

Driver considers intuitionism (or common sense ethics) as well as virtue and feminist ethics. These last few are becoming more prominent within the field of Christian ethics and to have a thoroughly secular account of them proves incredibly helpful.

As Driver has written a secular book one should not expect and will not get a sympathetic account of how God or the Bible fits into the construction of a normative ethic. If Christians only read Christian literature, however, we will be the poorer for it. Such well-written secular surveys as Driver has presented are important for Christians to read. It provides a perspective otherwise missing and rounds out ones study, especially on ethics. There is truth to the adage that 'all truth is God's truth'

Throughout Driver presents clearly defined positions, peppers the work with salient examples, and offers critical yet respectful arguments against a number of ethical positions. This makes the work accessible and useful as an introductory text. Students looking for a readable introduction to ethics will find it here.

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Stanley Hauerwas & Samuel Wells (eds.). *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004, 2006. (xii + 510 pp.) [9781405150514]

Companions, dictionaries, and handbooks have proliferated in recent years in all the major subjects from philosophy to applied sciences. Ethics has not been spared. Many of these companions are little more than historical treatments of well-worn topics and while useful for the beginner or graduate student are little more than annoying to the researcher. Blackwell Publishing has produced a vast number of companions on Judaism, postmodernity, spirituality to the Qur'an. What makes the *Companion to Christian Ethics* unique is that the editors adopt an integrative theme to the work – namely worship – and fit each of the articles into one of five parts: Meeting with God and One Another; Re-encountering the Story; Being Embodied; Re-enacting the Story; and Being Commissioned. Those familiar with the work of Hauerwas and especially Wells will already notice a common theme

here as in their other works, the centrality in ethics of worship and discipleship, and the ecclesial context within which Christian ethics is played out. The Eucharist becomes the lens through which ethical issues are discussed and actually discovered.

The following chapter titles illustrate the unique construction of the *Companion*: Greeting: Beyond Racial Reconciliation; Collecting Praise: Global Culture Industries; Praying: Poverty; Being Baptized: Bodies and Abortion; Breaking Bread: Peace and War; Receiving Communion: Euthanasia, Suicide, and Letting Die; and Eating Together: Friendship and Homosexuality. From these titles alone one can see the unique structure of the work. Prefacing the collecting are four articles co-written by Hauerwas and Wells which provide the conceptual rationale for the *Companion* and establish how ethics may legitimately be studied through the lens of worship. Much of this is a summary of what Wells has developed in his 2006 work *God's Companions*. The articles which follow each tease out the implications of understanding ethics as worship. Contributors are drawn from many Christian traditions, including, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, Mennonite, and Pentecostal. The ecumenical range of this work can be seen in the following:

What follows has been inspired by a range of theologians, some indicative, some interrogative, some imperative. In its emphasis on worship, it owes much to the Reformed tradition, though the importance of corporate worship is a more Catholic theme; on friendship, it follows Thomas Aquinas...and before him Aristotle...In its concentration on God as subject, it follows Karl Barth...in its perception of God's abundance in the face of quasi-Stoic scarcity, it follows John Milbank...in its emphasis on tradition and practice, it follows Alasdair MacIntyre...When it comes to seeing the heart of Christianity in corporate discipleship, it is aided by George Lindbeck's...cultural-linguistic proposal; perhaps most of all, its careful delineation of practices is inspired by John Howard Yoder...In its portrayal of exile, it follows Tom Wright...in its perception of God's commitment to the poor, it follows Gustavo Gutierrez...In its attempt to see the practices of the local church put under proper theological scrutiny it follows the invitation of Nicholas Healy...and its confidence that they will meet the challenge is encouraged by William Cavanaugh' (pp. 13-14).

Of the four introductory essays chapters 3 and 4 are the most important. In chapter three, 'Why Christian Ethics Was Invented', the authors clearly present how their vision of ethics as worship formed by the Eucharistic practices is superior to contemporary modern forms of ethics as a distinct subject of rational enquiry. In distinguishing their own work from that of Kant, Troeltsch, and H. Richard Niebuhr, the authors accept Yoder's critique that "'Christian ethics' has become – indeed, for the 200 years of its life has, perhaps, always been – the story of how the Church has set aside its practice and adopted a Kantian epistemology in an effort to secure relevance and consensus' (p. 33). Hauerwas and Wells are attempting to place ethics back within the sphere of theology, but not the theologian's guild. Rather, ethics is 'not primarily to be found in statements or debates or arguments, but in particular practices, commitments, and habits. Christianity is not principally something people think or feel or say – it is something people *do*' (p. 37). Thus ethics are the practices of the Church not the dogmas of the theologians. In 'How the Church Managed Before There Was Ethics' the communal ethic of the early Church is recommended. In this way the authors establish a meta-ethic under which the subsequent entries of the *Companion* flesh out and develop as they focus on specific issues (practices).

The thirty-two essays which make up the *Companion* are of a high standard, and each provides a select bibliography. Well known scholars such as Kevin Vanhoozer rub shoulders with high profile clergymen like Archbishop Rowan Williams, and they in turn share the bill with those less known to the west such as Emmanuel Katongale. Each essay is relatively short and lively, and presents theological reflections on ethical issues. None of the essays really covers the sort of ground Hauerwas and Wells cover in the introductory essays, but in an edited work of this nature this is to be expected.

Several essays deserve specific mention. Starting from his own experience Emmanuel Katongale (chap. 6 'Greeting: Beyond Racial Reconciliation') describes his awareness of being black in the summer of 1991 and how this forced upon him a rather profound exploration of his own racial identity (a black Ugandan) and his determined effort to recover a vision and way of life beyond such an identity. A similar argument from experience is given by Amy Laura Hall (chap. 7 'Naming the Risen Lord: Embodied Discipleship and masculinity') in which she meditates on what it means to embody the reality of the risen Christ. Kelly Johnson's essay on 'Praying: Poverty' makes the parallel between what we acknowledge theologically in intercessory

prayer and what we live in reality. To pray is to accept we have nothing and must ask God for all. In the same way we are to respond to the poverty around us and as people who know how to ask and receive we become people who also know how to give and to trust. Other essays, like that of Frederick Bauerschmidt ('Being Baptized: Bodies and Abortion') offer a more direct discussion of an ethical issue. Moving away from 'rights' language, Bauerschmidt offers a reflection on baptism and what this Christian practice says about being human in God's image. Through baptism the individual becomes 'one' with the body of Christ. With this perspective the issue of abortion is placed outside of an individual dilemma of competing human rights and into the social space of a body politic.

As the reader may perceive, the essays in this *Companion* are broad ranging, creative explorations written with literary expertise and creativity. Each one contributes to a basic ethical approach which may be characterized as virtue or character ethics. This means that directive statements and concrete advice does not form a feature of these essays. This is not an exercise in prescriptive ethics. This makes the *Companion* more *Atlantic Monthly* than *Time Magazine* in its approach.

The fields of literature and the arts are plundered for what they can offer to a contextualized approach to Christian ethics. For many, this will seem like a dilution of Christian ethics. The lack of exegetical content will put many off as will the adoption of a narrative theology combined with a cultural-linguistic methodology. To be honest, I am sympathetic to these criticisms, and yet the approach offered in the *Companion* does have a large appeal. It may not help to decide an ethical dilemma, and it seldom offers concrete advice on what to do in any given situation, but it does offer a valuable perspective on what sort of people we should be. For this Hauerwas and Wells are to be congratulated. This is a *Companion* to ethics and as such it needs to be supplemented with other works which offer a more rigorous biblical engagement. As a *Companion* however, it does a superb job.

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