

TENSIONS IN CONTEMPORARY

THEOLOGY

edited by Stanley N. Gundry and

Alan F. Johnson

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366 pages, \$8.95

Putting together a book on contemporary theology is no easy task.

If it is more than a handbook (which this one is), it must be comprehensive; it certainly must be comprehensible; and it must critically evaluate the viewpoints presented according to biblical canons. This book, which focuses primarily on the theologies of the 60's and 70's succeeds well.

by eight different contributors (the editors authored only a brief preface) The eight chapters include a background survey, discussions of the radical theologians, religious language, secular theology, theology of hope, process theology, Roman Catholic theology, and the conservative option.

The chapter on the theology of hope is deficient in comprehensiveness, omitting entirely any discussion of that viewpoint in its Latin liberation dress and in its American black theology form. These are serious omissions. The chapters on religious language and process theology will probably be least comprehensible to most readers due largely to the subject matter involved. The chapter on secular theology is almost dangerously soft in its criticisms. Indeed that chapter might have been replaced with one on contemporary German theology (since Bonhoeffer was discussed in a previous chapter and should have been edited out of one, and the God-is-Dead theology is referred to elsewhere, and Robinson might have been discussed with Tillich).

by Ramm

The book opens with a masterful survey of theology from Schleiermacher to Barth and Bultmann which handles concisely and critically the many viewpoints and movements during that long period. This is "must" reading. Grounds' chapter on Bultmann, Teilhard, Tillich and Bonhoeffer is equally outstanding. The concluding essay by Brown on the conservative option merits careful reading. In it the author sounds some necessary warnings (p. 330), discusses (perhaps too much at length) various systems of apologetics within evangelicalism, and makes a commendable attempt to construct an evangelical consensus on doctrine which is rooted "in the living God and in His inerrant Word" (p. 349). He strongly affirms the truth of the person of Christ, the substitutionary atonement, and opts for premillennialism, all of which adds up to a strong finish to a very helpful volume.--Reviewed by Charles C.

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