

# **Prophetic Witness In World Christianities Rethinking Pastoral Care And Counseling International Practical Theology**

In 'Soft Shepherd or Almighty Pastor?' contributors seek to go beyond the taboo on power within pastoral contexts. They not only discuss fundamental theological and philosophical questions about power but also develop ways to prevent power abuse in pastoral context. Power is considered as omnipresent and is analyzed in its positive and negative aspects. Not only the classical associations of power over or domination are discussed in relation to ecclesial and pastoral situations, but also forms of power linked to

Prophets have a reputation of changing, for the better, the relationship between people and God. Christianity has a long history of prophets who have directed the faithful towards more justice and righteousness. What can Christians learn from prophets for daily life, for contemporary theology, and for pastoral care? This book looks at prophetic action from a biblical, pastoral, and ethical perspective. The contributions - from both pastoral theologians and pastors from around the globe - make this study a unique exercise in maintaining the prophetic perspective in theological reflection and pastoral practice. (Series: International Practical Theology - Vol. 13)

In this and every age, the church desperately needs prophecy. It needs the bold proclamation of God's transforming vision to challenge its very human tendency toward expediency and self-interest to jolt it into new insight and energy. For Luke Timothy Johnson, the New Testament books Luke and Acts provide that much-needed jolt to

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conventional norms. To read Luke-Acts as a literary unit, he says, is to uncover a startling prophetic vision of Jesus and the church and an ongoing call for today's church to embody and proclaim God's vision for the world.

Christian identity is in moral and political crisis, scandalized by the many ways in which it has been coopted and misrepresented. Addressing this painful reality, Lee Camp writes that Christianity in America has been made into a bad public joke because of "our failure to rightly understand what Christianity is." From this provocative claim, Camp's manifesto makes the convincing case that a renewed Christian politics is more essential than ever, one that is "neither left nor right nor religious," but a prophetic way of life modeled after Jesus of Nazareth. Camp's robust vision exposes modern parodies of faith—the American concept of "Christian values," for one—and challenges Christians to rethink who they are and how they participate in the modern world. Authentic gospel truth is a scandal to the American myth, he argues, and we are called to be scandalous witnesses.

This book hails from decades of challenging trial-and-error work, abundant reading, and an enduring obligation to ministers, activists, and unsung lay heroes whose legacies matter. As there is little that actually addresses the elusive meanings, if not the dangers inherent in pursuing alleged spoils of "success," it is kairos time. Seemingly scarce resources and competition to make and maintain ministries in the city challenge those of us in the field, or on the sidelines, to speak, write, and communicate clearly, and convincingly—not only for ourselves and our "people," past and present, but for those who come along soon to receive the baton or wear the mantle. Concretely narrated, with unique case studies, a cast of dozens contribute their earthy, earnest testimonies and are, at long last, energetically

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affirmed. Specifically, this work proffers constructive attention to the critical cautions concerning subtle temptations to “succeed,” including: commodification, cooptation, communalism, clientelism, and cowardice—and, not bailing on fierce charity-justice tensions (with benevolence protectively dominant). Narrative analysis and biography-as-theology, social ethics, biblical theology, and recent church history give apt attention to how a compelling case is possible for success, if justice is practiced, given a hopeful realism and perspective of prophetic eschatology.

The final book of the Bible, Revelation prophesies the ultimate judgement of mankind in a series of allegorical visions, grisly images and numerological predictions. According to these, empires will fall, the "Beast" will be destroyed and Christ will rule a new Jerusalem. With an introduction by Will Self.

The church has much to learn from an often-overlooked group—those with disabilities. Including a study guide in this expanded edition, Stanley Hauerwas and Jean Vanier shed light on what it means to be human and how we are to live, carefully exploring the contours of a countercultural community marked by radical forms of gentleness, peacemaking, and faithfulness.

