

example, Luther and his wife Katharina would have arguments about whether accepting money from Luther's enemies would be appropriate (198). At other times, Katharina would become frustrated with "Luther's fairly unorganized manner of doing things" (223) or admonish Luther to consume less wine (242). As a father, Luther had the deepest affection for his children. The accounts of his daughter's death communicate the overwhelming sadness that a father faces when burying his own child. By telling such stories, Selderhuis allows the readers to sympathize with Luther and to understand him at a personal level.

One strong feature of this book is the sheer number of sources that Selderhuis uses to shed light on Luther's life and his world. The author uses his own translations of Luther's writings from various theological treatises, sermons, letters, and the table talk. He tells the story using Luther's own words. At the same time, Selderhuis interacts with secondary sources from Luther scholarship, at times showing consent but at times criticizing other scholarly interpretations on Luther.

What one will not find in this book, however, is an in-depth theological analysis of Luther's thought. Although as a competent theologian Selderhuis is fully capable of doing so, his purpose in this book does not lie in writing a textbook on Luther's theology. Instead, as a churchman and a teacher, he guides readers to walk with Luther as he rises and falls with the daily tasks of his Christian life. Thus, the author invites readers to witness an example of a Christian brother who found his greatest joy in studying the Scriptures and lived fully devoted to his faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In sum, theological, pastoral, personal, and humorous aspects of Luther are woven into one narrative through which Selderhuis draws a complete and complex picture of a significant man who made a great impact in the history of the church. Written in an accessible and engaging style, this book is one of the best introductions to Luther's life for readership of all levels.

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Jonathan Willis. *The Reformation of the Decalogue: Religious Identity and the Ten Commandments in England, c. 1485-1625*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Jonathan Willis has written the first extended analysis of how the Ten Commandments were explained in the English Reformation and what social impact they had. Previous historiography argued that in the medieval

period the so-called seven deadly sins had dominated the Christian ethical scheme, but Protestants focused on the Ten Commandments as the source for ethical norms. Willis advances beyond this to demonstrate how the Ten Commandments were integrated into English society within Protestant argumentation. In this way, the Commandments became far more than an ethical guide; they were also used as paradigm for theology and culture. Willis relates the three uses of the law—the civil use, convicting of sin, and guiding the moral life—to three major aspects of the Reformation. The book is structured into three parts, each with two chapters, and each part is devoted to issues tied to one of the three uses of the moral law.

The civil use connected to society as a whole because “there was incumbent upon all humanity, elect and reprobate, a temporal obligation to obey the ten precepts of the Decalogue at least outwardly” (16). The things forbidden in God’s law were bad for society, and therefore the civil sphere benefitted when God’s standards were upheld. Willis demonstrates this point through a case study on the fifth commandment, which enjoins honoring father and mother. Protestants certainly took the command to honor parents as programmatic training for how we are supposed to relate to superiors and inferiors throughout our lives as we engage in the world. Willis, however, argues in addition to this that Protestants under the English monarchy took particular advantage of this view to support their view of submission to the crown. He additionally points out that clerical authors included that the command required submission to ecclesiastical authorities. It is hard to tell if he thinks this was a matter of self-promotion or of legitimate application based on their principles.

Willis terms the second use of the law as “the evangelical office.” This use related to the Protestant goal of obtaining salvation. The Ten Commandments played a major role in the process of salvation because the proclamation of the law pointed out to sinners that they could not meet the standard of righteousness to enter heaven. The Commandments defined sin and so were “the pre-eminent mechanism” for showing people their need of a Savior (177). The Commandments were the guide to a godly life for those who converted to faith in Christ, and attention to their requirements formed an essential part of Puritan practical divinity (213–14). Works done after the event of salvation were counted as evidence of having been saved.

Willis calls the third use of the law its “practical office.” In part three, he analyzes how English Protestants used the Decalogue to address their concerns about finding the best ways to serve God. The Ten Commandments not only defined sin, as explained in part two, they also “defined comprehensively and in brief the praxis of the true Christian” (218). Willis

investigates many ways that the Commandments formed Christian piety in England, ranging from rigorous Puritan considerations of how to apply them to the way in which they were used to decorate the interior of churches and even formed the basis of church music.

