



Soul Among Lions: Musings of a Bootleg Preacher.

Will D. Campbell. Louisville, KY
Westminster John Knox Press, 1999. 61 pp.

Reviewed by Gary R. Brittain, Baptist Campus Minister, Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville, Alabama

Sometimes I need to revisit old friends. This happened this week when I picked up a copy of *Soul Among Lions*, placed in my hands recently by a friend and fellow fan of the writings of Will Campbell. In the preface, Campbell describes the book as “bits and pieces from the ditty box of one follower of the Way.” The book’s one and two page selections invite the reader’s attention during snatches of time, but the lessons contained in the brief entries invite further reflection.

Campbell is his vintage, irreverent self, smashing cultural icons in his quest to challenge believers to an authentic, biblical faith. Nothing is sacrosanct. The Christian Coalition is called the liberals of society, the death penalty is harangued and Baptists, Campbell’s own spiritual kin, are vilified. His diatribes are not without intent. He would have us reconsider culture mores and make fresh application of biblical principles on our own beliefs and values. His words further encourage application of those same principles in personal and corporate conduct.

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Soul Among Lions is most likely the easiest book I have read in recent months. Campbell’s wit and wisdom are refreshing to mind and soul. I recommend this volume to Campbell’s fans, and might surmise that its reading might prick one’s interest to read some of his other works.

GM

Preaching the New Millennium

John Killinger, Nashville, TN
Abingdom Press, 1999. 158 pp.

Reviewed by Dr. Bruce Gentry, Campus Minister, University of W. Alabama

John Killinger, former professor at Vanderbilt Divinity School, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Sanford University, and one of America's most noted preachers, has written a work for proclaimers

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of the gospel who are preparing messages around themes for the new millennium. Killinger looks upon the new millennium as a time of great opportunity for

preaching the gospel and asserts that millennial hype, anxiety, and expectations provide an excellent environment for ministers to do their best preaching. Whether a person realizes it or not, the millennium is on everyone's mind, including each member of a congregation or every college student involved in a campus ministry program. After all, from Chrysostom's sermons in fourth century Antioch to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s sermons during the American civil rights movement, some of the greatest preaching in Christian history was done during times of great national or world panic. Killinger asserts that preachers must seize this great occasion as a tremendous opportunity to deliver sermons that will engage the listener with the Gospel message.

Killinger addresses the range of emotions that people feel during times of crisis and addresses them pastorally and addresses biblical themes (creation and creativity, journey, jubilee, returning to the Tabernacle, the cross, etc.) that naturally give rise to messages that address millennial hopes and anxiety. Probably the most important chapter of the book is the one that addresses the spiritual life of the minister. Killinger defines authentic spirituality as *living in constant or at least frequent awareness of God's spirit than with*

having a particular kind of spirit ourselves. Any spirituality we might have would after all be only reflected light, something for which we could claim no personal credit. No, it has to do with God and how attentive we are to the holy presence around us. Too often, the busyness that minister's face causes them to divorce their daily ministries from spirituality. Recovering a sense of childlike wonder is the key to recovering a spiritual life in the everyday life of ministry. Killinger discusses the many wonders to be found: time and history, technology, human spirit, and the earth. The millennium presents a great opportunity for every ministry to recover or enrich a sense of wonder. The book concludes with a series of six sermons provided as examples for preaching millennial themes.

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Killinger's work is a seedbed of ideas for preachers preparing message for the late, late twentieth century and is good advice for every preacher. The best preachers always analyze their audience and preach within the context of their environment. Millennium themes are good for at least another two or three years. After all, the next millennium doesn't begin until January 1, 2001. Millennial themes will also work for the first year of the millennium as well. This book is recommended to all preachers for the early stage of sermon preparation. Campus ministers should also take note that their students are also affected by millennial hysteria and would benefit from this book.

CM



BELIEVING IN THE FUTURE

David J. Bosch, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania
Trinity Press International, 1995. 69 pp.

Reviewed by Emory L. "Chip" Reeves, Jr. Atlanta, Georgia

David J. Bosch was a professor and head of the department of missiology at the University of South Africa. He died in an automobile accident in 1992. In addition to this text, he has contributed to the field of missiology numerous articles in missiological journals, *Witness to the World: The Christian Mission in Theological Perspective* and the exhaustive *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*.

Bosch presents a surprisingly brief work in *Believing in the Future*. The book was authorized as part of a series called Christian Mission and Modern Culture. The other half of the series is *Write the Vision* by Wilbert Shenk. The series was commissioned to be "a forum where conventional assumptions can be challenged and alternative formulations explored."

