

but that what Christ founded is a Community—the on-going historical sharing by human beings of the love and life of God.

This part of the book is outstanding in its clarity and inspiration. A second section deals with the Church of the Fathers. We are shown their fidelity to its founder and their rejection of concepts of authority alien to him and which were beginning to develop and emerge within the Church and the Roman Empire. Again, Hill's scholarship is unquestionable and yet enlivens rather than destroys the vitality of his analysis.

The third section leads us up to the present day: the development of the concept of Papal Authority as we experience it. Here, perhaps inevitably, the presentation becomes heavier, even a little turgid. Authors dealing to a certain extent with similar material such, for example, as Peter de Rosa (*Vicars of Christ*) have tried to alleviate this with sensationalism and runaway 'theologising' (enough to make Philip Caraman SJ describe it, not unjustly, as a 'binful of garbage', but Edmund Hill does not fall to anything like this. His sober insistence on the principles which he has worked out and demonstrated earlier in the book carry him through and give his criticism of the current Church all the more weight and authority.

In a way it makes sad reading, but within it there is great hope. Perhaps the greatest hope of all is given by the way in which a book like this, so dedicated and so committed to Christ's Gospel and to the Church which continues to try and live it, can be written, published and finally assessed—not by 'them' but by us.

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GOD, JESUS AND LIFE IN THE SPIRIT by David E. Jenkins. *SCM Press*. 1988. Pp. x + 147. £4.95.

This is the third collection of sundry bits and pieces that the Bishop of Durham has offered us in recent years. It is the most personal and religiously positive of the three. As we are told in the Preface, *God, Miracle and the Church of England*, and *God, Politics and the Future* were 'offered as finding God in and through problems. This book is meant to be about finding God because God finds us'. Jenkins is indeed, as his more substantial theological works had already shown, a God-intoxicated man, which is somewhat ironical, given the penchant of ignorant journalists and dreary Conservative MPs for portraying him as virtually an atheist.

The first three pieces were talks given to students at London University. Jenkins had been asked to 'cut to the heart of the matter', and he does so, trenchantly and vigorously, sketching, without 'religious verbiage', 'evasion' or 'unreality', a personal confession of faith in the resources of God, which men and women can draw on for the realisation of creative possibilities in themselves and in the public world. It is all good, sound, Christian stuff—a little crude and knock-about in style, but positive in theological substance and at the same time manifesting a strong sense of social ethical priorities. The only slight criticism I would make of these talks concerns a tendency to emphasise the resources of 'the biblical stories and the Christian tradition' rather than those of actual Christians, who tend to get disparaged. This is understandable in a radical prophet and reformer but a little irritating in one of our chief pastors.

Next come four talks on 'Rediscovering the Truth'—about God, about

Jesus, about people, and about the Holy Spirit and the Church—which the Bishop gave four times in his diocese in the period following his television notoriety. This provided an excellent opportunity to give some systematic teaching. Prefaced by an extraordinary diagram, depicting the Holy Trinity and the world, these talks reveal a profound trinitarian and incarnational faith, based on conviction of the centrality of Jesus and his Cross, seen in the light of the resurrection. There is a fine statement of resurrection faith here. Cross and resurrection demonstrate the power of suffering love and the promise of God's Kingdom. The slight criticism I made of the London talks is more than met in these Durham addresses. There is excellent material here on finding God in people despite everything: people are God's image and the basic resources through which the Spirit works. The Church exists to celebrate and promote worth. That means, primarily, God's work through us, of sharing love and combating all unworthiness. Despite some looseness of expression and despite residual worries about Jenkins' style—on which I shall comment below—it can surely be said that the diocese of Durham was privileged to receive such stimulating teaching from its Bishop.

The third part of the collection contains four Christmas sermons (from 1984 to 1987) and four Easter sermons (from 1985 to 1988) preached in Durham Cathedral. It was a good idea to include these, since they enable us to judge what all the fuss was about. Again, it must be said that the sermons contain excellent teaching on the heart of incarnational Christianity and the resurrection faith. Broadly speaking, the Bishop's views on the New Testament evidence and on the impossibility of proof in these matters of faith can hardly be faulted, although, possibly, he remains a little cavalier about the empty tomb and a little crude on the notion of 'survival'. Recognition of the fact that the significance of the empty tomb and the nature of the resurrection state are disputed topics in serious theology ought surely to encourage a rather more careful treatment of the traditional ways of expressing resurrection faith.

The final section contains two short pieces on applied spirituality. They are 'Why Pray?' and 'Spiritualities for the End of a Century'. I will comment simply on the first. It speaks movingly of prayer as a central way of engaging with the love at the heart of things that makes for justice, peace and worth. If there is a criticism here, it is that the notions of openness, attention and waiting that feature so prominently in Jenkins' exposition, are made to do too much work. Is it only through our 'attention' that God's love 'makes for' justice, peace and worth? The topic of divine action in the world is perhaps the most difficult of all theological topics. Certainly the expectations implicit in much petitionary and intercessory prayer are too naive. But there is a hint of reductionism about the Bishop's exercises in translation at this point.

There is so much of positive religious worth, theological depth, and a right sense of ethical priorities in the pieces collected here, that it may seem churlish to end with some reflections on the Bishop's style. His earlier, theological, writings were profound and insightful in content but tortuous and convoluted in expression. Certainly, in these more popular addresses, he writes in a much more down-to-earth, no-nonsense, way. But readers may still wonder, not only whether something is lost in the course of these vigorous if relatively crude formulations, but also whether he has really succeeded in finding the true simplicity of the natural communicator.

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