There are some problems with this work, but they are essentially isolated to the conclusion. The rest of the volume is incredibly useful, and I highlight its strengths below. The first problem is that Willis fails to consider English Protestant developments in light of the broader Reformation on the Continent. His work is focused on England, but when he interprets English Protestant uses of the Commandments as having been shaped by the concern to address specific issues in England, he does not consider why there was continuity with the views of Continental Protestants and how they explained the Decalogue. Continental theologians would not likely shape their views to change English society. In this way, Willis wrongly depicts English Protestants as shaping their understanding of the Decalogue to achieve pragmatic ends. Additionally, he claims that “the commandments were manipulated by English Protestants in order to condemn sins which either hadn’t been considered sins—or which simply hadn’t existed—at the time when the precepts were first enumerated” (348). Although it may be true that Protestants addressed some sins that existed in their context with the Decalogue, Willis neglects to explain the use of casuistry in forming the implications of the commands. Thinkers like William Perkins made significant use of casuist arguments to show how certain precedents, and good and necessary consequence, shape the application of the Decalogue. English Protestants were not trying to overanalyze the Decalogue but did attempt to give fuller explanations for how it could work out in daily life.

Despite these problems, this volume is highly useful in many ways. Scattered throughout the chapters are short excursions on each of the Ten Commandments. In these ten subsections, Willis describes how each commandment was argued and applied, and the shape it took in relevance to English society. These are fascinating treatments that will be helpful overviews or guides to primary sources on the Commandments.

Additionally, although many social historians fail to grasp the actual theological ideas of the early-modern period, Willis is not one of them. His work is focused on social history as it related to the Ten Commandments, but he does not dismiss or mischaracterize the ideas that drove the English Reformation. Readers of this journal will likely find places where they quibble with his description of early-modern Reformed theology, but there are no places where he radically misrepresents it. He responsibly depicts the doctrines of justification by faith alone, the necessity of works in the

Christian life, and even the covenants of works and grace. This volume is also incredibly well written in clear and readable style, and at no point was it burdensome to read. It will be of great benefit for those who want to understand Reformation thinking on the Ten Commandments in a deeper way.

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Matthew Barrett. *The Grace of Godliness: An Introduction to Doctrine and Piety in the Canons of Dort*. Kitchener, ON: Joshua, 2013.

Matthew Barrett is Associate Professor of Christian Theology at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Barrett's book is a comprehensive and insightful text on the importance given in the Canons of Dort (1618–1619) to a balance between doctrine and holiness in the Christian life. This book has an encouragingly positive foreword by Michael Haykin (xi–xii), an author's preface (xii–xv), and a timeline of Jacob Arminius, the Arminian controversy, and the Synod of Dort (xvii–xix). It begins with a brief introduction, followed by five major chapters. The author ends the book with a summary. In addition, the book includes seven invaluable appendices that provide the historical and theological background of the Arminian Remonstrants controversy and the Dutch Reformed response to it in its historical and theological contexts. He includes a bibliography that is a valuable resource for further study.

The author briefly examines the historical background to the Synod of Dort in chapter 2 (9–22). He pays special attention to “the historical context of the seventeenth-century debate” (10). In so doing, he focuses on the life and the synergistic view of grace of Jacob Arminius (1559–1609), his immediate theological legacy in the Remonstrants, the formation of the Synod of Dort, the adoption of the Canons of Dort by the Dutch Counter-Remonstrant Calvinists, and ecclesiastical conflict between the Remonstrants and the Counter-Remonstrants (10–22).

Barrett then moves on to deal with the balanced understanding of doctrines and piety in the doctrinal formulations. He interprets divine predestination as the “source of assurance, humility and holiness” in light of the teachings of Dort in chapter 3 (25–49). Analyzing *The Opinions of the Remonstrants*, he argues that the Arminians promoted the unbiblical doctrine of conditional election, which denied God's absolute sovereignty and free grace in election (26). In response, Barrett properly argues that Dort affirmed unconditional election, based upon the teachings of Acts