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Review: Christianity and the Nature of Science: A Philosophical Investigation

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l, & *Evangelical*, vol. 1, by James Leo
3. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990.

mmunicating Christian theology to his
ten a systematic theology which is an
ine. Systematic theology is ill-defined
it only acquaints the reader with what
itates how it *is done!*

egesis, Biblical theology and historical
pstone of an intensive labor to under-
rett describes his method: "... I have
nd correlate all the pertinent Old and
e more significant statements from the
re undertaking any formulation of my
d of the Biblical and historical sources
study in this first of two volumes. The
eological" is accurate and presents the
doctrine covered. Garrett begins with a
ts the pertinent Old and New Testament
e interpretations that have come forth in
ng his conclusion.

this volume are prolegomena, revelation,
on and providence, humankind, sin and the
ed presentation on each of these topics is
conclusions of the writer are acceptable, the
ffered are stimulative and challenging.

eneration and inerrancy, recently areas of
Convention of which Garrett is a rep-
Garrett, like Millard Erickson be-
the question of whether revelation is
an inspiration is an example of the
and historical data in arriving at a
and it is important
before arriving at a final judgment.

the Word of God is subjected to
Garrett by only after recogniz-
and is developed very
organized in such a fashion as
well the issues and arrive

interpreting the Genesis
the creation in general
with all of the

reference to the
into various
emphasis

is on the unity of the human person, not parts, and his word studies bring to-
gether in succinct fashion the support for this contention. Also appreciated in
this regard is the handling of the issue of total depravity which briefly, but
clearly, identifies what it means and what it does not mean.

Of special interest is the study of the person of Christ. While traditionally
evangelicals have commenced Christology with the "from above" emphasis,
beginning with His deity and moving to His incarnation, Garrett begins with
His humanity and works toward His deity contending that one can follow this
method and "incorporate all the transcendent aspects of the person of Christ"
resulting "in a full-orbed, balanced doctrine" (p. 530). His reasons for follow-
ing this approach justify the arrangement and he does succeed in his attempt.

This book is written in outline style and reflects the use of the material in the
classroom. That form does not detract but benefits the investor who will use this
work often as a reference in future study. Appreciation of this volume is joined
with an anticipation of the completion of Garrett's valuable gift to the church.

RONALD T. CLUTTER
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Christianity and the Nature of Science: A Philosophical Investigation, by J. P.
Moreland. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989. Pp. 263.

J. P. Moreland has in recent years shown himself to be one of the leading
young Christian philosophers and active apologists for the faith. In this text he
has focused on the area of concern which many have asserted is his real
strength, the philosophy of science and the relationship between science and
the Christian faith. A preliminary example of this expertise was his chapter,
"Science and Christianity," in his erudite and well received book on apologet-
ics, *Scaling the Secular City*. In observing the multi-faceted interrelationship
between the sciences and Christianity, Moreland has also brought forth a
unique contribution to contemporary evangelical thought that will hopefully
stir much further thinking and research by Christians. The only comparable
works are Bernard Ramm's *A Christian View of Science and Scripture* (1954)
and *Philosophy of Science* by Del Ratsch (1986). Yet given Moreland's direc-
tions and purposes here is a true singularity about this book. Clearly, given the
current "scientific" perceptions of science as the only truly rational realm, this
is also a timely work that will clear away some of the current fogginess of
these issues. Ignorance and an attitude of ostrich-like unconcern about science
too often characterize the anti-intellectualistic evangelical community which is
often content with its subjective piety in the midst of a materialistic, scientific
culture. No wonder Christianity seems ineffectual in this era. This issue, sci-
ence and Christianity, must have an impact for the (re-)education of Christians
in the context of this society.

This work may be properly categorized as "philosophy of science." A cen-
tral question at the heart of the book for which many scientists have no full an-
swer, is "what *is* science?" This is a question which many would want to
approach by assuming the answer is already known. In actuality this is a ques-
tion which few could adequately define. Moreland helps the reader try to see that
this is far from a cut-and-dried issue. The complexities that surround the

question of the identity of science are multitudinous. Along with the question of science's identity, there is the difficulty of setting down a final line of demarcation between science and non-science. Moreland brings clarity to current debate and with it such points of concern as whether theology or philosophy can be understood as "scientific" given the oft heard assertion that *the* scientific method is a myth. How does all of this fit into current attitudes toward "non-scientific" subjects, i.e., the perspective of "scientism" that only science (reckoned usually as the "physical" sciences) is truly rational? What then is the relationship of science to other disciplines (especially theology and philosophy) and to the Christian faith in light of this epistemic bias? Is that a real picture of what is scientific? These and other crucial issues that are currently under debate at many levels are effectively handled and cogently dealt with as Moreland works to unravel and separate the true from the false. On p. 12 the larger purposes for this text are stated: "The purpose of this book is to assist and encourage Christians to think more clearly about the relationship between science and theology."

In working through Moreland's unfolding the nature of science and the role of science within the interactive and interconnective web of human life and thought, three issues seemed to arise repeatedly in various contexts. The reference to the nature, method and limits of science has already been discussed. A second critical issue is the ongoing realism-antirealism debate among current scientists and philosophers of science. The differences lie in whether science gives us an increasingly truer picture of the world as it is (realism) or if the theories of science are really only convenient and helpful fictions that reflect not the world but operations in the world (antirealism). A third issue for Moreland is the role of theology and the Christian faith to the various sciences, especially the physical sciences. Within this, of course, is the question as to the scientific status of "Creation Science." Herein the epistemic differentiation between the two (or more) sides and the need for Christians to effect real integration of the subjects are clear concerns for the author.

