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## Wheaton Theology 2009

"Life in the Spirit: Spiritual Formation in Theological Perspective" will be the focus of this year's Wheaton Theology Conference, to be held April 16-18. Speakers include Dallas Willard, Gordon Fee, Christopher Hall, Lawrence Cunningham, Susan Phillips, Bruce Hindmarsh, David Gushee, Kelly Kopic, Cherith Fee Nordling and more. For detailed information and registration, visit: [wheaton.edu/theology/theo\\_conf](http://wheaton.edu/theology/theo_conf) ■

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## Sincerely, John Calvin

*In 2009 we mark the 500th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin, certainly one of the towering figures of the Reformation.*



Herman Selderhuis

Known widely for his system of theology, he is often portrayed as a boring churchman with a pointed beard, who gazes darkly out into the world. Who was this man who aroused such passions?

That was the question that set Herman Selderhuis deep into the corpus of Calvin's letters. The result is *John Calvin: A Pilgrim's Life*, to be published by IVP Academic in March 2009.

Herman Selderhuis is a professor of church history and church polity at

the Theological University Apeldoorn (Netherlands). Andy Le Peau (IVP Associate Publisher, Editorial) had the opportunity to ask him about the project.

**Le Peau:** What influence has Calvin had on your own life and scholarship?

**Selderhuis:** It is of course not easy to distinguish what Calvin's influence was, since he has been part of a package of Reformers that I have gotten to know. However, Calvin has shown me how important the church is and also how justification and sanctification cannot be separated. Apart from this more theological influence, there is in Calvin that continuing drive to serve the Lord, his people and the world. These have

*continued on page 3*

## Politics Beyond State-Making

*Scott Moore, author of The Limits of Liberal Democracy: Politics and Religion at the End of Modernity, teaches philosophy and is director of the Great Texts Program in the Honors College at Baylor University. Now that we're on the other side of the presidential election, senior editor Gary Deddo thought it would be good to interview him.*



Scott Moore

among current political options available to us. But your aim is really to help us think differently both about politics and the nature of the church itself. Tell us a little more about your agenda for the book.

**Moore:** Right. I'm not interested in boosting the Christian community's confidence

**Deddo:** Scott, the book you've written, as indicated in the subtitle, is about politics and religion. Especially given the recent election, readers might think you want us to consider how we, as Christians, can most faithfully select for either the Democrats or the Republicans, though some of what's in the book might be misread as support for one or the other party—Walker Percy once wrote an article titled "An Essay on Abortion with Something to Offend Everyone"; maybe that should have been my subtitle! I'm really interested in how Christians might form and sustain communities that will enable us to be faithful as we go forward into a world that is increasingly indifferent at best or hostile at worst to orthodox, Christian faith. My assumption is that our politics—how we order our lives together—is not best understood through the concepts, assumptions and practices of statecraft, which refers to how we maintain nation-states. Both liberal critics like Richard

*continued on page 2*

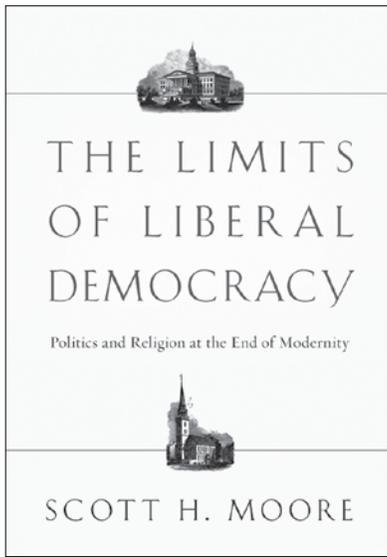
*Politics, continued from page 1*

Rorty or Cornel West and conservative critics like George Will or Gertrude Himmelfarb have argued that statecraft, particularly democratic statecraft, makes for a good soulcraft—how human beings are formed and mature. I think this perspective is quite problematic for

there was something that was philosophically and theologically important which was being missed by the mainstream media. My original article got reprinted in a collection and commented on here and there, but I became convinced some time ago that I had misunderstood some

calling into question democracy itself. Once you read the book, you find out that that is not your aim. But, for those who haven't yet read it, what is it that really deserves our critical scrutiny?

**Moore:** Why spoil the ending? They should read the book. I'm not calling



Christians. So, much of the book is spent showing that Christians have resources for a notion of politics which is much broader and more inclusive than that available to statecraft. Once we realize that, we turn our gaze away from government as the place where the most important political work gets done.

**Deddo:** Your book has an interesting background story to it. Tell us something of its provenance. Where was the seed idea for it planted? What really got you into rethinking the relationship of politics and religious freedom?

