others, something is not an easy task when it's not undergirded by the love of God.

I believe that this book will open many eyes to new ways of thinking about the world and our place in it. Beck doesn't dissuade us from engaging social justice or even political action, but he does call on us to open our eyes to the spiritual dimensions of such a work. He reminds us that central to our work is an understanding of our allegiance. He reminds us that we are all tempted by idolatry, whether it is the idol of nation or some other idol.

Indeed, this is a must read. It is a book for the ages. It's thoughtful, provocative, challenging. If one believes, as do I, in the spiritual realm, then we need to consider the full range of what that means. Beck does an excellent job of reacquainting those of us who have lived in a disenchanted realm with the reality of the spiritual realm, which likely involves “reviving Old Scratch.”

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1 & 2 TIMOTHY AND TITUS (Belief: A Theological Commentary on the Bible). By Thomas Long. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2016. Xv + 311 pages.

The Pastoral Epistles are an often ignored set of New Testament texts. While traditionally linked to Paul (after all the letters purport to be from Paul), there are portions of these texts that cause headaches for many Christians. For instance, there are words here that suggest that women should not have authority over men. While there is good material here, we who preach rarely visit. But, as is often true there is good reason to visit these words and discover treasure that is often buried alongside those passages that cause us problems. What we need are accessible and thoughtful commentaries that guide us through the difficult passages and on to the fruit we seek. Such a person can be found in Thomas G. Long (Bandy Professor Emeritus of Preaching at Candler School of Theology, Emory University). Long is a well-regarded teacher of preachers and author of a number of commentaries on various books of the Bible. He is very well qualified to be our guide. Long desires to help us reclaim them for a new day.

This particular commentary on the Pastoral Epistles is part of Westminster John Knox's highly regarded *Belief* series (including providing an APC Reference Book of the Year). The series is designed to allow theologians to engage the text of Scripture. I've read several of these commentaries and have been highly impressed with them. In fact, I think this is one of the best series available today, and it is designed in such a way that preachers should find them invaluable. Long comes at this set of books from a slightly different position than is true for many of the other contributors. He is first of all a teacher of preaching, but not only that he is by training a New Testament scholar. That shows in the way he writes the commentary. It has a feel that is closer to a traditional commentary than is true of some others. That being said, this is an excellent commentary.

Each of these books purports to come from hand of Paul. Both are addressed to young pastors in need of guidance. They have been looked upon as important guides to church life in ages past. We look to them for information about church order—finding here words about elders and deacons and orders of Widows. We find an author concerned about proper qualifications and also well-ordered church life. While Paul is the purported author, most critical scholars believe that these letters date to a time well after Paul was dead. While some might see these as forgeries, Long suggests that the original audience knew that Paul was dead and that these letters were not written by him, but are written in such a way as to suggest that this is the Paul might have addressed the issues at hand. In Long's mind, the author, whom he regularly addresses as “the Pastor,” is the iconic Paul. Thus, the recipients of the letters—Timothy and Titus—are themselves iconic figures. They are stand-ins for those called to service in the church, especially challenging ministries.

The audiences addressed in the letters are two-fold. The letters addressed to Timothy speak to congregations facing a significant crisis. The community (Ephesus) is being torn apart by false teaching/false teachers. The Pastor is stepping in to give guidance to the one entrusted with guiding the church through this difficult time. Thus, we have reason for words addressing leadership and ministerial qualifications. There is need for discernment so that the church can emerge whole. Part of this conversation has to do with the role of women in the church. The Pastor is extremely concerned