Can a church that is compromised through dependence on temporal, political power speak with a powerful prophetic voice in the world? As the body of Christ, the church has a prophetic role in the world. Prophets have always spoken clearly to people in power. They have been willing to challenge the decisions made by people who thought they were not accountable to anyone. Sometimes the prophets were respected, sometimes persecuted, but they were never ignored or regarded as irrelevant. So why is it that the church today cannot speak truth effectively to power? In *The Politics of Witness*, Dr. Allan R. Bevere asks these questions and

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proposes an answer. The church has come to depend too much on temporal power and has thus forgotten its divine authority. In finding this answer he goes back to the founding of the church and how it first became dependent on the state. He examines those who have followed, mostly building a political theory that takes the responsibility of ministry from the church and gives it to the state. You'll find some names in this that might surprise you. Any discussion of Christianity and the state will involve Emperor Constantine, but what about his modern lieutenants, such as Locke, Jefferson, Franklin, and others? While the theology applies to the church in any country, Dr. Bevere takes a particular look at the peculiarly American view that the United States of America is somehow God's chosen people, a nation of destiny in accomplishing the gospel mission. This book balances brevity with a broad intellectual and historical reach. You will be taken from the founding and foundation structure of Christian theology today to a proposal for how we, as the Church can reclaim our prophetic witness. In the current political atmosphere, every Christian needs to read this book. Christianity is a global faith. Today, people are increasingly aware that Christianity extends far beyond Europe and North America, permeating the Eastern and Southern hemispheres. What we may know less well is that Christianity has always been a global faith. A vast untold story waits to be heard beyond the familiar tale of how the Christian faith spread across Europe. Not only was Jesus born in Asia, but in the early years of the church Christianity found fertile soil in Africa and soon extended to East Asia as well. In this brief introduction to world Christian history, Derek Cooper explores the development of Christianity across time and the

continents. Guiding readers to places like Iraq, Ethiopia and India, Scandanavia, Brazil and Oceania, he reveals the fascinating—and often surprising—history of the church.

Presenting practical strategies for reform and renewal of the Church, this strikingly direct volume brings together the voices of leading Catholic theologians who offer ideas for change while still showing that feminist reflection can work in support of the Church. With insightful essays on a wide range of complex topics—from Catholic sexual ethics in the 21st century and practical theology in global Christian contexts to race, class, and gender and the next generation of faithful women—this inspirational anthology provides an exciting perspective into the lives of practicing women and the particular challenges they face within the Church. Contributors include Susan Abraham, Karen A. Barta, Rosemary P. Carbine, Francine Cardman, and M. Shawn Copeland, among many others.

Visser 't Hooft and the Shaping of Ecumenical Theology  
Visser 't Hooft is, perhaps, the most distinguished figure in the modern ecumenical movement, emerging in the postwar decades as a pivotal figure. Under his leadership, the World Council of Churches was officially constituted in 1948 by 147 Protestant and Orthodox Catholic denominations, and the organization grew to include nearly 300 denominations in the following decades. Visser 't Hooft played a major role in the inclusion of churches from communist countries in the World Council, and he also sought to enlarge the role played by African, Asian, and Orthodox churches in the

organization. He served as editor of the Ecumenical Review from 1948 to 1966. He was also the author of numerous books on the ecumenical movement and the nature and functions of the church.

A new Catholic Church is emerging in the West, one that is very different from the Church before 1960. This book describes the new Church-in-the-making - its new position in society, its new structuring and workings, and its new frame of mind. The book also looks in a prospective way at some basic issues the Church has to deal with, such as imagining the Church in advanced modernity, attracting both youth and adults, rebuilding local communities, refashioning liturgy, and rethinking pastoral guidance. The book is the result of an interdisciplinary endeavor by philosophers, sociologists, and theologians. (Series: Tilburg Theological Studies / Tilburger Theologische Studien - Vol. 5)