In five short chapters Bosch put together ingredients that factor in developing a missiology of Western culture. He first discusses the postmodern influences in contemporary society. The key is that inevitable change is happening in several different directions which can be seen mainly in either increasing secularism or as society becomes extremely anthropocentric. It is crucial for the church to face the challenges that postmodernism presents. The church's track record, however, has been to dig in and wait for the threats to disappear.

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Bosch then moves to discuss some of how the Enlightenment contributed to the current crisis. The Enlightenment, though, should not be cast as some kind of villain he says. There were many advances during this time that were very much a blessing.

The answer for the church is not to wish for the clock to turn backward to the good old days before the Enlightenment began.

Modern and postmodern elements continue to clash in society. Present situations are not harmonious. Two extremes can be seen, dogmatic scientism and extreme relativism. For these persons everything is either empirical or everything is relative. Both sides create self-legitimizing laws. Without morality, the laws make no sense. For morality to aid in understanding, each camp has to focus outside itself. Humanity is much more than either pure reason, pure science, or pure whatever (relativism). To be human is far beyond these ideals.

Bosch contends that for a Western missiology to be honest it must abandon the theological tri-cotomy it has used for centuries. That is, 1) theology is for the church and used to advance the church; 2) mission refers to an "out there" work of the church to convert the heathen overseas in places where there are no churches; and 3) evangelism is what must be done to re-convert those at home who have turned their backs on the church. A better method would be to develop a missionary theology. Without a missiological agenda the church has no purpose or reason to exist. All that the church does should be in participation with God's mission for the church: to follow the model of Christ and announce God's reign in the world.

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Where should this expression of God's mission begin? Bosch warns that people in general are still Enlightenment thinkers. They want proof. The beginning point for establishing a relationship and sharing faith with another is to consider his or her worldview, how a person is shaped based on theory and practice (or faith and experience). Begin there knowing that what we believe to be true for ourselves we must also believe is worth the belief of others.

Bosch also adds a few more ingredients to his developing mis-
sionology of Western culture. He suggests that it must have an ecological dimension, be countercultural, ecumenical, contextual, be primarily the ministry of the laity, and flow from a local, worshipping community. He adds that the right combination of ingredients do not guarantee success. God is not interested in our success reports but our level of commitment. Success can be blinding and lead to abuse of power. The mission to which we are called belongs to God. Even though the future is cloudy, God's call to mission remains.

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Believing in the Future is a tough read even though it is rather brief. Those who read it should prepare to sit with it for a while, move slowly and study. Bosch has contributed much to the study of mission and evangelism and has a lot to say even in this short work. He provokes the reader to keep considering new ways that the church can be on mission. The mission is not restricted to foreign countries or ten weeks out of a student's summer. God's mission is all around every day.

Bosch lends many suggestions that are helpful to the campus minister. The above is very true. Mission is not something to be relegated to summer or spring break but what the church (or BSU) is called to participate in each day. It is also not about "going therefore" and making Baptists. There should be no consumerism and competition in ministry.

Two of Bosch's final ingredients seem very applicable to campus ministry. 1) Mission should be primarily the work of the laity. 2) Mission must flow from the local, worshipping community. Are students aware that they are *on mission* when they are *on campus*? God's mission might have more to do with them showing up for class on time than with them going to Beach Reach. David Bosch has ideas here that will help the campus minister and her students do genuine ministry in both places.

CM

Good News In Exile

Three Pastors Offer a Hopeful Vision for the Church

Martin Copenhaver, Tony Robinson, Will Willimon. Grand Rapids, MI

Reviewed by Charles J. Scalise Associate Professor of Church History, Fuller Theological Seminary

Baptist campus ministers—particularly those who live in religiously traditional areas found in the American South and Southwest—will find intellectual challenge and spiritual depth in dialogue with confessing Christians who live across the boundaries of their religious world. As the third millennium arrives, one of the most important boundaries for Baptists to cross is the century-old divide between conservative (evangelical) and liberal (revisionist) Protestants.

While there still remain a few unreconstructed liberal Protestants in the pulpits of mainline churches, they are a dying—or, perhaps more accurately, a retiring—breed. Instead the new kind of Protestant pastor in established old-line churches is one who has experienced and understood the marginalization of the church in secular

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American life. These leaders speak

confessionally about their faith in accents that may sound strangely familiar to many Baptists and other evangelical Christians. They have much to teach campus ministers who may similarly have experienced marginalization in the secular world of American higher education.

