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Gentle Persuasion, by Joseph C. Aldrich (Book Review)

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wives of David Livingstone and William Carey. Tucker also discusses the impact of persecution and disease on missionary wives. Many of them lost their lives and their children in the early years of the modern missionary movement. No less serious was the loss of dignity by other women. Perhaps the most potent challenge is the one issued by Lottie Moon of Southern Baptist fame: "What women have a right to demand is perfect equality" (p. 41).

A second major section discusses the numerous opportunities that women have found in missions. At home Mary Webb devised means of raising support for missionaries, while Mary Lyon founded Mount Holyoke Female Seminary as a training school for missionaries (pp. 64-67). Other women gave positive leadership to missionary enterprises, such as the Roman Catholic Anne Marie Javouhey and the missionary pioneer in Liberia, Eliza Davis George. Urban missions found a champion in Catherine Booth, wife of General William Booth (p. 75).

Some women were known as pioneers, such as Mildred Cable and Mary Slessor. Others made their mark as extremely able preachers mobilizing missionary interest, as did Annie Armstrong of the Southern Baptist Women's Missionary Union (pp. 102-103). More traditional missionary activities are also treated. The orphanage work of Amy Carmichael and Gladys Aylward are an example of this, as is the educational example of Pandita Ramabai (pp. 143-147).

In finishing the book, Tucker surveys the role of women on the cutting edge of current missiological thought. The popularizing work of Elisabeth Elliot and Isobel Kuhn is studied from a missiological standpoint. There is an unusually thoughtful discussion of power encounter in missions today (p. 229), and a final chapter brings the subject up to date with a survey of third-world women in missions.

In evaluating Tucker's writing, we may draw several conclusions. (1) Tucker has altered the writing of missions history. She blends sophisticated missiological insights with controversial, current assessments.

(2) True to her background as an historian, Tucker is meticulous in her research. A great deal of time is devoted to the study and evaluation of primary sources.

(3) She includes references to lesser-known personalities. Among them are Carie Sydenstricker, mother of Pearl S. Buck (p. 42); Clara Swain, the first woman missionary doctor; and Henrietta Soltau, a woman preacher within the circles of the Brethren (pp. 112-113).

(4) Tucker never shrinks from difficult assessment. She reports that the death of Carey's wife "was no doubt a relief to her husband" (p. 16). Likewise Tucker reports that Ann Hasseltine Judson (wife of Adoniram) did not "seek to understand the Burmese worldview" (p. 25).

(5) The addition of an extensive bibliography and index makes this book a valuable part of the missions professor's library. It is a worthy companion to *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya* and enhances Tucker's well-deserved reputation as one of the most skillful writers in the field of missions.

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Gentle Persuasion. By Joseph C. Aldrich. Portland: Multnomah, 1988, 247 pp., n.p. paper.

When it comes to "lifestyle evangelism," Joe Aldrich wrote the book. Although he is an educator by profession, he is a communicator by passion. Whether in the backyard or the pulpit, Aldrich is a communicator par excellence.

In this volume he gives a step-by-step plan for communicating the Christian message to non-Christians. Demonstrating the necessity of a planned approach, Aldrich quips: "Evangelism isn't throwing hamburger in a fan and hoping someone opens his mouth" (p. 18).

Because he believes that gimmicks are not the key to communicating the gospel, Aldrich emphasizes the value of a credible Christian lifestyle. People are persuaded by people—or, as Aldrich puts it, "God's communication strategy has always been to wrap an idea in a person" (p. 49).

The typical Christian excuses are hit head-on. Aldrich also explains that eighty percent of those who trust Christ come through the influence of a friend.

Underlying a fascinating style of writing is a sound basis of theological truth. In describing the state of the lost, Aldrich tabulates the characteristics: spiritual deadness, degraded emotions, intellectual handicaps (pp. 112-113).

The correct sphere of evangelism is not the world at large but a person's network of contact, one's *oikos*. "The gospel," asserts the author, "flows down webs of relationships" (p. 136).

In a final section Aldrich includes helpful, practical instruction. His first rule of success: "Cultivation is an appeal to the heart through the building of a relationship" (p. 154). In fact lifestyle evangelism is primarily relational evangelism.

Since non-Christians suffer from isolation, friendship is a primary avenue of approach with the gospel. The author concedes that "it is easier to talk to a stranger than to build a friendship" (p. 172).

Inasmuch as Aldrich has often come under attack from the fundamentalist and the separatist, he finds it necessary to face head-on the agenda of the separatist. He concludes that the greatest barrier to doing evangelism is not our theology but our Christian culture. This means that we must accept the diversity of conscience that characterizes the Church in any given time or place.

As an addendum, Aldrich includes twenty-five of the most frequently asked questions. Among them: "Do you think every Christian should be involved in lifestyle evangelism?" "My house is nothing fancy. Can God still use me?" "My husband's not a believer. Should I still be involved in evangelism?" (pp. 239-247).

Aldrich communicates by means of humor, excellent illustration and colorful language. This book is so well organized that it could provide the basis for a study course in evangelism. Although its whole tone is popular it is well worth reading for pastors, professors of evangelism, and evangelists.

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Dominion Theology: Blessing or Curse? An Analysis of Christian Reconstructionism. By H. Wayne House and Thomas Ice. Portland: Multnomah, 1988, 460 pp., \$15.95.

A judicious reader forestalls judging a book by its cover, but its title is fair game, especially when containing a question. What principled, hopeful evangelical could possibly resist so alluring a call as "dominion theology"? Even those put off by the potential arbitrariness of "dominion" would surely warm to the progressiveness of "Christian reconstructionism."

For those who have not followed the debate in *Christianity Today*, Christian reconstructionism hopes to succeed where the early American Puritans failed. Its goal is to erect a theocracy of global proportions, implementing in Greg Bahnsen's