Christianity must be understood not as a religion of private salvation, but as a gospel movement of universal compassion, which transforms the world in the power of God's truth. Amid several major global crises, including the rise of terrorism and religious fundamentalism and a sudden resurgence of political extremism, Christians must now face up fearlessly to the challenges of living in a "post-truth" age in which deceitful politicians present their media-spun fabrications as "alternative facts." This book is an attempt to enact a transformative theology for these changing times that will equip the global Christian community to take a stand for the gospel in an age of cultural despair and moral fragmentation. The emerging post-Christendom era calls for a new vision of

Christianity that has come of age and connects with the spiritual crisis of our times. In helping to make this vision a reality, Searle insists that theology is not merely an academic discipline, but a transformative enterprise that changes the world. Theology is to be experienced not just behind a desk, in an armchair, or in a church, but also in hospitals, in foodbanks, in workplaces, and on the streets. Theology is to be lived as well as read.

The Book of Revelation is a work of profound theology. But its literary form makes it impenetrable to many modern readers and open to all kinds of misinterpretations. Richard Bauckham explains how the book's imagery conveyed meaning in its original context and how the book's theology is inseparable from its literary structure and composition. Revelation is seen to offer not an esoteric and encoded forecast of historical events but rather a theocentric vision of the coming of God's universal kingdom, contextualised in the late first-century world dominated by Roman power and ideology. It calls on Christians to confront the political idolatries of the time and to participate in God's purpose of gathering all the nations into his kingdom. Once Revelation is properly grounded in its original context it is seen to transcend that context and speak to the contemporary church. This study concludes by highlighting Revelation's continuing relevance for today.

In this compelling book, Mark Stibbe argues that God wants to use Christians to speak prophetically into the lives of unbelievers, waking them up to the fact that Jesus is alive and he knows their every thought, word and action. There are many biblical examples of God's

people using prophecy in their witness to unbelievers. Jesus used prophecy in His ministry to seekers. After Pentecost, God gave the gift of prophecy to believers as one resource among many in their witness to the world. Furthermore, Christians today receive prophecies for those who don't know Christ, often with immediate and life-changing effects. This book contains many such testimonies.

Written by a diverse group of younger women religious from North America, *In Our Own Words* offers a collection of essays on issues central to apostolic religious life today. The thirteen authors represent different congregations, charisms, ministries, and histories. The topics and concerns that shape these chapters emerged naturally through a collaborative process of prayer and conversation. Essays focus on the vows and community life, individual identity and congregational charisms, and leadership among younger members leading into the future. The authors hope these chapters may form a springboard for further conversation on religious life, inviting others to share their experiences of religious life in today's world.

This book aims to rearticulate and reinterpret a Christian concept of God's mission and evangelization in light of the universal, irregular, and transversal horizon of God's narrative as it pertains to the realities of public sphere.

The modern apologetic enterprise, according to Myron Penner, is no longer valid. It tends toward an unbiblical and unchristian form of Christian witness and does not have the ability to attest truthfully to Christ in our postmodern context. In fact, Christians need an entirely new way of conceiving the apologetic task. This provocative text critiques modern

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apologetic efforts and offers a concept of faithful Christian witness that is characterized by love and grounded in God's revelation. Penner seeks to reorient the discussion of Christian belief, change a well-entrenched vocabulary that no longer works, and contextualize the enterprise of apologetics for a postmodern generation.

In this case study of Kenya's Nairobi Chapel and its "daughter" Mavuno Church, Wanjiru M. Gitau offers analysis of the rise, growth, and place of megachurches worldwide in the new millennium. This engaging account centers on the role of millennials in responding to the dislocating transitions of globalization in postcolonial Africa and around the world, gleaning practical wisdom for postdenominational churches everywhere.

This study is unique in its comprehensive account of the theology of Revelation, and is original in its exposition of the Book's message.