**Moore:** The book developed out of an essay that I published a few years ago which was, itself, an almost accidental article that emerged out of a year I spent as a post-doc at Notre Dame. At the time, I was watching two events unfold which made the conservatives look like liberals and the liberals look like conservatives. I thought, *What's going on here?* The closer I looked, the more it became clear that

**I'm not calling into question democracy as a form of government.**

**I am arguing that democracy is a means and not an end.**

key features of the questions at hand. This new book is an attempt to go back and get some of those things right, to clarify crucial features and follow the relevant inferences.

**Deddo:** You tell us that this book represents a second take for you on the subject. The problem as you now see it is not essentially about the limits of structuring our thoughts and commitments around being liberal or conservative, with a lowercase *l* and *c*, but about our fairly pervasive and shared confidence in the larger tradition of Liberal democracy, with an uppercase *L*. Tell us about that shift in your perspective and what you now see as the deeper issue.

**Moore:** Yes. At first I just thought that the labels "liberal" and "conservative" didn't work. For instance, I'm strongly opposed to both capital punishment and abortion. Am I a liberal or a conservative? But the real issue wasn't about getting the label, such as "conservative Democrat with communitarian values," right. Both of those labels are in one way or another focused on democracy and enthralled by the nation-state. But what if the nation-state wasn't the issue? What if there were political associations and friendships and practices and virtues that were not focused on the nation-state? What then?

**Deddo:** Some might wonder if you're

into question democracy as a form of government. I am arguing—as have many others, including Pope John Paul II—that democracy is a means and not an end. As such, we must always be careful that we not confuse our confidence in a certain form of government with our faith in Christ or our understanding of what Christ demands of us. For most of our nation's history, most Christians would have had difficulty imagining a tension between the notion of being a "good Christian" and being a "good American." Well, what if there was a tension here? What if democratic procedure produces a state of affairs to which Christians could not assent? What if it's been going on for forty years? How should Christians think about these things?

**Deddo:** Having just gone through a national election, we find ourselves on the other side facing tremendous international as well as domestic challenges that would test the mettle of any successful candidate for office. How might your book assist us in evaluating our current state of affairs and setting an agenda for being faithful as the church of Jesus Christ?

**Moore:** Hmm. Well, I doubt that it will be much help for evaluating pressing international or domestic policy crises. There's very little in it about how to fix the stock market! Seriously, our faithful-

*John Calvin, continued from page 1*

struck me and motivated me.

**Le Peau:** There are already several Calvin biographies out there. What makes this one different?

**Selderhuis:** I guess the difference is that I have tried to find the human being in Calvin by writing a biography almost

than they might have thought. On the other side, the book might help them in their self-understanding. But most of all I think they too will be surprised that this great man was in fact a fragile and sensitive man, who could laugh and cry, could be lonely and amicable, in short, a

tify or define. I mean, it will have been that moment when he saw who God really is, the holy God who wants to be a Father, who wants to love and be loved, who governs and guides, who is far off as well as close by. After that moment, all Calvin wanted was to serve that God, under all

**I think Calvinists will be surprised that this great man was in fact a fragile and sensitive man, who could laugh and cry, could be lonely and amicable, in short, a human being like they themselves.**

exclusively from his letters. So the focus is not his theology, nor his activities, but his personal life. The book is a biographical search for the heart of this man.

**Le Peau:** Why did you subtitle the book *A Pilgrim's Life*?

**Selderhuis:** Calvin not only saw the life of a Christian as a pilgrimage through this world on our way to heaven, but his personal life was just as much a pilgrimage. He was a French refugee in Geneva—always a foreigner, a stranger, an asylum seeker. So “pilgrim” is one of the best ways to characterize Calvin.

**Le Peau:** What might the readers of this book, especially Calvinists, be surprised to learn?

**Selderhuis:** For one thing, I hope they will see that Calvin is less a Calvinist

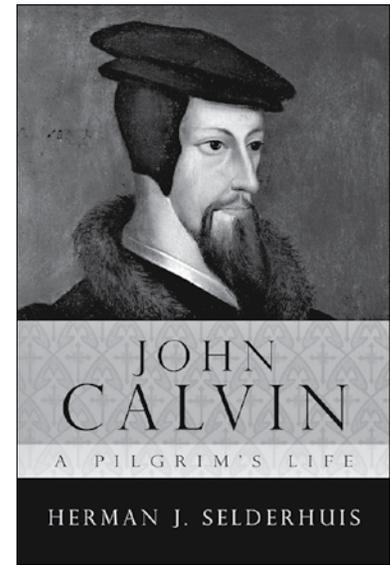
human being like they themselves.