Three such “postliberal” pastors are the authors of this stimulating book: Martin Copenhaver is senior pastor of Wellesley Congregational Church in Massachusetts, Tony Robinson is senior minister of Plymouth Congregational Church in Seattle, and Will Willimon is Dean of the Duke University Chapel. They describe their experience in ministry, using the biblical metaphor of exile to capture the situation of the disestablished, old-line

Protestant churches they serve. What is remarkable is that rather than simply lamenting their ecclesiastical exile from the culture, instead like some of our Baptist forebears, they see exile as a source of hope for the authentic renewal of the church. So, instead of jeremiads on the state of church and society, readers are offered hopeful “good news”!

Following a foreword by Walter Brueggemann and a brief introduction, the book begins with three brief autobiographical chapters, one by each of the authors, which describe their pilgrimage to this unexpected point of view. In particular, Tony Robinson’s “The Making of a Post-Liberal” sounds the call of this renewal movement: “I never expected to be in love with the Bible, but I am. I never imagined that I would be encouraging people to reclaim spiritual practices like Sabbath keeping, but I am. . . . With God all things are possible, even the birth of a new church out of the death of the old” (pp. 25-26).

If Baptist campus ministry is starting to feel like serving in a mission outpost in a secular academic culture, then perhaps beginning a dialogue with these confessional, postliberal pastors would seem like entertaining “angels unawares”
(Heb. 13:2)

Following this triune overture, the book then *practically* examines this postliberal church renewal approach in the areas of Scripture, preaching and speech, ritual and sacrament, formation and teaching, and mission and social action. While the authors draw insightfully upon the writings of scholars like theologian George Lindbeck and ethicist Stanley Hauerwas, this book does not seek to engage critically the views of these scholars, but rather to apply them practically in the churches where the authors serve. In other words, the postliberal perspective is appropriated as a pastoral theology for the renewal of the church in the secular world. The book closes with a brief chapter that explores further the connections between conversion and new creation in the life of mainline Protestant churches.

CM

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO THE SHORT-TERM MISSION TRIP

David C. Forward, Moody Press, Chicago, 1998, 227 pp.

Reviewed by Jim Wilson, Campus Minister, Carson-Newman College, Tennessee

“Mission trips can be a life changing experience. You really can’t put a price tag on having a mission experience.” How many times have we as ministers recruited students for mission service with such statements? If student ministers really believe these statements then we should insure good results for our students with the best preparation and leadership possible.

The Essential Guide to the Short-term Mission Trip by David Forward is an excellent “step by step” resource to aid student ministers in giving quality leadership for mission experiences. David Forward’s experience and the focus of this book are on international or cross-cultured ministries (including domestic mission projects). Although the major thrust of the book deals with overseas missions, much of the material is applicable to stateside ventures as well.

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The first twenty percent of the book is dedicated to laying a Biblical and philosophical foundation for short-term missions. Objections to short-term missions are dealt with in a clear and objective manner. The challenge is to see the missions as “world Christians”, as God sees the world, rather than being “worldly Christians” (i.e. a self-centered church).

The largest portion of the book (50%) deals with preparation for the team as they fine-tune themselves for service. Of practical interest to the team leaders are the areas on fund-raising, financial planning, team building, and the basic troubleshooting that is needed to avoid the minefields that come with ministering in a different culture and place.

The on-site leadership (10% of the book) deals with health and medical emergencies, unexpected situations, keeping journals, and team management.

The concluding portion of the book (20%) orchestrates the debriefing, evaluation, and a section on forms and checklists that are of practical assistance to the team.

David Forward's book does prove to be an "essential guide" for student ministry leaders who desire to make the most of their mission team experience. Even for those student ministers who have "been doing mission trips for years", this book presents fresh ideas to help increase the productivity of the mission experience that will pay dividends in students lives for years to come.

CM



An Intrusive Gospel? *Christian Mission in the Postmodern World.*

Norman C. Kraus, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998.

Reviewed by Devita Parnell, Student at MacAfee School of Theology at Mercer University, Atlanta Georgia

Kraus, professor emeritus at Goshen College in Goshen, IN, writes from the perspective of his faith tradition – the Mennonite tradition. He critiques not only his own denomination, but also other mainline evangelical denominations whose approach to mission reflects a modern versus a postmodern worldview. His challenge is to mission agencies and others “on mission” to reconsider their approach to mission in this postmodern world we find ourselves.