Christian ethics is less a system of principles, rules, or even virtues, and more of a free and open-ended responsible witness to God's gracious action to be with and for others and the world. Postmodernity has left us with the risky uncertainty of knowing and doing the good. It also leaves us with the global risks of political violence and terrorism, economic globalization and financial crisis, and environmental destruction and global climate change. How should Christians respond to these problems? This book creatively explores how Christian ethics is best understood as a witness to God's action, thereby providing the ethical framework for addressing the various problematic social issues that put our world at risk. Haddorff develops the notion of witness through a detailed study of Karl Barth's theological ethics. Barth, he argues, provides a language enabling us to know what a Christian ethics of witness actually looks like in both theory and in practice. In correspondence to God's gracious action,

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Christians remain free to think and act in faith, hope, and love in response to their unique circumstances, even in a world at risk. In their witness, Christians remain confident that God has not abandoned the world but loves and cares for its future.

In this wide-ranging collection of essays Ronald E. Osborn explores the politically subversive and nonviolent anarchist dimensions of Christian discipleship in response to dilemmas of power, suffering, and war. Essays engage texts and thinkers from Homer's Iliad, the Hebrew Bible, and the New Testament to portraits of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Noam Chomsky, and Elie Wiesel. This book also analyzes the Allied bombing of civilians in World War II, the peculiar contribution of the Seventh-day Adventist apocalyptic imagination to Christian social ethics, and the role of deceptive language in the Vietnam War. From these and other diverse angles, Osborn builds the case for a more prophetic witness in the face of the violence of the "principalities and powers" in the modern world. This book will serve as an indispensable primer in the political theology of the Adventist tradition, as well as a significant contribution to radical Christian thought in biblical, historical, and literary perspectives. "In reading Osborn you cannot help but think, 'He has to be kidding. He has to be putting us on to suggest there is a connection between anarchy and that form of Christianity called Adventist.' But he is not kidding. Rather he has written a book of lively essays to remind us that a commitment to peace is a challenge to any order based on violence. It was the Adventists, in their early formations, who reminded us that a commitment to peace cannot avoid challenging orders based on violence; that peace requires a different kind of order altogether. This is a call to the church to be that community based on the order of Christ's peace." --Stanley Hauerwas author of Christianity, Democracy, and the Radical Ordinary "This book is a bracing

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read for anyone trying to make sense of Christian witness in a violent world. Osborn ranges both widely and deeply, connecting insights from theology, history, literature, and political science in startling and inventive ways. He shows how violence creates its own momentum, and offers a wide range of resources for countering that momentum. Anyone interested in living creatively in a destructive world will benefit from this book. It is the kind of book that has the power to transform lives." --William T. Cavanaugh author of *The Myth of Religious Violence* "The Christianity of the American Empire has not only come to accept the normalization of violence; it often celebrates it! How desperately American Christians need the keen insights regarding the demonic dynamics of power and violence that Ronald Osborn reflects in these essays!" --Greg Boyd author of *The Myth of a Christian Nation* Ronald E. Osborn is a Bannermen Fellow with the Program in Politics and International Relations, University of Southern California

The church has been called to participate in God's mission in the world. But without a robust, biblical sense of the Spirit's action, how can we be sure we're fulfilling that call? Gary Tyra employs a biblical theology of the Holy Spirit to deepen and inform our understanding of life as the church, the people of God. Since the church's mission to and into the world is both evangelistic and prophetic, the task calls for the working of the Spirit in our preaching, proclamation and service. Tyra brings together both charismatic and evangelical emphases resulting in a theological and practical synthesis that is richer than when either is taken separately.