In assessing the strong points of *Christianity and the Nature of Science* a number of items stand out. First, this is an exceedingly timely book. In a time of rampant "secularism," "materialism" and (on the other hand) "occultism" (New Age), Christians are in desperate need of a way of seeing, knowing and responding to false notions and stylized reductionism on both fronts. The text reflects his continued growth and interaction (Moreland speaks of becoming a "chastened realist"). Further, he asks the crucial questions, cutting through all the well known distractions, and in the heat of controversy shows a superb ability in analysis and critique of the various views. He is also open and humble, immensely teachable, willing to show not only points of growth in his own thought but shortcomings in his own position "(cf. the question of realism and the need for further work in creationism). Moreland gives effective examples and diagrams, illustrating and clarifying the sometimes weighty points. He also has an effective way of communicating and a lively style that ensures movement from point to point.

Possibly one more versed in current issues might fault this or that explanation or characterization, but Moreland is scrupulously fair with all legitimate points. This edition, while having an excellent bibliography, unfortunately lacks an index of subjects. Subsequent editions will apparently include one.

Finally, by way of exhortation, this book is *must reading*. Many reviewers arrive at that conclusion automatically but his work is an exception. Christians

udinous. Along with the question of setting down a final line of demarcation, Moreland brings clarity to current debate on whether theology or philosophy can be unassertion that *the* scientific method and attitudes toward "non-scientific" that only science (reckoned usually as science and philosophy) and to the Christian. Is that a real picture of what is currently under debate at many points dealt with as Moreland works to unify in p. 12 the larger purposes for this to assist and encourage Christians between science and theology."

Exploring the nature of science and the interconnective web of human life repeatedly in various contexts. The history of science has already been disengaging realism-antirealism debate of science. The differences lie in their picture of the world as it is (really only convenient and helpful notions in the world (antirealism). A dialogue between the Christian faith to the sciences. Within this, of course, is the "Science." Herein the epistemic differences and the need for Christians to address concerns for the author.

Our Idea of God is a timely book. In a time of "occultism" (New ways of seeing, knowing and responding on both fronts. The text reflects the author's speaks of becoming a "chastened" cutting through all the well known, showing a superb ability in analysis and a humble, immensely teachable, in his own thought but shortcomings in science and the need for further work in philosophy and diagrams, illustrating and also has an effective way of communicating from point to point.

Some might fault this or that explanation but it is fair with all legitimate excellent bibliography, unfortunately some will apparently include one. This book is *must reading*. Many reviewers who say this work is an exception. Christians

in all walks of life must become oriented to the issues found in Moreland's book. It would make an excellent text for philosophy, apologetics, philosophy of science or science courses within a Christian setting. Educated Christians could well use this text as the basis for group study and discussion in local churches. In an age of scientism when true and false perspectives are often indistinguishable behind the covering veil of "scientific rationality," it is dangerous to hide from the issues.

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Our Idea of God: An Introduction to Philosophical Theology, by Thomas V. Morris. Contours of Christian Philosophy series, C. Stephen Evans, ed. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991. Pp. 192. Paper.

Thomas Morris has added a significant volume to the Contours of Christian Philosophy series. As with previous volumes in the series, *Our Idea of God* tackles a variety of problems that have long been debated by theologians and philosophers. Morris analyzes alternate views as to their philosophical cogency and their value in the construction of a Christian world view.

Our Idea of God is not a philosophical defense of the existence of God or the rationality of religious belief, but rather a defense of the traditional Christian concept of God. The book is of current interest in view of the rise of non-Christian notions of God. What is God like? Can we articulate a conception of God that is both biblically faithful and philosophically plausible?

Morris begins by evaluating the arguments concerning whether rational discussion of God is possible. He refutes the arguments of theological pessimism based on the limitations of human language and concepts, contending that human language and thought are flexible enough to extend far beyond ordinary employment. He links this idea with the biblical doctrine of creation in which God created humans for the purpose of communion to conclude that rational discussion about God is possible. Morris admits that his theological optimism presupposes prior knowledge of God, but argues that basic knowledge of any kind cannot be demonstrated with non-circular arguments.

Morris then discusses the method for determining a feasible concept of God. After dismissing universal revelational theology, he settles on two methods which undergird the argumentation in the rest of the book: creation theology and perfect being theology. The basic core of perfect being theology is Anselm's idea that God is the greatest possible being. This thought provides the governing focus for additional theistic concept building involving the properties of God. The methodology then evaluates which properties are to be considered among the "great-making" properties, the nature of those properties, and the philosophical and theological problems involved.

Succeeding chapters discuss such topics as God's goodness, power, knowledge, eternity, creation, incarnation, and the Trinity. Morris contends that God is necessarily good, that he must have perfect power, and that his knowledge must be complete. He arrives at these conclusions primarily from the inference of perfect being theology, rather than from independent arguments. Morris discusses such problems as whether God is praiseworthy or