

COMMUNICATING



THEATER OF
Dreams

Ordained Servant Online

A Journal for Church Officers

E-ISSN 1931-7115

CURRENT ISSUE: IMAGES OF GOD 1

January 2020

From the Editor

The way of worship is perhaps the most contested arena in the modern Western church. The pervasive presence of entertainment presents a powerful temptation to imitate this mode of public performance and fails to consult God's Word for direction. Glen J. Clary, "Image of God and Images of God: The Second Commandment and Semi-realized Eschatology, Part 1, lays a foundation for considering the nature of idolatry in the Bible and how to counteract its intrusion into the worship of the church by understanding and implementing the regulative principle of worship.

Darryl Hart reviews an important new book on the Puritans, *Hot Protestants* by Michael Winship, in his review article, "Presbyterianism's Unusual Origins." He emphasizes the importance of the book:

Winship's book is essential reading for any Presbyterian curious about British antecedents to the rise and development of the church polity that American Presbyterians take for granted and that was implemented in America without any of the fanfare of civil war or regicide.

Charles Wingard's review of J. Stephen Yuille's *A Labor of Love: Puritan Pastoral Priorities* reminds us of the richness and contemporary relevance of the best Puritans. Puritan George Swinnock's *The Christian Man's Calling* offers sixteen pastoral priorities designed to encourage the discouraged pastor. In a cultural environment increasingly hostile to Christian faith, this book will be good medicine for pastors.

Michael Kearney reviews Ken Golden's book on the Christian Sabbath, *Entering God's Rest*. Golden addresses the matter of what activities are forbidden on the Sabbath. His mature and balanced wrestling with this matter should further the main focus of the book, which is keeping the day for worship of and fellowship with the living God.

I review *Piercing Heaven: Prayers of the Puritans*, compiled and edited by Robert Elmer. These prayers have been judiciously chosen from the best Puritans and a few latter day followers. Not only will this little volume assist Christians in their private devotions, but it will also help ministers of the Word in their preparation of prayers for the pulpit.

Finally, as a lover of winter in New England, I could not resist offering a poem "Ode to Snow."

The cover for this issue is a photograph of a department store window in New York

City taken by the editor. “Theater of Dreams” theme of the department store reminded me of the idolatry all around us.

Blessings in the Lamb,
Gregory Edward Reynolds

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Ordained Servant exists to help encourage, inform, and equip church officers for faithful, effective, and God-glorifying ministry in the visible church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Its primary audience is ministers, elders, and deacons of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, as well as interested officers from other Presbyterian and Reformed churches. Through high-quality editorials, articles, and book reviews, we will endeavor to stimulate clear thinking and the consistent practice of historic, confessional Presbyterianism.

Servant Truth

Image of God and Images of God: The Second Commandment and Semi-realized Eschatology, Part 1

by Glen J. Cary

In the iconoclastic controversies of the eighth and ninth centuries, the chief argument of the iconophiles in favor of iconography was the incarnation of Christ.¹ According to the seventh ecumenical council of the church (AD 787), the incarnation of the eternal Son of God, who is the image of the invisible God, necessitates the production of sacred icons and their use in divine worship. That doctrine is based, in part, on the assumption that the incarnation of Christ has rendered the prohibition of images in the second commandment obsolete.² A proper understanding of the rationale for the prohibition of cultic images, however, will demonstrate that the incarnation of Christ does not sanction iconic worship. Lawful worship in the new covenant, just as in the old covenant, is aniconic.

The Second Commandment

You shall have no other gods before me. “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. (Exod. 20:3–6)

In Exodus 20:3–6, there are two distinct but related commandments.³ Both commandments belong to the same genus, but they are different species. Both prohibit idolatry, but they deal with two different species of idolatry.⁴ The first teaches us “whom

¹ See Daniel Sahas, *Icon and Logos: Sources in Eighth-Century Iconoclasm* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 178–79. Cf. Ambrosios Giakalis, *Images of the Divine: The Seventh Ecumenical Council* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), 107–13; and Andrew Louth, *Three Treatises on the Divine Images: St. John of Damascus* (Yonkers, NY: SVS Press, 2003).

² Cf. Giakalis, 108–10; and Marjorie Boyle, “Christ the EIKΩN in the Apologies for Holy Images of John of Damascus,” *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 15, no. 2 (Fall 1970): 175–86.

³ Cf. Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2000), 137.

⁴ Cf. *The Commentary of Dr. Zacharias Ursinus on the Heidelberg Catechism* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1985), 518.

we are to worship;” the second, “how we are to worship.”⁵ Even though the second commandment only explicitly prohibits the use of icons or images in worship, the scope of the commandment is much broader.⁶ God not only proscribes images as means of worship; he prescribes other means of worship including prayer, the reading of Scripture, the preaching of the Word, the sacraments, and the singing of psalms and hymns. God regulates worship prescriptively not merely proscriptively. The second commandment has a broad scope; it deals with the overall governance of worship. In this article, however, we will focus on the narrow question of cultic images.