The role of religious prophetic witness in the public discourse of modern civil societies is a vital question, not only for the churches, but for society as a whole. Is it still appropriate for churches to make use of prophetic witness as a mode of public discourse in contemporary democratic societies? Can

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biblical tradition be a referential source for prophetic public statements of the churches in highly debated political questions? Or must public discourse in pluralistic societies be strictly grounded in purely reason-based arguments? This book deals with these questions in a multi-disciplinary perspective, looking at historical settings of biblical texts and discussing contemporary issues and contexts. (Series: Theology in the Public Square/Theologie in der Öffentlichkeit - Vol. 1)

In this inaugural Prophetic Christianity volume, fifteen contributors share their visions for a biblically centered, culturally engaged, and historically infused evangelicalism. Interacting with a wide variety of influential thinkers, they articulate several approaches to creating a socially responsible, gospel-centric, and ecumenical evangelical identity. Contributors: Raymond C. Aldred Vincent Bacote Bruce Ellis Benson Malinda Elizabeth Berry Chris Boesel John R. Franke David Gushee Peter Goodwin Heltzel Pamela Lightsey Cherith Fee Nordling Ruth Padilla-DeBorst Gabriel Salguero Helene Slessarev-Jamir Christian T. Collins Winn Telford Work

Gallagher and Hertig have collected a range of seminal articles and papers that offer students insight into thinking by the makers of modern mission and world Christian studies. This is a priceless book for the classroom, bringing between two covers the most important reflections on these issues in our age. This marvelous book answers the prayers of teachers who have struggled for a generation with the problem of providing their students a resource that will offer an entre into the best thinking on the nature of mission and the emergence of world Christianity.

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Globalization is uniting the world more closely than ever

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before while at the same time increasing the likelihood of division and conflict. Humanity faces problems of an unprecedented scope: vast inequality, climate change threatening the conditions of life on this planet, and a great population migration that includes human trafficking and desperate refugees. What does this global plight demand of a church called to be a sign and instrument of the union of all in God? In this book, Mary Doak shows how the church must rectify its own historic failures to embody the unity-in-diversity it proclaims, especially with regard to women and Jews. Only then, and through responding to the demands of the current global crises, can we learn what it means to be the church—that is, to be a prophetic witness and public agent of the harmony that God desires and the world deeply needs. This book explores the prophetic characteristics of literature, particularly poetry, that seek to reimagine the world in which it is written. Using theological and philosophical insights it charts the relentless impulse of literature to propose alternative visions, practicable or utopian, and point toward possibilities of renewal and change. Drawing from each of the three main Abrahamic religions, as well as Greek and Latin classics, an international group of scholars utilise a diverse range of analytical and interpretive methods to draw out the prophetic voice in poetry. Looking at the writings of figures like T. S. Elliot, Blake, Wittgenstein and Isaiah, the theme of the prophetic is shown to be of timely importance given the current state of geo-political challenges and uncertainties and offers a much-needed critical discussion of these broad cultural questions. This collection of essays offers readers an insight into the constructive power of literature. As such, it will be of great interest to scholars working in Religion and the Arts, Religious Studies, Theology and Aesthetics. Abingdon Pillars of Theology is a series for the college and seminary classroom designed to help students grasp the

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basic and necessary facts, influence, and significance of major theologians. Written by major scholars, these books will outline the context, methodology, organizing principles, primary contributions, and major writings of people who have shaped theology as we know it today. Reinhold Niebuhr understood the tensions and complexities of the Christian Life. His approach became to theology became known as "Christian realism." Through his life and work we can see the importance of paying attention to what is really happening and the witness we can make when we look at events with a wisdom shaped by a biblical understanding of history and human nature. An excerpt from the Circuit Rider review: "In the face of recession and a troubled economy, global warming and environmental peril, war and the AIDS pandemic, contemporary Christians would be well served to ponder again the work and witness of Reinhold Niebuhr. His work urges Christians and the church to define and claim our voice in the public arena. Faithful and prophetic witness rooted and grounded in true Christian hope are needed now more than ever. We are grateful to Prof. Lovin for this important contribution to the life of thoughtful faith and faithful living." (Click here to read the entire review.)

In a world divided by race, ethnicity, gender, violence, and hate, Harold Recinos's Good News from the Barrio explores the ways in which the good news of the gospel is at work in Latino barrios. He challenges Christians to listen to the gospel in these contexts and offer a prophetic witness to the nation and the church.

