

and contestations. Kūng's book is hampered by the attempt to make palatable to all religious traditions the finally liberalised Christian values Kūng espouses (values which uniquely derive from secular Christian culture). It is possibly the worst book Kūng has ever written. One is tempted to say that it is not theology, but 'pie in the sky' liberalism; not ethics, but a parade of unquestioned Western values. Most seriously, Kūng doesn't seem to realise that one can't dream up an ethic for a world that doesn't exist, but must make the world as one makes the ethic, and that requires making certain sorts of community; and that already—is the project of Christ's Church.

GERARD LOUGHLIN

THE TEMPTATION AND THE PASSION: THE MARKAN SOTERIOLOGY. Society for New Testament Study Monograph Series 2 by Ernest Best. *Cambridge University Press*. Second Edition 1990. Pp. lxxx + 222. £30.00.

During this century the common understanding of Mark's Gospel has been greatly transformed. From being a naive, untutored biographer Mark became first the impassive collector of early tradition and then the adapter of existing material, so arranged as to controvert misleading views and substitute safer ones. One of the pioneers of that last stage was Professor Best who in 1965 produced a detailed study of the Markan soteriology. Since then he has written *Following Jesus: Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark* (1981); *Mark: The Gospel as Story* (1983), and *Disciples and Discipleship: Studies in the Gospel according to Mark* (1986). Now comes this second edition, in which the earliest Markan book is reprinted and supplemented by sixty-two pages of additional preface. All these writings draw upon or take issue with the numerous scholars working in this field; this second edition lists forty works of some importance.

What did Mark think was achieved by the life, death and resurrection of Christ? In his original book Dr Best examined and rejected the view that the cross was the defeat of Satan. That defeat took place at the Temptation: thereafter Satan virtually disappeared from the Gospel. By examining the Markan seams and the arrangement of the material, by studying the witness of Jesus to himself and the titles used of him, and by observing the significance of the Christian community, Dr Best sought to show that the cross is judgement, borne by Jesus, to bring people into the new community formed out of those who are saved, enjoy the forgiveness of their sin, and themselves go out to seek others (p. 191).

In this second edition, Dr Best moves away from redaction criticism to reading the Gospel as a whole, with much attention to the continuity of the narrative. He sharpens and re-affirms his previous view of the Temptation. He no longer thinks that Mark was using an existing passion narrative. Mark's use of the Temple theme indicated the end of some aspect of Judaism (law and cultus were no longer

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central) and the creation of a new people to include Jews and Gentiles. Even the new community failed, but they were restored by their response to the passion. Hence the question of atonement: Jesus is not presented chiefly as martyr or the righteous sufferer, and there is little to link him with the Servant. He is not chiefly an example to be imitated; his death is not chiefly an eschatological event; and his kingship does not govern the account. The main interpretation must depend on 10:45 (with *lytron* meaning liberation from spiritual failure—firm proof is lacking that the Akedah was influential), on 14:24 (the blood of the covenant shed for many), and the surprising cry of dereliction, 15:34—when Jesus bears God's judgement for fearing death as breaking relationship with God. Hence restoration after failure in discipleship and creation of the new community are central themes of Mark's passion.

Dr Best has enviable ability to disclose the essentials of an argument, to assess its measure of plausibility, and to expose its inadequacy. Present Markan scholarship needs this severe combing out. But to my mind, he is less persuasive when he proposes his own solution. I think he misreads the three important sayings, and misunderstands Gethsemane. His discussion does not help me to locate 'freedom from sin' (*lvi*) in the spectrum 'freedom from the consequences of having sinned—freedom from the practice of sinning'. But I have no hesitation in saying that his latest thoughts on Mark are necessary reading for all exegetes, and cannot lightly be dismissed.

KENNETH GRAYSTON

ATHANASIUS AND THE HUMAN BODY by Alvyn Pettersen. *The Bristol Press*, 1990. Pp. viii + 117.

Most recent discussions of the anthropology of St Athanasius have had more than half an eye on what is really another issue, viz. whether the great patriarch of Alexandria and champion of Nicene orthodoxy can be accused of Apollinarianism. It is alleged that his understanding of Christ's humanity allows no real room for a human soul. One of the great merits of Dr Pettersen's book is that it puts such questions to one side and concentrates on Athanasius' understanding of the human body for its own sake. In the light of this study, it may well appear that the question of Athanasius' Christology needs to be approached more circumspectly, but Dr Pettersen does not pursue this question here.

Dr Pettersen's discussion advances by close analysis of various Athanasian texts, but also by critical assessment of pieces of widely-held conventional wisdom about Athanasius, especially those found in textbooks accessible to students where such conventional wisdom rapidly gains wide currency as the truth. He has three large points to make about Athanasius' understanding of the human body. The first is the profound importance for Athanasius of the doctrine of *creatio ex*