

Heb and ends with a call to follow the Pioneer 'outside the camp'. This, McKelvey argues, is a call to Christian discipleship and to undertake the pilgrim life that the Pioneer calls the people to. The community is able to 'go out' because the Pioneer has already brought them into the heavenly sanctuary where they find the help they need for the journey.

Some will question the originality of McKelvey's work. However, it is my conviction that McKelvey does show that the themes of priest and pioneer are not simply two themes found in the letter, but they are meant and must work together. If the reader does not allow them to work together, she misses something of the author's concern and rhetorical force. McKelvey's survey of interpretation leads me to think he does offer a slightly original, and helpful, contribution to this ever growing field of scholarly interest. What is more, McKelvey helpful draws upon and explains Jewish texts and traditions that likely influence the letter. He does this both in the main text and in several concluding appendixes. Anyone interested in Hebrews will benefit from working through this book. It will be especially helpful to scholars and pastors.

Robert Jason Pickard  
University of Otago



***Simul Sanctification: Barth's Hidden Vision of Human Transformation***, Jeff McSwain, Pickwick, 2018 (ISBN 978-1-5326-4107-7), xviii + 316 pp., pb \$39

This book presents an expanded form of Jeff McSwain's PhD dissertation completed in 2015 under Alan Torrance. McSwain introduces his project as an interactive reading of Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics* which attempts to demonstrate the centrality of the formula *simul iustus et peccator* (simultaneously righteous and sinner) for Barth's understanding of sanctification. What follows is a number of constructive arguments that explore how various doctrinal *loci* are radically implicated by Barth's application of the *simul* to sanctification. Setting the tone for these explorations, McSwain warns that his work is provocative due to the unprecedented theological moves made in the realm of Barth studies, especially in relation to Barth's actualism which McSwain thinks has not yet been fully appreciated by the guild.

In Chapter 1, McSwain delves into Barth's deployment of Luther's *simul* to capture what is at stake in the sanctification bestowed on us in Jesus Christ. In particular, McSwain emphasizes how this move both

enables Barth to refer believers totally and continually to God's grace for their sanctification and, correspondingly, prevents any conception of Christian life in which the total sinfulness of the Christian is somehow left behind. This, McSwain observes, in no way disparages the ontological change that has taken place for us in Jesus Christ in whom our sanctification is a reality, and we are totally holy. However, it does guard against all forms of psychologism and gradualism by which Christians attempt to quantify their progress in new life by locating this life in their own spiritual experience rather than solely in Jesus Christ.

The next two chapters (2 and 3) search for the basis of this soteriological-anthropological claim in Christology, a search that leads McSwain to a rather novel expansion of the Chalcedonian definition. Alongside the duality of Christ's divine and human nature, McSwain contends, we must also speak of the duality of Christ's humanity so that Jesus Christ, in his assumption of sinful flesh, is both true and false humanity in one person. This, note well, moves a step further than Gregory of Nazianzus' assertion that the unassumed is the unhealed and his subsequent conclusion that Christ must have taken our sinful flesh in order to reconcile us. What McSwain wants is nothing less than a Christological application of the *simul* which affirms that Jesus Christ is both false humanity and true humanity at the same time and, consequently, embroiled in a struggle between these battling determinations.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 offer an interpretation of Barth's affirmation that all humanity is already sanctified in Christ which begins by disputing readings of Barth's work that distinguish between what has objectively taken place for all in Christ and our subjective participation in this reality through the work of the Spirit. Such a dualism, according to McSwain, implies that our reconciliation is not already complete in Christ but remains in need of realization and so introduces a semi-Pelagian note into Barth's thinking. To avoid this, McSwain draws on Barth's actualism to demonstrate both that all humanity is objectively included in Christ and that the subjective response of all humanity is already taking place in Christ. In other words, when we say that everything has been done for us by Jesus Christ, McSwain argues that this includes our own personal hearing and doing of the Word so that all humanity is already, objectively obeying the gospel in Jesus Christ.

Chapters 7 and 8 return to the warring humanities of Jesus Christ in the context of the atonement to discern how this framework helps us comprehend Christ's reconciling life. McSwain's basic conclusion is that the dualistic nature of Christ's humanity allows us to divvy out the judgment and destruction of the old humanity to Christ's false humanity and salvation and resurrection to Christ's true humanity. For example, in this paradigm, the sinlessness of Jesus Christ refers strictly to Christ's true humanity whereas the referent of the sinful flesh that Christ assumed is the false humanity that exists simultaneously in Christ. Perhaps most provocative in

this stage of McSwain's argument is his claim that the gospels actually attest the struggle between Christ's false and true humanity insofar as Jesus' doubts in Gethsemane and on Golgotha are most consistently understood as sinful actions. Indeed, these moments, for McSwain, embody the most intense struggle between the two human minds of Christ, one totally sinful and the other totally righteous.