**Le Peau:** What did you learn or what surprised you or struck you in a new way in the process of writing the book?

**Selderhuis:** Well, first of all the things I just mentioned. I never got really warm feelings when I heard Calvin's name. He seemed so distant. But that all changed as soon as I searched and found the personal notes in his letters. And then there are these other things—his tears, his sicknesses, his anger, his compassion. I tried to get to know Calvin better, and for me it worked.

**Le Peau:** What would you consider to be the greatest defining event in Calvin's life, and why?

**Selderhuis:** That's a tough question, but I believe it's an event that we cannot iden-



conditions and with his whole life.

**Le Peau:** What would you consider to be Calvin's greatest contribution to the church and the world?

**Selderhuis:** I would say it is this conviction that life makes sense only when you live it with Christ, but when you do—then life in this world does make sense, whether you are a preacher or a gardener, prime minister or mother. ■

*Politics, continued from page 2*

ness will not be seen in whether we successfully elect officials who promise to do things that we like. Our faithfulness will be seen in whether we create cultures that enable Christians to flourish no matter who is elected. Indeed, we need a set of practices that will enable us to resist the culture of convenience and consumption that is consuming the church in the United States even now.

Overturing *Roe v. Wade* would be great, but the more pressing political struggle most of us face is found in creating a culture which so values children that neither the unwed teenager in the youth group nor the couple who has discovered their baby has Down syndrome is subtly encouraged to get an abortion because of shame or fear or presumption. We need cultures that encourage

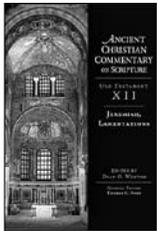
and equip families to receive ailing and elderly parents into their homes, cultures that do not equate happiness and security with financial prosperity and independence. What kind of culture will help us form the necessary bonds of dependence in the coming age? What we need is a radical politics of an alternative polis—namely, the church. ■

## New & Noteworthy



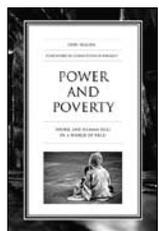
Need an honest dialogue to get your students thinking about the case for and against atheism? *Deepest Differences: A Christian-Atheist Dialogue* by James W. Sire and

Carl Peraino may be perfect for your class. Begun as an incidental email exchange, the correspondence took on a life of its own. In the end, neither party wins out but each gains a new appreciation of the other. A set of questions and a bibliography for further study add value for classroom use.



*Jeremiah, Lamentations, Old Testament volume 12*, edited by Dean O. Wenhe, brings the Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture to its penultimate volume. Readers will find early church wisdom on the prophet Jeremiah and the book of Lamentations. Pastoral insights on losses and death abound in Lamentations. The prophecy of the “new covenant” distinguishes Jeremiah’s prophecy, as well as themes of conversion, spiritual progress, the power of evil and the meaning of salvation.

From a much-loved theological adviser to Tearfund (U.K.) comes *Power and Poverty*, a thoroughly biblical reflection on how these social forces intersect. Dewi Hughes has the chops to be authoritative and the passion to be prophetic, but his humility and charity steer readers toward a more chastened understanding of this global concern.



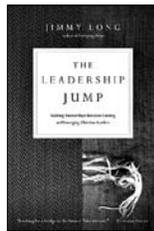
John Stapleford has revised and updated *Bulls, Bears and Golden Calves*—a classic treatment of ethical issues only acknowledged in standard economics texts. Now included are chapters on executive compensation, the effects of corruption

and issues in rural development. The data has been updated and the arguments reflect the latest topical research. The chapter on environmental stewardship, for example, now includes reflections from Bjorn Lomborg’s *The Skeptical Environmentalist*, and the chapter on immigration includes a reflection on policy in the light of September 11, 2001, and terrorism.



Pastoral leadership has changed, and leaders are rethinking the very nature of their leadership. Drawing on recent developments in leadership studies, Jimmy Long’s *The Leadership Jump* maps out the cultural shifts affecting church leaders and shows how younger leaders navigate leadership issues differently than existing ones.

How should Christians think about immigration? In *Welcoming the Stranger*, World Relief’s Matthew Soerens and Jenny Hwang provide a balanced and compassionate case for immigration policy reform, debunking myths and offering constructive ways for the church to respond and minister to immigrants.



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Words & the Word: Explorations in Biblical Interpretation and Literary Theory, edited by David G. Firth and Jamie A. Grant, is an excellent collection of introductory essays on a sometimes complex field. Chapters focus on speech-act theory, genre criticism, ambiguity, poetics, rhetoric and discourse analysis, while broader essays survey literary theory and biblical interpretation, and a structural-historical approach to Old Testament exegesis.