That the Ten Commandments begin by addressing the sin of idolatry points up the fact that “idolatry is the ultimate sin” and, in some sense, “the root of all other sins.”⁷ Idolatry was the chief sin of Israel and, indeed, the chief sin of humanity. As Tertullian said, “The principle crime of the human race, the highest guilt charged upon the world, the whole procuring cause of judgment—is idolatry.”⁸ In Romans 1:21–25, Paul indicts all people for rebellion against God, his chief accusation being the sin of idolatry. Cornelius Van Til observed, “Paul knows only two classes of people, those who worship and serve the Creator and those who worship and serve the creature.”⁹ All people fall into one of these two categories: true worshipers or idolaters. Every unregenerate person is an idolater. Idolatry is not merely an external cultic act, it is “a matter of the heart and its ultimate attachments.”¹⁰ Idolatry was both the root of Adam’s sin and the result of it. All who descend from him by ordinary generation are idolaters by nature. “Man’s nature, so to speak, is a perpetual factory of idols.”¹¹ Idolatry pervades the life of all who are in a state of sin. To put it in Pauline terms, all who are “in Adam” are idolaters; true worshipers are those who are “in Christ.” Conversion, therefore, may be described as turning away from idols to serve the living and true God (1 Thess. 1:9; cf. Acts 14:15; Rev. 9:20).

The second commandment contains a twofold prohibition: “You shall not make for yourself a carved image” (v. 4), and “You shall not bow down to them or serve them” (v. 5). The grounds of the prohibition are as follows, “for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers,” etc. (vv. 5–6). The prohibition deals with the production of any representations of God and the use of such images in the worship of God. You shall not make them, nor shall you bow down to them. Both idol-making (iconography) and idol-worshiping (iconolatry) are forbidden. A breach of the first would necessarily lead to a breach of the second.

⁵ G. I. Williamson, *The Westminster Confession of Faith* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1964), 138; cf. Joachim Douma, *The Ten Commandments* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1992), 35; and John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Four Last Books of Moses Arranged in the Form of a Harmony*, volume 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005), 106; hereafter, *Harmony of the Law*.

⁶ Calvin, *Harmony of the Law*, 107.

⁷ G. I. Williamson, *The Heidelberg Catechism: A Study Guide* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1993), 95.

⁸ Cited in David Bercot, *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), 350.

⁹ Cornelius Van Til, *Paul at Athens* (unidentified booklet, 1956), 1; cited in Gregory Edward Reynolds, *The Word is Worth a Thousand Pictures: Preaching in the Electronic Age* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001), 17.

¹⁰ Reynolds, *The Word*, 15.

¹¹ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. by Ford Lewis Battles, ed. by John T. McNeill (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1960), 108.

The second part of the prohibition makes it clear that the first part has in view cultic images. It is not a prohibition of the visual arts in general but of cultic images in particular. Turretin explains, “The making of images is not absolutely interdicted, but with a twofold limitation—that images should not be made representing God (Deut. 4:16), nor be employed in his worship.”¹² It is helpful to make a distinction here between cult and culture. Images are forbidden with regard to the former not the latter. The second commandment does not forbid the cultural use of visual arts or images, only their cultic use.¹³

What is especially in view in the second commandment is the iconic worship of Yahweh. Israel must not worship Yahweh like the pagan nations worship their gods. Iconic worship was a prominent feature of the nations that surrounded Israel, but the worship of Yahweh was to be aniconic. Even before leaving Mount Sinai, however, Israel broke the second commandment. Aaron made a golden calf as a symbolic representation of Yahweh (Exod. 32:5; cf. 1 Kings 12:28).¹⁴ Aaron made an image of a bull not because he thought Yahweh possessed the form of a bull, but to symbolize Yahweh’s power. His image was “never intended to portray a photographic likeness, but only to control Yahweh’s power.”¹⁵ He “saw a passing representation of precisely that power in the strong bull with its fertility.”¹⁶ Thus, the golden calf was an attempt to secure Yahweh’s presence among his people and to harness and channel his power. That is, it was an attempt to walk God around on a leash.¹⁷

After their forty-year sojourn in the wilderness, the Israelites entered the Promised Land with orders to destroy all cultic images of the Canaanites. The conquest of Canaan was meant to be a war against the idols of Canaan. In place of the false worship of the Canaanites, Israel was to establish the true worship of Yahweh “in the midst of his sanctuary-kingdom.”¹⁸ However, Israel failed to do that, and as a result, the idols of the nations proved to be a snare to them (Ps. 106:36). They soon fell into idolatry just as God had forewarned (Deut. 7:16).

Throughout Israel’s history, there were many periods of repentance and reformation accompanied by the destruction of images and recovery of true worship. The forbidden means of worship were destroyed, and the divinely prescribed means were restored.¹⁹ Indeed, the whole history of Israel’s dynastic period can be told and evaluated in terms of her faithfulness to or disregard of the first and second commandments. Gregory Reynolds explains:

¹² Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, volume 2 (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1994) 65.

¹³ Cf. Douma, *The Ten Commandments*, 54–56.

¹⁴ After making the calf, Aaron proclaimed, “Tomorrow shall be a feast to the LORD [Yahweh]” (Exod. 32:5). Hence, the golden calf was an image of Yahweh. In Acts 7:41, the calf is called an idol even though it was intended as a representation of Yahweh. God treated the calf as a rival and substitute for himself; he made no distinction between Israel’s worship of him through the golden calf and the pagan worship of false gods (1 Cor. 10:7–14).

¹⁵ Douma, *The Ten Commandments*, 39.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹⁸ Meredith G. Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority*, second edition (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1997), 50.