The next four chapters (9, 10, 11, and 12) all roughly revolve around the question, when is the *simul*? McSwain's answer is to follow Barth's doctrine of election and situate the *simul* in the eternity of Jesus Christ. This has two dramatic implications. First, if the original, natural, and ontological determination of humanity in Jesus Christ is the true, *iustus* humanity and human beings are created accordingly, then McSwain concludes that God effectively saves humanity in Jesus Christ even before it falls. That is, we are already one with Christ, in all of the actualistic significance that McSwain perceives in this affirmation, by virtue of creation so that we are even allowed to speak of a Wesleyan entire sanctification albeit not as a goal for the Christian to obtain but as the undiminished basis of the Christian life grounded in pre-temporal eternity. Second, because Christ's new humanity is established from the outset, his victory over sin in the incarnation and resurrection must be considered as a revelation of an ongoing truth that is already valid in and with creation. God does not complete anything new or different in the Christ event but freely expresses what is already the case in a new way.

In Chapters 13 and 14 McSwain moves into some more practical or existential reflections. Various topics are addressed in the framework McSwain has presented in the previous chapters including prayer, love of one's neighbor, the difficulty of the 'two selves' conception that runs through McSwain's project, and the nature of human transformation. After concluding with a brief summary of his arguments, McSwain also adds some final reflections of a more ecclesial and personal nature that indicate how his work engenders certain evangelistic practices and how it interacts with special needs ministry.

Overall, the most stimulating aspect of McSwain's work is his attention to scripture and Barth's interpretation of it, a consideration that runs throughout his entire project. This feature of Barth's work is often overlooked, and yet Barth himself thought that the *Church Dogmatics* was simply an attempt to repeat what he himself heard in the biblical witness. Having said that, it must be observed that McSwain's ambitious project boldly proposes theological conclusions that depart not only from mainstream Barth interpretation but also from some more traditional streams of Christian orthodoxy. This novelty, coupled with the dense and intricate prose which McSwain uses, means that this book is not for the faint-hearted or those looking for an introduction to Barth's thought. Indeed, even those familiar with Barth's work will find a very unfamiliar Barth in these pages, so much so that one wonders if McSwain's

interactive reading actually interacts with what Barth affirmed or if, in the end, it grasps at snippets and phrases to build a construct that would deeply concern Barth.

Michael Bartholomaeus   
University of Otago



**True Myth: C. S. Lewis and Joseph Campbell on the Veracity of Christianity**, James W. Menzies, Lutterworth, 2015 (ISBN 978-0-7188-9376-7), xii + 258 pp., pb £22.50

*True Myth* grows out of Menzies's PhD dissertation at Salve Regina University and seeks to answer the question: 'What was the meaning and significance of myth as understood by Joseph Campbell and C. S. Lewis and how did each man apply his understanding of myth to the Christian faith?' (p. 1). The primary aim of the study is thus to articulate the ways in which Lewis and Campbell conceptualize myth and utilize it when discussing Christianity. Secondly, Menzies is also interested in how myth may be employed in a technological society and seeks to show how the concept of myth in the writings of Campbell and Lewis may be beneficial in an age of advanced and quickly changing technologies.

Chapters 1 and 2 highlight important introductory matters when considering Lewis and Campbell and take up the definition of the word myth. Myth is a particularly flexible term in scholarly discourse and is utilized to describe religious, cultural, and literary phenomena. Menzies argues that myth, fantasy, and allegory are best defined as one might define colors on a spectrum. As there are both clearly defined areas of blue and areas of overlap, so there are clearly defined myths and areas in which myth overlaps with another genre.

Chapters 3 and 4 then take up myth in the writings of Lewis and Campbell. Lewis's understanding of myth was influenced by early experiences in his life, namely, the world of Boxen and his mother's death. It was also influenced by literary masters like Plato, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, George MacDonald, G. K. Chesterton, Owen Barfield, and J. R. R. Tolkien as well as his religious experiences. Lewis took myth to be an extra-literary phenomenon and was interested in the effects of myth. In particular, Lewis perceives myth to be vital in creativity and spirituality. Turning to Campbell, Menzies notes the stimulating impact of Native American spirituality, Roman Catholicism, James Frazer, Sigmund Freud, and Carl Jung