

historical framework going back to Adam, one that remains unfinished, chronologically and geographically. Just as history follows patterns, Luke uses typology to connect the church's history with Israel's history. In Luke, Jesus is a type of Adam; in Acts the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost is a type of Moses's "gift of the Law" (p. 22). The remaining six chapters are thematic discussions of Lukan theology. Surprisingly, González documents none of his sources. For example, he states that "some" suggest that the original author of Luke-Acts was a woman (p. 45), but provides no bibliographic references.

González has produced a sort of theological treatise of Luke-Acts that is at times very predictable. He notes that Luke mentions the Holy Spirit more than any other Gospel writer and that Acts is really about the acts of the Holy Spirit. In Chapter Three, "Luke and the Great Reversal," González traces reversal throughout Luke-Acts. The greatest reversal is Jesus's journey from the manger to the right hand of God; and reversal/upheaval is both religious and social. In Chapter Four, "Luke and Gender," he observes that Luke mentions women (often pairing them with men) more than any other Gospel, but he offers no feminist-critical reading. In Chapter Seven, "Luke and Worship," González argues that doctrine and theology are shaped in worship but provides little attention to the significance of worship in Luke-Acts. In Chapter Eight, "Luke and Salvation," salvation is both physical and spiritual and impacts both the individual and community. González makes a potentially controversial statement in that chapter in an attempt to demonstrate, I think, the omnipresence of God: "any truth is Christian truth" (p. 72). A less problematic assertion is that Acts demonstrates how God was already active and present in places prior to the disciples' arrival, as in the story of Cornelius and Peter (Acts 10).

The book offers a basic, concise, accessible, and traditional theological approach to Luke-Acts. I recommend it as an introductory text to

Lukan theology if paired with other texts offering critical gender and cultural readings.

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John

by *Karoline M. Lewis*

Fortress Biblical Preaching Commentaries.
Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014. \$22.00. 261 pp.
ISBN 978-0-8006-9924-6.

THIS FINE VOLUME EXEMPLIFIES the spirit of the Fortress Biblical Preaching Commentaries series, which is to help preachers identify "(1) what the [biblical] text invited people in the ancient world to believe and (2) what the text encouraged people to do in response." It also aims to "identify issues, raise questions, and pose possibilities for preaching while stopping short of placing a complete sermon in the preacher's hands" (p. ix).

Lewis encourages the preacher to listen to the distinctive voice of the text, taking into account its oral character as well as its historical, literary, and theological settings. The energy of the commentary is in how the text helps preacher and congregation imagine a renewed future. Lewis urges listeners to resist importing contemporary points of view into the text. In addition to the typical commentary, Lewis offers "Connections to the Lectionary" that help the preacher work with the Fourth Gospel across the seasons and years of the lectionary.

Lewis identifies seven themes that permeate the Fourth Gospel: (1) the connection of Jesus to the creativity of God; (2) Jesus not only comes from God but is God made flesh; (3) the Word reveals who God is (nature) and what God does (purpose); (4) the incarnation of Jesus holds together the divine and human; (5) the contrast between light and darkness; (6) witness—Jesus as witness to God and the disciples as witness to

Jesus; and (7) abundance. While the commentary proper begins with John 1:1 and moves passage by passage through the text, Lewis shows how these themes continually surface throughout the Gospel and can illumine preaching.

This commentary is noteworthy for its emphasis on the intended effect of the Fourth Gospel upon the community to which it was first addressed. According to Lewis, that community was beleaguered by questions about its identity, raised by tensions between the Johannine community and the leadership of other Jewish communities that did not believe in Jesus. This is a particularly fruitful point of contact for preaching today when so many congregations in the historic denominations struggle with identity and mission in the postmodern swirl of relativity, diversity, and change. This commentary can help the preacher engage the congregation around the two fundamental questions facing the church: “Who are we today,” and “What are we to do?”

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Encountering God in Tyrannical Texts: Reflections on Paul, Women, and the Authority of Scripture

by *Frances Taylor Gench*

Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2015.
196 pp. \$20.00. ISBN 978-0-664-25952-5.

THIS IS A BOOK FOR FEMINISTS who love the Bible and who want to read it responsibly without excising the parts that offend them. Frances Taylor Gench gathers five of the New Testament passages most toxic to women’s interests—1 Tim 2:8–15; Eph 5:21–33; 1 Cor 11:2–16; 1 Cor 14:33b–36; and 1 Tim 5:3–16—together with a host of their interpreters and brings them into authentic conversation with each other. The texts from the Pauline orbit that suppress

women’s leadership in the church, prescribe their proper dress, and subordinate them to male authority are routinely dismissed by Christians who cringe at their embrace of Greco-Roman patriarchy and rightly point to the presence of a remarkable number of women leaders in early Christianity. Gench pleads instead for authentic Christian welcome of the various authors of these passages without asking her readers to agree with everything they say. At the end, she looks at Rom 16:1–16, a decidedly “non-tyrannical” (p. xiii) passage that praises a number of significant women leaders.

Gench’s method is straightforward. She makes five recommendations for dealing with problematic texts. (1) Interpreters are obligated to be charitable because we are related by baptism to these authors. (2) To wrestle with a biblical text is an act of faithfulness, even when we cannot endorse its point. (3) The whole of a passage may have something to commend it even if we disagree with parts of it. (4) We can learn from the dangers in a text as well as its insights. (5) To engage in this kind of interpretation does not mean that one does not take the Bible seriously. This is wise advice.

Each of the six chapters includes a close reading of the passage under discussion and the responses of scholars who have either tried to make it say something other than it says, ameliorated its impact on women, or dismissed it or its author as not worth hearing. There is a wealth of scholarship here made accessible to a broad audience. Following her own recommendations, Gench then looks for ways to find compassion for the author and his situation, argues strenuously with him, searches for commendable insights, and highlights analogous dangers faced by the contemporary church. I found most helpful her discussion of 1 Cor 14:33b–36 for the way it muddied the waters of my own conviction that the verses are an interpolation. Helpful questions for discussion follow each chapter, making the book useful for either seminary or congregational use.