¹⁹ Reynolds, *The Word*, 8.

While First and Second Kings focus on the prophetic dimension and First and Second Chronicles focus on the priestly dimension of Israel's dynastic history; the history of Israel's kings in both places is viewed uniformly from the perspective of idolatry. The Former Prophets [Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings] form a court brief, used by the prophets in prosecuting God's Covenant lawsuit against idolatrous Israel. Asa, Jehoshaphat, and especially Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah stand out as heroes by destroying idolatry in varying degrees.²⁰

Despite the occasional periods of reformation in Israel's history and the repeated prophetic warnings and calls to repentance, Israel continued to descend into deeper depths of depravity, which ultimately led to the departure of God's glory from his temple, the temple's destruction, and the exile of his people—all because of their idolatry. In his mercy, however, God graciously preserved a remnant of his people and promised to make a new covenant with them, which included, among other things, a promise to cleanse and cure them of their idolatry (e.g. Ezek. 36:24–27).

Verbal Revelation at Mount Sinai

Another version of the second commandment is found in Deuteronomy 4, where Moses reminds the Israelites that when they came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, the Lord spoke to them “out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of words, but saw no form; there was only a voice” (4:12). The word translated “form” here is the same term used in the second commandment. “You shall not make for yourself a carved image or any likeness” (Exod. 20:4). The Hebrew word *temunah* (תְּמוּנָה), meaning “form” or “likeness,” occurs only ten times in the Old Testament, including Numbers 12:8, which I will examine below.²¹ As the basis of the prohibition of images, Moses appeals to the fact that Israel did not see Yahweh's form (*temunah*). “Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. Since you saw no form (*temunah*) on the day that the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image” (Deut. 4:15–16).

“Carved image” (*pesel*, פֶּסֶל) is the other term used in the second commandment. “You shall not make for yourself a carved image” (Exod. 20:4). In the Old Testament, *pesel* refers to any image made from wood, stone, or metal that represents God (whether the true God or a false god).²² Moses writes,

Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. Since you saw no form [*temunah*] on the day that the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image [*pesel*] for yourselves, in the form [*temunah*] of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, the likeness of anything that

²⁰ Ibid., 9; cf. Kline, *Structure of Biblical Authority*, 58–59.

²¹ See Exod. 20:4; Num. 12:8; Deut. 4:12, 15, 16, 23, 25; 5:8; Job. 4:16; and Psalm 17:15. Cf. Francis Brown, et al., *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001), 568; hereafter BDB.

²² See BDB, 820; cf. James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew*, electronic edition (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth.
(Deut. 4:15–18)

This is another version of the second commandment, but notice that the rationale for the prohibition is different than the rationale given in Exodus 20. In Exodus 20, the grounds are, “for I the LORD your God am a jealous God,” referring to God’s conjugal jealousy.²³ But in Deuteronomy 4:15–18, we find a different rationale for the prohibition, namely, the fact that Israel saw no form when God spoke to them at the mountain. Since you saw no form or likeness (*temunah*), do not make an image (*pesel*). The common interpretation of this rationale appeals to the spiritual (nonphysical) nature of God. Since God is an invisible spirit, he cannot be imaged. It is an ontological impossibility.²⁴

There are two problems with that interpretation. First, on several occasions, God visibly appeared to certain people like Abraham, who saw him in human form (Gen. 18:1–21), and Jacob, who declared that he had seen God face to face (Gen. 32:22–32). Likewise, Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel ascended Mt. Sinai, beheld God, and ate and drank in his presence (Exod. 24:11). The second problem with that interpretation is that Deuteronomy 4:15–18 is making a historical argument not an ontological one about the immaterial and invisible nature of the divine essence.²⁵ It is true that God is a pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions (WCF 2.1), but that is not the point of the rationale in Deuteronomy 4:15–18. Rather, the rationale is based on God’s chosen mode of revelation at Mount Sinai. God chose to reveal himself to Israel by means of words not images. His chosen mode of revelation was verbal not visual. Therefore, since you heard a voice but saw no form, do not make an image (Deut. 4:15–16). There is an inseparable link, therefore, between the prohibition of images in the second commandment and God’s choice of verbal revelation.

Direct and Indirect Revelation

Bearing in mind the link between the prohibition of images and divine revelation, let us examine Numbers 12:6–8. Out of jealousy over Moses’s unique role as prophet-mediator of the covenant, Miriam and Aaron complained about Moses. Consequently, the Lord rebuked them:

Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream.²⁶ Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house. With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form [*temunah*] of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? (Numb. 12:6–8)

²³ Vos, *Biblical Theology*, 136. Idolatry is spiritual adultery, which arouses jealousy in Yahweh much like jealousy is aroused in a husband if his wife leaves him for another man (cf. Douma, *The Ten Commandments*, 43).

²⁴ E.g., Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2002), 60. For a critique of this interpretation, see Vos, *Biblical Theology*, 136; Douma, *The Ten Commandments*, 45; and David VanDrunen, “Iconoclasm, Incarnation and Eschatology: Toward a Catholic Understanding of the Reformed Doctrine of the ‘Second’ Commandment,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 6, no. 2 (April 2004): 130–47.

²⁵ VanDrunen, “Iconoclasm, Incarnation and Eschatology,” 134–35.

²⁶ Visions and dreams are prophetic modes of revelation (cf. Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17–18).

