

was deified after his resurrection, were the first, true, authentic, and genuine adoptionists, as far as definitions and evidence go” (p. 122).

The final chapter is a brief discussion of modern theology and adoptionism. John Knox and John Macquarrie, among others, are given as examples of recent adoptionist theology. He also argues that some advocates of Spirit-Christology, David Coffey and Ralph Del Colle, leave themselves open to the charge of adoptionism because they are not explicit as to whether Jesus was divine before receiving the Spirit at his baptism. Bird briefly argues against them all concluding, “A Christology that presents us with a mere man who bids us to earn our salvation is an impoverished alternative to the God of Grace and mercy who took on our flesh and ‘became sin’ so that we might become the ‘righteousness of God’” (p. 130).

Overall this is a highly stimulating and readable book. Use of Greek alphabet rather than transliteration might hinder non-academic readers, although there is not a lot of it. Equally, explanation of some terms (e.g. angel- and possession Christology which are introduced without explanation) would improve accessibility for a general audience. From a scholarly perspective Bird engages impressively with the secondary literature, with some very useful footnotes. The brevity of the book and amount covered means more time spent at the theoretical level than the exegetical. Occasionally this means some arguments appear a little thin. In particular his argument for the pre-existence of Christ in Mark’s Gospel would need a much fuller treatment if it were to be convincing to a sceptical reader. Likewise, his criticisms of modern adoptionists in chapter 6 is so brief it is in danger of being perfunctory. Notwithstanding, Bird has succeeded in creating a short, readable and provocative book which both serves as a useful summary of the state of the discussion and forcefully throws down the gauntlet to those who argue for an adoptionist Christology in the New Testament.

**Alexandra Radcliff.** *The Claim of Humanity in Christ: Salvation and Sanctification in the Theology of T. F. and J. B. Torrance.* Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2017. (208 pp.) [ISBN: 9781498230193 ]

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Radcliff’s book is based on her doctoral studies where, as intimated by the title, she focused upon the twin themes of salvation and sanctification in the work of Scottish reformed theologians and brothers, James B. and Thomas F. Torrance.

Masterfully written, the book follows a two-part chiasmic structure (A-B-C C-B-A). The first section (A-B-C) is headed up under the heading *The Triune God of Salvation*. Here Radcliff deals with the Torrance’s soteriology. Radcliff argues that salvation is a Trinitarian event; *from the Father* (covenant over contract, or filial over federal Ch. 1), *through the Son* (achieved ontologically through Christ’s vicarious humanity rather than some external benefit Ch. 2), and *by the Holy Spirit* (applied subjectively to us by the Spirit based upon the objective union achieved in Christ Ch. 3). Within this filial, ontological, and objectively grounded

understanding of salvation, Radcliff consistently argues that salvation is entirely something God achieves but achieves *in* humanity because it occurs *in Christ*. Those familiar with the Torrance's soteriology will be unsurprised that the telos or goal of this soteriological vision is *theosis*—the personal, relation, ontological participation of humanity in God's life because of our participation in Christ's life (p. 119).

The second half of Radcliff's work is headed up *Sanctification and Human Participation*. Here Radcliff, still following the chiasmic structure (but now C-B-A), starts her discussion on sanctification by considering it from its objective grounding as something already accomplished in Christ (p. 125). In Radcliff's sights here is the faulty view of sanctification as the human work of 'making one's self more like Christ,' as is sometimes the case in the more introspective, legalistic streams of puritan theology. In opposition to this, Radcliff argues for a vision of sanctification as something *already achieved in Christ*, but to be realized in our lives as "free and joyful participation by the Spirit in what God has already accomplished" (p. 141). Moving on from this objective basis, Radcliff turns her attention to the ontological aspect of sanctification as growing up into what we already are *in Christ* (Ch. 6). While retaining something of the Torrance's eschatological reserve in regard to an over realized understanding of sanctification in this present life, this ontologically grounded vision of sanctification is again understood as something that really has happened *'in Christ.'* Christians are therefore to be viewed as "saints that sin, rather than sinners who are saved" (p. 155). Radcliff finishes the second half of her work by returning to the theme with which she opened; a filial understanding of participation as the key to understanding both salvation and sanctification, for both are nothing other than the free gift of God opened up by God's own act of covenantal, unconditional love in Christ.

Throughout the two parts, Radcliff states in a variety of ways that "salvation and sanctification are not burdensome endeavors but the *free gift of enjoying communion with the triune God of grace*" (p. 188). This central, consistent theme runs throughout her work. That is, in Christ, by the Spirit humanity has been drawn into the life of love and fellowship that the Father shared with Spirit and Son from before the world began. Both salvation and sanctification can only be understood for Radcliff as something occurring *in Christ*.

Radcliff's work is a most welcome addition to the steadily growing body of Torrance scholarship, and to the wider genre of pastoral theology. This is so for several reasons. First, the Torrances' work remains inaccessible to most because of their technical and dense writing. Radcliff's work breaks down some of that barrier by providing a constructive point of entry into Torrance scholarship without becoming a simple readers guide or summary. Second, and perhaps more importantly, Radcliff places some of the most complicated academic theology of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century into explicit dialogue with pastoral concerns. While her work remains principally concerned with the *theological* contours of such pastoral practice, it does at incisive points indicate, and constructively so, what such a christologically conditioned, Trinitarian view of salvation and sanctification could, or perhaps should, entail for pastoral practice. The one critique is that very few lived examples or real life illustrations find their way into the book. For a work on pastoral theology, example and illustration from lived practice would have been a welcomed addition. But, perhaps that is asking too much from a single volume. Taking everything into account, Radcliff's work is a wonderful gift for both church and Academy alike.