A life of consecration prefigures what Christians hope for by calling into question the value of power, sexuality, and material possessions. Religious life challenges the idea that these things alone bring happiness and shows that we can be more fulfilled, happier, and more whole without being attached to them. Furthermore, detaching ourselves from

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these desires allows others to live with more dignity and greater ease, as well. Consecrated life, then, is a prophetic witness to the joy of the eschatological call of Christianity. In the words of Pope Francis to religious men and women leading up to the Year of Consecrated Religious, "Wake up the world! Be witnesses of a different way of doing things, of acting, of living!"

This book analyzes the impact of pluralism and inclusivism upon ecclesiology.

"Magisterial. . . . A learned, brilliant and enjoyable study."—Géza Vermès, *Times Literary Supplement* In this exciting book, Paula Fredriksen explains the variety of New Testament images of Jesus by exploring the ways that the new Christian communities interpreted his mission and message in light of the delay of the Kingdom he had preached. This edition includes an introduction reviews the most recent scholarship on Jesus and its implications for both history and theology. "Brilliant and lucidly written, full of original and fascinating insights."—Reginald H. Fuller, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* "This is a first-rate work of a first-rate historian."—James D. Tabor, *Journal of Religion* "Fredriksen confronts her documents—principally the writings of the New Testament—as an archaeologist would an especially rich complex site. With great care she distinguishes the literary images from historical fact. As she does so, she explains the images of Jesus in terms of the strategies and purposes of the writers Paul, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John."—Thomas D'Evelyn, *Christian Science Monitor*

As a global religion with growing numbers of expressions, Christianity calls for deepening relationships across traditions while also formulating collaborative visions. A thriving church will require Christians from various traditions and on varying trajectories to become familiar with one another, appreciate one another, and work in common service to God in Jesus

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Christ. In this book, a group of thirteen distinguished scholars from around the world and representing a range of Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant perspectives demonstrate how theological reflection and broad-based ecumenical conversations may serve the church. Reflecting on numerous salient matters facing the global church, these scholars model what may be accomplished in ecumenical conversations that recognize the gifts that come with unity across diversity among those who seek to be faithful to Jesus Christ.

In this clarion call to action, leading Unitarian Universalist theologian Paul Rasor dispels the myth that conservative Christianity is the only valid religious voice in the national debates on social policy. Showing that religious liberals are more numerous than many realize, he calls on them to embrace their prophetic heritage and bring their religious convictions to bear on the issues of our time. Reclaiming Prophetic Witness will lift your spirit, while inspiring you to lift your voice and reclaim a place in the public square. From the foreword: This is a time for prophets. In the United States, economic inequality-at its highest level since the Gilded Age-is tearing our communities apart, depriving young people of hope in the future. Across the world, the unsustainable use of fossil fuels has poisoned the soil and the air, turning African farms into desert and threatening island nations with destruction. Great liberation struggles of past generations remain incomplete. All too often, churches close their doors to queer families, schools close their doors to immigrant children, and hospitals close their doors to the most vulnerable. The earth and her people cry out in anguish, in indignation, and, yet still, in hope....

The most important theological work of the 20th century in a new edition - now available in individual volumes. > What constitutes the good life and authentic Christian leadership in a high-speed technological society geared to

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perpetual economic growth? In a world of rapid change and heightened risks, how do we move beyond the tyranny of emergency and polarization toward a politics of engagement and time oriented to the long-term common good? Taking up key themes in the social teaching of Popes Benedict XVI and Francis, *Sustainable Abundance for All* argues that life in a risky, runaway world requires new forms of Christian praxis that are both forward-looking and rooted in tradition. Among the issues addressed are pathways toward sustainable development in the Anthropocene, automation and the transition to post-jobs society, the proactionary-precautionary debate over new technologies, and the dangers of becoming "people of the device." *Sustainable Abundance for All* lays the groundwork for new kinds of Christian social action and prophetic witness in the twenty-first century.

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