This rebuke of Miriam and Aaron highlights the priority and uniqueness of Moses in comparison to all other prophets of Israel, particularly with respect to the various modes of revelation by which God made himself known to them.²⁷ God distinguishes Moses from all other prophets and places him in an entirely different category in terms of how he receives divine revelation. God spoke to the other prophets in dreams and visions—not clearly but in riddles, not directly but indirectly. To Moses, however, God spoke mouth to mouth or face to face as it is stated elsewhere in the Pentateuch. “Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend” (Exod. 33:11).²⁸ “There has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face” (Deut. 34:10). Again, the priority and uniqueness of Moses is stressed in terms of his face-to-face communion with God.

God spoke to the other prophets of Israel in dreams and visions, but that is not how he spoke to Moses. “With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles” (Numb. 12:8). The term translated “riddles” here means through obscure or enigmatic words.²⁹ Furthermore, Moses “beholds the form [תְּמוּנַת הַיְיָ *temunah*] of the LORD” (Num. 12:8). *Temunah* here is the same word used in the grounds of the prohibition of the second commandment. Since you saw no form (תְּמוּנַת הַיְיָ *temunah*), make no image (Deut. 4:15–16).³⁰ Robertson explains the significance of Moses seeing the form of the LORD:

Scripture says elsewhere that no man can see God and live (Exod. 33:18–19). Yet Moses as prophet shall see the form of God. These statements are not contradictory. Moses will not see the essential nature of God. Yet he will see a form that shall manifest the nature of the invisible God to the understanding of mortal man. This experience by Moses places him in a category distinct from all the other prophets. He is unique in the history of prophetism in Israel, and by God’s appointment he holds a position of priority that will belong to no one else.³¹

The contrast in Numbers 12:6–8 is between two modes of revelation that we can label face-to-face communication versus non-face-to-face communication, or, if one prefers, direct versus indirect communication. “Face to face” is an idiom that denotes direct, intimate communication in contrast to indirect communication by means of an intermediary or medium.³² In the ancient world both in Jewish literature (particularly with reference to Numb. 12:6–8) and in Greco-Roman literature, the metaphor used to describe an indirect mode of communication was a mirror.³³ When one looks at something in a mirror, one does not see the thing itself but only a reflection of it. If we

²⁷ Cf. O. Palmer Robertson, *The Christ of the Prophets* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2004), 31–39

²⁸ The idiom “face to face” denotes intimacy of relationship and access. See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 1070.

²⁹ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1068.

³⁰ It is significant that the Septuagint uses the word *doxa* (δόξα) in Numbers 12:8; Moses “beholds the glory of the Lord;” cf. 2 Corinthians 3:18, “we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.”

³¹ Robertson, *The Christ of the Prophets*, 38

³² Cf. David Garland, *1 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2003), 624.

³³ See Roy Ciampa and Brian Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010) 658–60; cf. Garland, 623–25; and Thiselton, 1067–70.

apply the mirror metaphor to Numbers 12:6–8, we can paraphrase the idea as follows: Unlike Moses with whom God spoke face to face, the other prophets of Israel only beheld God indirectly as if they were looking at his reflection in a mirror. Similarly, if we apply the same metaphor to the rationale of the prohibition of images in Deuteronomy 4:15–18, we can paraphrase the prohibition as follows: Since you did not behold my form but only saw my reflection in the mirror of my Word, do not make an image of me.

It should be noted that the direct, intimate, face-to-face encounter with God that Moses experienced pointed forward to and was a foretaste of the consummative revelation of God’s glory in the age to come, the eschatological hope of every believer. When Moses prayed “Please show me your glory,” the LORD said to him, “You cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live” (Exod. 33:22–23). Moses’s face-to-face communication with God in which he beheld the form of God (Num. 12:8) does not refer to the consummative revelation of God’s glory at the end of the age, though it was certainly a foretaste of it.

Like Moses, many other saints of old longed to see God. The psalmist states, “As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness [תְּמוּנַתְךָ *temunah*]” (Ps. 17:15). Again, “One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple” (27:4; cf. Job 19:25–26). The desire to see God is good. It is, in fact, the pinnacle of Christian eschatological hope.³⁴ This desire is partly fulfilled in the incarnation of the eternal Son of God who is the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15). When Philip said to Jesus “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us,” the Lord responded, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:8–9).

In part two of this article, we will turn our attention to the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ and consider whether the incarnation has any effect on the second commandment’s prohibition of cultic images.

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³⁴ VanDrunen, “Iconoclasm, Incarnation and Eschatology,” 143.

ServantReading

Presbyterianism's Unusual Origins

A Review Article

by Darryl G. Hart

Michael P. Winship. *Hot Protestants: A History of Puritanism in England and America*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019, xiii + 351 pages, \$28.00.

“Puritanism” is a word that has almost as many associations as “evangelicalism.” Likewise, Presbyterians in the United States have an awkward relationship with Puritanism if only because of the institutions that grew from it in North America. Although Puritanism as a reform movement in the Church of England could take Congregational, Presbyterian, or even moderate episcopal forms, in the United States the reformist English Protestantism that took root in New England left Congregationalism and the United Church of Christ as its denominational legacy. Once someone mentions the UCC (also known as Unitarians Considering Christ), conservative Presbyterians generally head for the doors. Indeed, ever since the 1801 Plan of Union between Presbyterians and Congregationalists to cooperate in planting churches in the Northwest Territory (which eventually became Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin), relations between the two denominations have been rocky. In 1837, Old School Presbyterians not only broke with their New School siblings, but they did so because of the infectious doctrines oozing into Presbyterian institutions thanks to New England theology taught at Yale Divinity School (for starters).

