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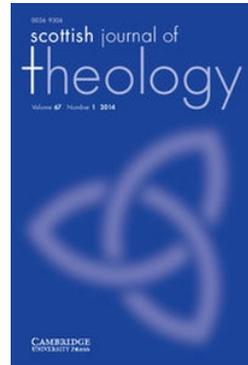
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**Todd A. Wilson, *The Curse of the Law and the Crisis in Galatia: Reassessing the Purpose of Galatians*, WUNT 225 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), pp. xi + 174. £39.27.**

John Anthony Dunne

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that's not her approach. Alternatively, she might have joined the conversation within theological ethics about eudaimonism and deontology, and the early modern emergence of pluralism (which cast doubt on objective accounts of human flourishing). Given the material she is working with, the second of these two conversations would probably have proved the more fruitful. Augustine is aware of the problem this pluralism poses for the Christian account (he asks whether happiness is found in pleasure or virtue or wealth), and Aquinas follows him on this. This is clearly at issue in Butler's debate with Hobbes as well: are we directed to what is right by a coincidence of self-love and benevolence, or merely by the fear of violent death?

But she doesn't pursue this second conversation either. Instead she seems almost to aim for a devotional or spiritual meditation on how obedience reinforces pleasure, rather than competing with it. The book's structure might be a red flag, warning that her target was too broad from the outset, for her 'state of the question' fills over half its pages. That is too much exposition and not enough analysis. Of course, having a reference guide to this tradition will prove invaluable for scholars with a particular interest in the question. It's just that within the book itself, one wants to know what Charry thinks of those she's engaging.

On the positive side of the ledger, I found her brief chapter on divine command fascinating. In it, she acknowledges the existence of voluntarist divine commands in a way that fits together with the eudaimonist commands which are the basis of the asherism she is proposing. Thus she concludes decisively that, despite the (rare) occurrence of voluntarist commands in the Bible, 'voluntarism fails as a general theory of divine command' (p. 174). In sum, *God and the Art of Happiness* is a serious treatment of an important topic, and one which will hopefully encourage further reflection from systematic theologians and church historians on the relation between doctrine, ethics and flourishing.

John Perry

University of St Andrews, St Mary's College, St Andrews, Fife KY16 9JU, UK

[jmp24@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:jmp24@st-andrews.ac.uk)

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Todd A. Wilson, *The Curse of the Law and the Crisis in Galatia: Reassessing the Purpose of Galatians*, WUNT 225 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), pp. xi + 174. £39.27.

One vexing issue in the study of Galatians is how the 'ethical section' (Gal 5:13–6:10) corresponds with the rest of the letter. Specifically, it is often wondered why Paul would include references to 'fulfilling the Law' (cf. Gal

5:14 and 6:2) alongside his ethical commands to his readers. As a means to settling this issue, Todd Wilson offers a compelling case that the theme of the curse of the Law, made explicit in Gal 3:10–14, best accounts for the references to the Law in Gal 5–6. His central thesis is that Paul believed that through the leading of the Spirit, believers are now able to fulfil the Law and thereby avoid its curse.

Wilson sets forth his study in part 1 by unpacking the various potential references to the curse of the Law in Galatians in order to demonstrate the pervasiveness of the theme (chapter 2). He then addresses how the agitators may have utilised the language of curses in order to articulate that Paul was a false prophet who, in line with Deut 13, brings a curse on those who follow him (chapter 3). In light of evidence from Anatolia regarding various forms of curses, and the evidence from the letter that Paul and the Galatians were experiencing suffering, Wilson contends that fear of divine punishment contributed as a motivating factor in making circumcision appealing (chapter 4). In part 2 Wilson addresses the key texts within Gal 5–6 in order to demonstrate that the language of ‘fulfilling the Law’ is specifically intended to express the idea that Christians are not under a curse because they are led by the Spirit (chapters 5–6).

On the whole I found Wilson’s study to be quite compelling, but I have two main critiques that I will address. First, Wilson argues that the phrase ‘under Law’, occurring five times in Galatians (cf. 3:23; 4:4–5, 21; 5:18), is a theological shorthand for ‘under the curse of the Law’, which points back to the concept of being ‘under a curse’ in Gal 3:10–14 (pp. 30–44). Wilson offers several intriguing reasons for this reading, but they are ultimately unconvincing. Paul is not simply interested in the Law’s curse through the designation ‘under Law’, but in its role as a governing principle as the comparison with Gal 4:2 and being ‘under guardians and managers’ demonstrates. Related to this, Wilson’s thesis does not deal satisfactorily with references to the Law’s temporary nature, as in Gal 3:19, which states that the Law was added until the promised offspring should come.

My second critique relates to Wilson’s discussion on ‘fulfilling the Law’, where he contends that Paul has the Law of Moses in mind for both 5:14 and 6:2, the latter of course referring to the ever-elusive ‘Law of Christ’. Setting aside 5:14, which I assume refers to ironic fulfilment of the Law, I am mainly interested in the meaning of the ‘Law of Christ’. Interestingly, Wilson never addressed 1 Cor 9:20–1 in this section, which contains the only other instance of the phrase (pp. 102–3). In that context Paul appears to be clearly juxtaposing the Law of Moses with the Law of Christ. Furthermore, this passage provides an additional critique of Wilson’s nuanced understanding of ‘under Law’ as a theological shorthand since the essence of the phrase

occurs five times with the connotation of governance being expressed. To be fair, Wilson did state that elsewhere in Paul's writings 'under Law' probably did not carry the ad hoc meaning it does in Galatians (p. 44). Despite this admission, however, 1 Cor 9:20–1 should have been dealt with more explicitly since the concept of 'under Law' is prevalent and the only other reference to the 'Law of Christ' is present there.

Essentially both of my critiques relate to my view of Paul and the Law; a perspective which others may not share. Regardless of one's view of the Law, however, Wilson's main thesis can be integrated into nearly anyone's reading of Galatians, as he notes as well (p. 115). The strength of Wilson's thesis is that he has rightly drawn attention to the motifs of cursing and blessing as integral to the letter. This will certainly be an enduring quality of his study.

John Anthony Dunne

St Mary's College, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, KY16 9AJ, UK

*jad22@st-andrews.ac.uk*

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Murray Rae, *Kierkegaard and Theology* (London: T&T Clark/Continuum, 2010), pp. 232. £14.99.

In the final chapter of *Kierkegaard and Theology*, Murray Rae contends that, of the current interest in Kierkegaard, 'Only a portion of that interest is theological' (p. 179). In this work Rae provides a sustained argument that this deficiency in theological interest is misguided. Rae shows that Kierkegaard's theology is the place where the philosopher, psychologist or general reader ought to begin; that without a clear understanding of the centrality of Christ, of grace and of scripture to Kierkegaard's thought, whatever insights one might glean about, for example, the human condition, will rest on faulty footing.

The idea that theological concerns ought to inform one's reading of Kierkegaard is not based in academic provincialism but in the quality of theology Rae believes Kierkegaard endorses – theology which edifies. '[I]n the midst of all the scholarly engagement with Kierkegaard we must remind ourselves that the reader he himself sought was one who was prepared to engage, not with his genius as an author, but with the existential challenge of the paradoxical self-presentation of God, and thus also with God's call upon every individual to a true realization of the self' (p. 2). The edifying quality of Kierkegaard's writing is imitated in Rae's own style which, with pastoral tone, often makes use of the first person plural; for example, 'The important question is whether through his corrective Kierkegaard still confronts us with the challenge of the gospel and by virtue of that challenge prompts action towards a giving of our whole lives, without merit as they are, into