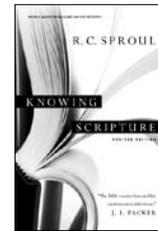
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Regarding the second edition to *Can God Be Trusted?* Gerald McDermott (Roanoke College) perhaps says it all: “This is the best book in accessible English on how to think about the problem of evil. One of the finest theologians in North America, John Stackhouse brings to bear insights from Scripture, philosophy and theology on this age-old dilemma. I recommend this first.”



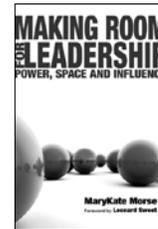
After twenty-five years and a quarter million copies sold, this classic introduction to biblical interpretation just got the update it so richly deserves. This second edition of R. C. Sproul’s *Knowing Scripture* helps students dig out the meaning of Scripture for themselves. He covers many topics, including how to understand different types of literature such as poetry, proverbs, parables, narratives and prophecy.

In *Making Room for Leadership*, MaryKate Morse (George Fox Evangelical Seminary) makes the surprising case for spatially intelligent leadership. She explores different types of power in the body, delineating how each type can be used for good or for harm. Throughout, Christ’s use of power serves as the guide for how to lead in life-giving and empowering ways.

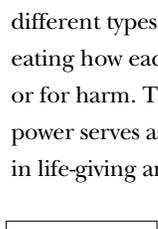


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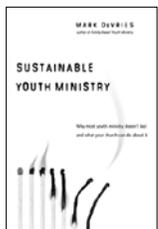
*Sustainable Youth Ministry* reviews common causes of division and burnout in an increasingly fragile ministry context. Mark DeVries provides the tools and structures church leaders need to lay a ministry foundation that isn’t built on one person or the latest student ministry trend. ■



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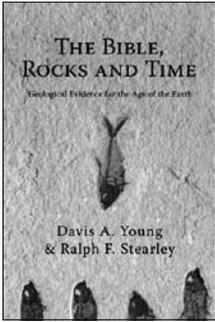
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## Old-Earth Christians Summon Evidence



Is the Earth relatively young or very old?

The consensus regarding the age of the Earth, based on the best geological evidence, is that it is billions of years

old. But many Christians believe that the Bible teaches that the Earth is only a few

thousand years old at best. What are we to make of this discrepancy? Christian geologists Davis A. Young (Ph.D., Brown University) and Ralph F. Stearley (Ph.D., University of Michigan) tackle this issue head-on.

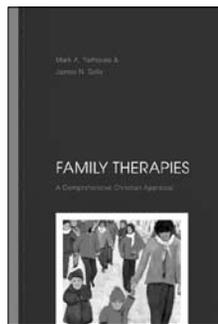
The amply illustrated *Bible, Rocks and Time* takes a comprehensive and authoritative look at the key issues related to the Earth's antiquity by surveying the history of ideas, examining the biblical aspects, analyzing the geological

evidence and discussing the philosophical implications. Young and Stearley contend that "this issue can have profound spiritual consequences for the church, . . . the individual Christian and the non-believer as well."

*The Bible, Rocks and Time* will provide professors, pastors, students and interested laypeople with ample resources—biblical, theological and scientific—for investigating the Earth's antiquity. ■

## CAPS Book Surveys Family Therapies

Mark A. Yarhouse and James N. Sells, both of Regent University, have teamed up to produce another substantial volume in our series of psychology texts. *Family Therapies: A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal* joins the ranks of Jones and Butman's *Modern Psychotherapies*; Yarhouse, Butman and McRay's *Modern Psychopathologies*; and McMinn and Campbell's *Integrative Psychotherapy*. This volume is also published in partnership with CAPS. We think this collection of texts covers well a significant swath of topics across the discipline, and so provides students and professionals some great resources.



Showing some affinity to the other volumes, Yarhouse and Sells survey the major approaches to family therapy and treat, within a Christian

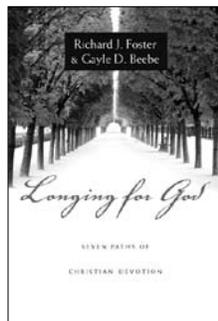
framework, significant psychotherapeutic issues in the field. The wide array of issues covered include crisis and trauma; marital conflict; separation, divorce and blended families; individual psychopathology; substance abuse and addictions;

issues of gender, culture, economic class and race; and sexual identity. Calling for an integrated approach of "responsible eclecticism," they conclude with a vision for Christian family therapy.