Thus, there are two roads—Presbyterian and Congregational—that American descendants of British Protestantism have traveled since the US founding. Michael Winship’s brilliant and original book *Hot Protestants* shows, from 1540 to 1700 relations between Presbyterians and Congregationalists were anything but smooth or straightforward.

Although contemporary conservative Presbyterians tend to look to Puritan sermons and devotional literature for instruction and inspiration, they rarely do so with an eye for historical context or ecclesiastical consequences. Puritanism as a form of Protestant devotion was the English-speaking equivalent of Pietism. It featured intense spiritual experiences, from conversion to daily Bible-reading, prayer, introspection, and more. Puritanism more narrowly was an effort, sometimes better-organized than others, to carry out reform of the Church of England. Originally it grew from frustration with what Queen Elizabeth and her advisors would allow. Often, the Puritan’s inspiration for further reform were the Reformed churches of Geneva and Zurich. Many English and Scottish Protestants experienced this firsthand while in exile, especially during Queen Mary Tudor’s reign (1553–58) as well as that of Mary, Queen of Scots (1542–67). The Stuart

monarchy after Elizabeth only frustrated Puritans more. The Stuarts' Scottish lineage gave Puritans additional political levers for pursuing ecclesiastical reformation thanks to alliances between the English and the Scots under a single crown. It was a very rough ride, and Winship's book captures in wonderful and dramatic detail the difficult road that Puritanism traveled.

His story begins with John Hooper, a Cistercian monk at Cleeve Abbey, who converted to Protestantism around 1540 after reading tracts written by Reformed pastors from Zurich. Under Henry VIII's reign and repression of some reformers, Hooper left England and settled in Zurich. When he returned to England, now under Edward VI, Hooper became a popular London preacher, known for his condemnation of England's national sins. He also objected to the practices of wearing vestments and kneeling for the Lord's Supper—hallmark offenses for hot Protestants. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, appointed Hooper to the bishopric of Gloucester but the former monk refused to wear vestments for the ceremony and went to prison for his convictions. Under threat of execution, Hooper relented and became Gloucester's bishop.

About midway through the book is another episode involving the Presbyterian (by conviction since the Church of England was still Episcopalian) Christopher Love. He preached as a chaplain in 1645 to Oliver Cromwell's New Model Army and proclaimed the Lord's blessing on the military's recent victory in a battle against Charles I's soldiers. But Cromwell's military success proved costly for Presbyterians like Love. The New Model Army was home to Baptists, Independents, and Congregationalists. It reflected the sort of religious diversity that prevailed during the Commonwealth era (1649–60), a pluralism that Presbyterians opposed. As Cromwell gained more power, Presbyterians lost their standing and even had to meet surreptitiously. After the execution of the king, Cromwell's government imprisoned Love for maintaining ties with Scots and seeking to hold England to the Solemn League and Covenant. For these treasonous acts, Love was beheaded.

These stories capture the flavor of Winship's book—a series of episodes that reveal larger historical developments—and Love's in particular underscores the inability of British Protestants to agree. All Puritans sought a reform of the Church of England that resembled the Reformed churches of Switzerland, not because Calvin or Heinrich Bullinger were international Protestant celebrities but because the Swiss had done the most to remove Roman Catholic elements from church practices. Even more, through Presbyterian polity they had implemented oversight of church members that encouraged holiness. The Swiss Reformation represented the reform of both institutions and persons. But the best path to implementing those ideals in England and Scotland was by no means clear. Presbyterians favored church polity that removed power from bishops and dispersed it to pastors and elders who could oversee congregational life according to biblical norms. Presbyterians also favored a national church. Congregationalists, in contrast, favored covenanted congregations, comprised of believers who could give evidence of their conversion experience. They also opposed a national church and favored religious freedom, which explains the religious diversity in Cromwell's army.

From the beginning to the end of the seventeenth century, Presbyterians and Congregationalists usually found themselves at loggerheads not only about church reform but also about national politics. For Presbyterians, the Scots' condition for joining the English parliament against Charles I, the Solemn League and Covenant, was the

proverbial North Star. They hoped the Stuart monarchs would uphold their earlier vows to maintain and defend the true religion, first in Scotland and then in the Three Kingdoms (England, Scotland, and Ireland). As such, Presbyterians tended to be royalists while Congregationalists could wander into republicanism. New England's state churches were another variation on Puritan religious and political policy. And one of the great strengths of Winship's book is to tell the story of Puritanism on both sides of the Atlantic.

Hot Protestants also excels for putting British church-state relations into the context of early modern Britain's tumultuous relations between crown and parliament. As much as contemporary Presbyterians debate two kingdoms, theonomy, or transformationalism, Protestants in the seventeenth century had access to political power and needed to make difficult choices for accomplishing reformation. Here the differences between Scotland and England are important since the Church of Scotland had achieved a measure of reformation, even back to the reign of James VI (then James I of England). The Second Book of Discipline (1578) gave the Scottish church many of the features of Presbyterian government. This was not true for England until Parliament, with the assistance of the Westminster Assembly, began to consider forming a Presbyterian Church of England. The political alliance with the Scots and the ratification of the Solemn League and Covenant gave additional appeal to Presbyterianism. But because of the diversity of English Puritans, and the appeal of Congregationalism and Independency to many, Presbyterianism never bore fruit in the form of an English national church.