Among college students, there seems to be an increasing interest in making a difference. Perhaps, that is because most college students are of the postmodern generation, a generation that wants to change the world. As a result, the number of students involved in Christian mission is larger than ever.

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Kraus’ book is a good place to start, when those involved in mission begin to think seriously about the components of mission. His first step is to address a false dichotomy that has crept into the Western mindset of Christianity and Christian mission. This dichotomy is the split between body and soul, which translates to a split between mission and evangelism. “Soul-winning” has been the focus of many churches, campus ministries, and individuals. Their focus is eternity. And, yes there is the eternal dimension to salvation, but there is also a “here and now” element to salvation. The physical dimension of salvation is what we are to be about, as well – salvation from hunger, from

oppression, from war, from societal pressures, etc. Kraus proposes a holistic view of mission.

In the first chapter, Kraus identifies three paradigms that have shaped Christian mission over the past century. The first is the evangelism paradigm; the second - the presence paradigm; and thirdly - the transformation paradigm. It is this last paradigm that Kraus recommends as a new approach to mission. The transformation model is not devoid of the proclamation of the evangelism paradigm, nor is the service element of the presence paradigm lost. The transformation model, however, reclaims the “dynamic of the gospel as change agent in human culture” (p. 56). “Gospel implies intervention,” however “gospel intervention is NOT intrusive” (p. 58). Although this model is characterized by incarnation, Kraus avoids using this word. Rather he uses a synonym, “catalytic,” to refer to the way that change is brought about. And change is “at the heart of the gospel” (59).

Kraus discusses the kind of intervention necessary in Christian mission - spiritual intervention that is holistic. He lists five social-personal changes necessary to holistic transformation. These changes involve the transformation of oppressive societal structures, as well as the human bodies and spirits affected by them. The goal of transforming mission is to bring about shalom - the Old Testament concept of salvation - to the fullest (justice and peace).

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The final chapter of *An Intrusive Gospel?* is on relating to people of other faiths. He makes his claims on the basis of Paul’s approach to cultural religions. That is, “calling other religions to a new identity ‘in Christ,’ not to a cultural Christianity” (114). Kraus lists several theological insights in the last pages of his book that are helpful in determining one’s own approach to other religions, but he makes clear his own position.

This is a book that you will not want to hand most college students. Most of the book's material is theoretical in nature and may not appeal to the average student. It is one, though, that campus ministers will want to read to better train their students to be on mission. It is an excellent resource for developing a beginning theology of mission. It raises issues that are critical to the way one approaches mission.

CM



Leading Change

Overcoming the Ideology of Comfort and the Tyranny of Custom

James O'Toole, San Francisco
Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995 pg. 261

Reviewed by Gary R. Brittain, Baptist Campus Minister, Jacksonville State University,
Jacksonville, Alabama

Unlike many of the numerous trendy books on leadership, Leading Change is low on sound, fury and anecdote and high on analysis, logic and historical context. O'Toole cites social scientists and leaders across the centuries to make his case for a values-based model of leadership. Ironically, O'Toole, a self-described non-practicing Christian, uses Christ as the model of the ideal leader.

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The book contends that an effective leader is a "moral" leader—one who truly builds his or her vision based on the well-researched needs and aspirations of his or her followers" (O'Toole's word.) This approach allows the followers to embrace the vision, because they see themselves and their desires in it.

O'Toole observes that few people want another person's will imposed on them. Moreover, in a democratic society and especially in today's culture, leaders perceived to be pushy will cause their followers to naturally resist any changes, even if the followers accept the change to be necessary.

Campus ministers will find O'Toole's discussion of "leading leaders" to be quite compelling. His leading leaders philosophy points out that transformation can only happen when key people are inspired to affect the change.

“To be an effective leader, no one can remain a solo operator...Instead one must become a leaders of leaders. Christianity did not depend on Christ personally; it did not depend on the force of his personality, his charm, or for that matter, his “media persona”...The ultimate measure of Christ’s leadership is that the movement he founded continued to spread after his death. In fact, from the moment of his first conversations, Christianity belonged not to Christ but to the Christians.” (p 11)

Conflict, tension, and turmoil are the order of the day - today and tomorrow.

While this quote from a non-Christian lacks understanding of Christ’s divinity, the role of the Holy Spirit and the resurrection, it does understand and appreciate Christ’s teaching, patience, trust and hope He placed in His disciples. O’Toole challenges leaders to show the same interest in those they lead.