A landmark work providing critical Christian engagement with existing models of family therapy, this volume was written for those studying counseling, social work, psychology or family therapy. *Family Therapies* will also serve as an indispensable resource for those in the mental health professions, including counselors, psychologists, family therapists, social workers and pastors. ■

## Foster and Beebe Seek a More Systematic Spirituality

The roots of *Longing for God* began in class at George Fox College—where Gayle Beebe (now president of Westmont College) was a student and Richard Foster was his professor. As Gayle tells it in the introduction, "It was during a class led by Richard that I first read *Celebration of Discipline* in mimeographed form. . . . I had never read nor experienced such a thorough ordering of how we could understand and make progress in our life with God. . . . The discoveries I made during this critical period have guided me ever since."



Gayle Beebe went on to study at Princeton Seminary where he was greatly influenced by Diogenes Allen. He says, "Dr. Allen was integrating philosophy, theology and church history in the most compelling synthesis I had ever seen." While Gayle was completing a Ph.D. in philosophy of religion and theol-

ogy at Claremont Graduate University, he and Richard Foster developed and taught "The History and Practice of Christian Spirituality." It is the interaction around that course that forms the foundation of this book.

*Longing for God* outlines seven distinct paths to God, with each chapter describing a particular path embodied by several classic spiritual writers who illuminate our understanding of the Christian life. As such, it provides a fine overview to both the history of Christian thought and to twenty-six key spiritual writers. ■

## An Occasionally Witty Intro to Paul



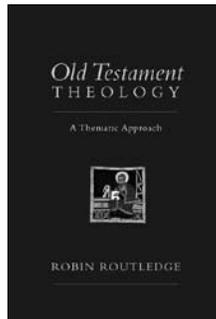
Michael Bird's *Introducing Paul: The Man, His Mission and His Message* is a sprightly introduction to the great apostle and his theology. In fact, it is hard to think of a better little "first book" on Paul to put in the hands of readers wanting a serious

introduction to Paul and his theology. Michael Gorman comments, "Michael Bird offers an insightful, readable and serious (yet occasionally

witty) introduction to Paul in conversation with the best scholarship on the apostle. It will be especially useful for those who think they know Paul well but have the courage to take a fresh look and have their assumptions challenged. Particularly important are Bird's discussions of justification and of the gospel itself." And Scot McKnight sums it up: "*This is the first book to put in the hands of the student or layperson who wants to know what Paul is all about. The super bonus of this book is that it navigates current discussions about Paul without burdening the reader. Introducing Paul sparkles with wit.*" ■

## This Book Contains Thematic Elements

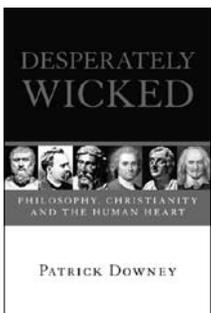
Old Testament theologies can take a variety of approaches and serve various purposes. The title of Robin Routledge's *Old Testament Theology: A Thematic Approach* says quite a bit about the angle he takes, and it is one that will be welcomed by many readers. After a discussion of approaches to Old Testament theology he then proceeds to God, creation, election and covenant, worship and sacrifice, instruction, kingship, ethics, and the future. The style is clear, concise and nuanced, and Routledge attempts to keep the wider canonical context in view, noting unity and coherence while also maintaining awareness of diversity. You can almost read this book at two levels. Following the main body of the text you can disregard the



footnotes and gain a wonderful overview of Old Testament theology. But the footnotes are extensive and stacked deep on the page, so those who wish to follow up themes in more detail will find a wealth of comment and

signposts pointing them toward research paths. As Gordon McConville comments, "This book will provide welcome orientation for readers who find the Old Testament difficult, and will repay careful study." ■

## A Philosophical Account of the Human Heart



The prophet Jeremiah put the question to us in his proclamation: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer 17:9 KJV). Patrick Downey, professor of philosophy at St. Mary's College of California, surveys the biblical writings of

Genesis and the Hebrew prophet Jeremiah, the Greek tragedies, Plato, Aristotle, and political philosophers—such as Rousseau, Hobbes, Nietzsche and René Girard—comparing their views on the nature of the human heart and the implications for

both the personal and social/political dimensions of life. Engaging the reader like few books attempt to do, this work is not for the faint of heart. Downey calls his readers to join with these thinkers in the search for truth and serious self-reflection. Recognizing our resistance to know the truth about our own hearts, this book addresses the most foundational question of our human existence as individuals in community: What is the nature of the human heart and can we, will we, know it? *Desperately Wicked* should serve as a provocative and informative text for use in political philosophy, ethics or apologetics courses. ■

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