In fact, the Civil War of the 1640s, the emergence of Cromwell, and the creation of the Commonwealth, insured that Presbyterianism in England remained a minority position. Meanwhile, from 1650 until the Glorious Revolution (1688–89), which relieved England and Scotland of the Stuarts and placed William and Mary on the throne, Presbyterians and Congregationalists vied for influence with kings, Parliament, and even bishops. Those political battles even took a toll on New England Puritanism, such that the royal charter (1692) that Massachusetts received from William and Mary, according to Winship, signaled the death of Puritan hopes for a godly commonwealth where church and magistrate closely cooperated. (Winship observes that Puritanism's defeat was also a factor in the witch trials that afflicted Massachusetts towns in the 1690s.) The result of almost 150 years of hopes for and attempts at reform left Puritans far from what they had once envisioned. Presbyterianism prevailed in Scotland but lacked the vigor that earlier reformers had wanted.

How these alliances, controversies, and political schemes played out in the North American colonies and eventually in the United States are well beyond Winship's account. At the same time, Winship's book is essential reading for any Presbyterian curious about British antecedents to the rise and development of the church polity that American Presbyterians take for granted and that was implemented in America without any of the fanfare of civil war or regicide. Even better, *Hot Protestants* is a book that readers will not be able to put down.

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ServantReading

A Labor of Love: Puritan Pastoral Priorities, by J. Stephen Yuille

by Charles Malcolm Wingard

A Labor of Love: Puritan Pastoral Priorities, by J. Stephen Yuille, Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2013, x + 136 pages, \$15.00, paper.

Faithful ministers experience bouts of discouragement, some of them long and intensely painful. Our hearts go out to them: hard work and steadfast prayer have yielded little in the way of visible fruit. Their discouragement can be so severe that they lose sight of the nobility of their work—they are men sent by God to care for his blood-bought church.

A second danger may come from the opposite direction: times of growth in God's church produce pride. If ministers are not careful, they end up claiming for themselves the glory that belongs to God alone.

Both dangers—discouragement and pride—can cripple ministers and their work. Fortunately, there are safeguards, one of which is books that remind pastors of their calling and character while offering a fresh vision of their indispensable work. J. Stephen Yuille's splendid *A Labor of Love: Puritan Pastoral Priorities* is such a book.

The author writes in an era of “diminished appreciation of pastoral ministry.” Frequently ministers and churches possess “a clouded perception of pastoral ministry.” They fail to distinguish between *success* based upon worldly calculations of “power, prestige, privilege, and prosperity,” and *excellence* that is measured by faithfulness to God, an excellence that the world—and even unthinking Christians—dismiss as failure (1–2).

Given the dangers, pastors need constant reminders of the fundamentals of their work lest they stray from their God-given duties. They also must understand the proper motivation for their work, which is “an insatiable desire to please God” (3). Truly, ministers must keep vigilant watch over their hearts, for “whatever rules our hearts controls our ministry” (36).

A Labor of Love has two major sections: pastoral priorities (part one) and Swinnock's farewell sermon upon leaving a beloved congregation after eleven years (part two).

In part one, Yuille presents sixteen pastoral priorities that he found in a section of George Swinnock's *The Christian Man's Calling*, “wishes” the seventeenth-century Puritan had for his own ministry (3–4). Each chapter heading identifies one aspect of the pastor's identity; a quotation from Swinnock is followed by the author's own instruction and reflections.

A comprehensive portrait of the Christian minister emerges. He is . . .

- A royal ambassador, heralding God's words of reconciliation
- A true vessel, knowing experientially the power of the great truths he preaches

- A sincere suitor, earnestly seeking the spiritual well-being of men
- A wise builder, laying the foundation of sound doctrine
- A skilled physician, distributing what men need most in their various spiritual conditions
- A diligent student, studying hard, reading hard, and praying hard
- A tender mother, affectionately disposed toward those entrusted to his care
- A courageous soldier, facing danger to protect his people
- A prudent preacher, preparing to preach in the way that tends most to God's glory and his people's good
- A ceaseless intercessor, praying privately and publicly for the salvation of his flock
- A patient instructor, helping the unstable believer find balance
- A discerning judge, ready to speak the truth and act with firm and loving discipline
- A faithful shepherd, visiting and counseling his flock
- A powerful example, modeling a life of good works
- A humble instrument, neither discouraged nor proud but obedient
- A watchful overseer, taking heed to his own doctrine and life

In Chapter 7, the pastor as *a tender mother* serves as an example of Yuille's approach.

In the opening quotation, Swinnock prays:

Lord, when I behold wounded, bleeding, dying souls, let my eyes affect my heart with sorrow. May I seek Thy blessing upon my diligent efforts for their recovery. Make me such a tender and affectionate mother that I patiently bear their offenses. May I willingly bear the burden of instructing my children. (37)

The image of minister as tender mother comes from 1 Thessalonians 2:7–8 (KJV): “But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.” Paul was “torn away” from his spiritual children by persecution (1 Thess. 2:17)—a separation, explains Yuille, that is costly, but only temporary, bodily, and involuntary. The Thessalonians will never be far from his heart (39).