The final portion of the book is dedicated to illustrations and explanations of why people tend to resist change and how leaders can get the attention of a seemingly inattentive crowd. In one particular check with reality, O’Toole advises, “Great leaders recognize that the perpetual lot of institutions in modern, democratic societies is flux and spirited disagreement among those with conflicting values. Conflict, tension, and turmoil are the order of the day—today and tomorrow. Thus, great leaders recognize that there is no single truth, no final answer, and that the process of leadership is a never-ending struggle to balance the constant and never-abating demands of those with different objectives.” (p.257) Of courses, O’Toole is speaking here in matters of practice and course. He is insistent the values and morals be well-described and constant.

Leading Change is provocative and interesting. Although some of the examples become a little tedious, it clearly has application for campus ministry.

CM



The Ragamuffin Gospel

Embracing the Unconditional Love of God

Brennan Manning,

Multnomah Publishers, 1990 227 pp.

Reviewed by Tommy Johnson, International Student Campus Minister, Kentucky Baptist Convention

In *The Ragamuffin Gospel* Brennan Manning writes "not for the super-spiritual...but for the bedraggled...the wobbly and weak-kneed who know they don't have it altogether." In doing so, Manning presents a grace that is compelling; for the grace that Manning knows is striking in its clarity, beauty and wonder.

Throughout *Ragamuffin*, the author insists that we rely entirely on the mercy of God. If we are honest, Manning says, our inadequacies and inevitable failures confront us with this reality. He is

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of self-recovery.*

fond of Thomas Merton's saying, "A saint is not someone who is good but who experiences the goodness of God." Manning

leaves no room for pretense or spiritual cosmetics. Rather, "grace must be drunk straight."

Himself a Catholic priest and itinerant evangelist, Manning is candid about his human frailty. Indeed, his daring to embrace the unconditional love of God seems born out of personal failure. He indicates, "Often I have been asked, 'Brennan, how is it possible that you became an alcoholic after you got saved?'" Manning explains that it is possible because he got beaten up by life. Left only to throw himself on the mercy of God, he cries:

*We are all
Ragamuffins.*

"To be alive is to be broken. And to be broken is to stand in the need of grace." Like Manning, all of us are incapable of self-recovery. To think otherwise is to kid ourselves. We all stand in the need of grace.

Having checkmated us with our need for mercy (all of us wear "tilted halos" in Manning's words), he presses us to accept the indiscriminate love of God. Manning is clear that Jesus came for and hung out with the rabble of his day as well as the socially acceptable. He sees Jesus' compassion for the outcast most evidenced in His table fellowship with those written off by society. In the context of the day, shared meals

Love is a greater catalyst for spiritual growth than law.

equalled shared friendship. It is this acceptance by God which makes possible self-acceptance. Manning promotes an acceptance of self not owing to one's spiritual resume but on the basis of being loved by God. Genuine self-acceptance is "an act of faith in the God of Grace."

Manning puts his finger on the uneasiness such radical grace creates. Why does embracing pure grace cause us discomfort? Because doing so is risky for the Christian community. Perhaps it is thought that law is preferable to grace for keeping us on spiritual course. Manning counters that love is a greater catalyst for spiritual growth than law. He finds that it is the experiencing of grace which transforms and produces a

life of gratitude. He contends that "a loving God fosters a loving people." Heavy on grace, Manning is not lax on discipleship. Like Bonhoeffer, he holds together grace and discipleship, portraying a grace-motivated discipleship.

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Manning calls for a discipleship that "risks everything" in response to God's love. Yet, he emphasizes, "What makes authentic disciples is not...spectacular successes in the ministry but a capacity for faithfulness. Authentic disciples may have stumbled and frequently fallen, endured lapses and relapses...and wandered into the far country. Yet, they kept coming back to Jesus." Over and over, Manning returns to the theme that spiritual maturity and depth requires learning to deal with failure through the grace of Christ.

Having been a part of a campus ministry that promoted a rigid, legalistic discipleship, I observed some years later that this form of training did not seem to yield much lasting fruit. I reflected that perhaps we tended to obey the stringent rules only when the spiritual police were near. It seemed that those of us who participated in this kind of program needed a grace-generated rather than self-generated discipleship to sustain our growth. I came away from that experience thirsty for real grace. The grace that Manning points to simultaneously fills that thirst and makes me want to drink more!

Having been profoundly touched and captured by the love of God in Christ, Manning helps us to glimpse the brilliance of grace. He brings good news for ragamuffins. And we are all ragamuffins.

CM