He proceeds to identify and warn of two attitudes that destroy a pastor's love for his people: envy and anger. Taking his cues from Jonathan Edwards, Yuille notes four “occasions” when anger is sinful: when it is distinguished by envy, errant judgment, and loss of self-control, and is out of proportion to its cause. “As pastors, we must mortify in us all that disrupts ‘sincere affection’ for our people” (39–41).

Both Swinnock and Yuille are eminently quotable. Here are two of my favorites:

We must not give people the impression that we love them (kind words, warm hugs, beautiful smiles, firm handshakes), when in reality we feel quite different. We must not deceive ourselves into thinking that externals will mask what lurks inside. (Yuille, 19)

Some Christians erroneously assume that good works and good manners are inconsistent. Although Christianity removes the pretentious expressions of courtesy, it does not destroy courtesy. Civil language and courteous behavior are not essential to Christianity, but they do adorn it. God's saints are always courteous. (Swinnock, 99)

The title for this book comes from the dedication of Swinnock's farewell sermon: "There are two things which I have always judged chiefly requisite in a pastor—labor and love. The former is a work of the head, the latter a work of the heart: faithful labor will speak his love, and sincere love will sweeten his labor" (4).

Taken to heart, this fine book will encourage pastors to make their work a labor of love.

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ServantReading

Entering God's Rest *by Ken Golden*

by Michael J. Kearney

Entering God's Rest: The Sabbath from Genesis to Revelation (And What It Means for You), by Ken Golden. Lancaster, PA: Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, 2018, 81 pages, \$7.99, Kindle.

Ken Golden has provided a relatively brief introduction to the importance of Sabbath rest in God's purposes for humanity, something that could be read in under three hours. This is not an exhaustive, in-depth study. It is useful, rather, in acquainting readers with the biblical concept and reality of entering God's rest and how this is to be tasted through observance of the Christian Sabbath, or Lord's Day. It also goes out of its way to respect Christian liberty in terms of what Sunday is to look like for Christians. Judging from his interactions in certain footnotes with another author (Joseph Pipa Jr., in his writing on *The Lord's Day*), along with the book's overall content, it is safe to say that Golden is offering a more moderate alternative to strict Sabbatarianism.

In accordance with the subtitle, Golden traces the development of biblical Sabbath rest from Genesis to Revelation, starting of course with the creation ordinance in Genesis 2:1–3, whereby God's rest on the climactic seventh day of creation becomes the basis for humanity sanctifying the seventh day of the week. Mankind in Adam would fail to fulfill the covenant of works and thus fail to enter the rest divinely held out to God's image-bearers (Gen. 2–3), but the hope of God's rest is not dashed to pieces. Starting with Genesis 3:15 and the first announcement of the gospel promise, the future Savior is hinted at—the One to be bruised, but whose bruising would be his and his people's victory, displayed in his bodily resurrection from the dead, ushering redeemed humanity towards its appointed rest, grounded upon God and his faithfulness to the covenant of grace. As Golden points out, we enter God's rest by faith in Another, in this seed of the woman, the “second Adam,” Jesus Christ, through the perfection of his active obedience.

While his treatment is nuanced enough to recognize a temporary, judicial-law aspect to it, as operative in Israel's life as a theocracy, Golden goes on to demonstrate that the fourth commandment is reflective of God's abiding moral law, and in substance therefore still in force under the new covenant. This is a key point to make for those ignorant of the relevance of the Ten Commandments for the church today (like those from a dispensational background), perhaps especially when it comes to the commandment in Exodus 20:8–11 to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Related to this, Golden takes pains to unpack how the designated day of rest would change to Sunday, starting with Christ being raised from the dead the first day of the week, what could also be considered the eighth day, with the number eight suggestive of a new beginning.

Golden, however, does move on to “what it means for you.” One part that stands out is “Present and Future Rest,” in which he mines some of the riches of Hebrews 3–4 (with

Psalm 95 as backdrop) to draw out the already/not yet dynamic of Sabbath rest as we know it as Christians. We have not yet fully experienced it, and yet worshipping God together on the Lord's Day is like participating in a "dress rehearsal" for the glories of the heavenly rest to come, namely the eternal Sabbath.

Finally, though some of what he says about Isaiah 58 in an earlier section anticipates it (check out his appendix on this passage as well), Golden more fully addresses the issue of current Lord's Day practices in the concluding chapter on "Sabbath Wisdom," in which he argues for it being a matter of wisdom as to how one or one's family is to pursue rest on Sunday. While seeking God with the church publicly as his worshipers and being given to the means of grace is non-negotiable to be the focal point, how the day is otherwise spent is a matter of debate. Golden is concerned that while some of us may have scruples that govern what we do or don't do on Sunday, we ought to exercise caution lest we unduly impose these standards on others. In particular, he comes down in favor of allowing some measure of freedom as to how one handles certain activities that could, but might not necessarily, interfere with resting in the Lord and worshipping him. Moreover, there are conceivable scenarios where these activities might even enhance it.

Personally, I found myself believing that on these matters it might have been helpful to also, or at least more explicitly and emphatically, ask, "How can we most glorify and enjoy God in our Lord's Day activities?" Golden openly wrestles over the problem of what is actually forbidden by Scripture (cf. the prohibition of needless involvement in "worldly employments and recreations" in WLC 119). Yet, in fairness, it must be said that he raises a host of practical questions that are valid, doing so in a pastorally sensitive manner (e.g., about eating out or watching sports or engaging in recreation on a Sunday, under certain conditions). More absolute, hard-and-fast interpreters and practitioners of the Sabbath principle need to reckon with these challenges. Even in Reformed circles, there has been, and remains, a range of beliefs and approaches, and Golden does a pretty good job of representing his end of the spectrum.

Controversies aside, though, it shouldn't be lost that Golden has made an accessible case for the positive recovery of the Christian Sabbath. There are other perspectives on the topic, to be sure, but this would be a solid book to share with someone who is unfamiliar with these themes and interested in learning more—that person who is just beginning to follow Christ or investigate Christianity, or is coming out of broad Evangelicalism, or is new to one of our churches. In fact, as David VanDrunen points out in his foreword, any book that takes the Lord's Day as seriously as Golden does in this work should be appreciated by a wide variety of readers.

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ServantReading

Piercing Heaven: Prayers of the Puritans, *compiled and edited by Robert Elmer*

by Gregory E. Reynolds

Piercing Heaven: Prayers of the Puritans, compiled and edited by Robert Elmer.
Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2019, 321 pages, \$23.99.

The title of this book comes from a saying of well-known Puritan Thomas Watson, “That prayer is most likely to pierce heaven which first pierces one’s own heart.”¹

The piety founded in the theology of the Westminster Confession and Catechisms is the piety of the Puritans. Anthony Burgess, Jeremiah Burroughs, and Edward Reynolds, who wrote several of the prayers in this volume, were all members of the Westminster Assembly.

This newly published prayer book combines the prayers of thirty-two writers, mostly seventeenth-century Puritans or in a few cases men of Puritan sympathies, like nineteenth-century Octavius Winslow. I say “men,” but there is an exception, the exceptional Puritan poet and preeminent woman of letters in the American colonies, Ann Bradstreet. She (along with several prominent theologians like William Ames and Richard Sibbes) has only one prayer, presumably because she did not write many prayers. Other lesser known writers like Lewis Bayly and Robert Hawker were prolific prayer authors. Hawker wrote the most in this volume with more than fifty. Well-known devotional writer and preacher Philip Doddridge comes a close second with almost forty. There are also international connections; theologian-preachers such as William Bridge and William Ames had a strong connection with the Calvinists of the Netherlands. William Guthrie was a pastor in the Scottish Covenanter movement. Ezekiel Hopkins was a bishop in the Church of Ireland. It is also notable that all of these authors, with the exception of Ann Bradstreet were preachers, the majority of whom were also theologians. Doctrine and life were never separated, and many risked their lives, fortunes, and honor for what they believed and preached, due to the 1662 Act of Uniformity, which prescribed conformity to the Church of England and its *Book of Common Prayer*.

As to content, the combination of fervent devotion, sound biblical foundation, and carefully articulated theology makes these prayers a treasure to be explored and enjoyed. The prayers are divided into sixteen categories, ranging from “Teach Me to Pray” to “Your Kingdom Come.” Three categories deal with beginning, living, and closing the day. Along with a section on forgiveness of sins is a unique category “Help Me Give the Gospel to Others.” It is obvious that the editor and compiler Robert Elmer has done his work with great care and discernment.

¹ Quoted on dedication page. I have not been able to locate the source.

The publisher's blurb is informative and sums up my reason for heartily recommending this book.

For the Puritans, prayer was neither casual nor dull. Their prayers were passionate affairs, from earnestly pleading for mercy to joyful praise. These rich expressions of deep Christian faith are a shining example of holy living.

The Puritan combination of warm piety and careful intellect have fueled a renaissance of interest in their movement. This combination is on display in *Piercing Heaven*, a collection of carefully constructed prayers from leading Puritans. The language in these prayers has been slightly updated for a modern audience while retaining the elevated tone of the Puritans. With prayers from Richard Baxter, Thomas Brooks, and many more, each entry reminds us that heartfelt prayer is central to the Christian life.

Not only will this little volume assist Christians in their private devotions, but it will also help ministers of the Word in their preparation of prayers for the pulpit (Samuel Miller's *Thoughts on Public Prayer* is one of the best sources of instruction on this topic). There is a great need for better preparation for public prayer in our ministries.

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ServantPoetry

Ode to Snow

G. E. Reynolds (1949–)

O snow! I owe you for joy,
For the cold bliss you bring
Each winter to my soul;
You make me sing

Of blizzard winds that pile
You high in fields and banks,
That mount up to the sky,
Eliciting wild, happy thanks

For being buried in my home,
And stopping all obligations
So that I may wander and wonder
In my soul's oblations;

Tramping and skiing in your
Powdery presence night and day,
With the frozen pleasures of greenless
Trees and other treasures on my way,

With other greens that ever
Speak of life amidst my trek
In woods and fields where
Wildlife play within the wreck

Of winter's stern regimen—
Demanding fortitude and grit
To stay until the hope of spring
Rewards your persevering wit.

But snow, I hate to see you go,
Since daily exercise and winter air
Are my chief sustenance in cold;
Without you I would despair.