



Books in Review

INSTRUMENTS IN THE REDEEMER'S HANDS

by Paul David Tripp

P&R Publishing, 360 pages, \$16.99

While this is not a new volume — it's almost a decade old — it is one that is often called the most valuable book for those interested in biblical counseling. If there is a complete volume on biblical counseling, this is it.

Tripp's premise is that our problems flow from our hearts. If we are to help people live to the glory of God and handle their troubles properly, we must address the heart. We must expose what is in the heart, analyze what is found in light of Scripture, and call for a biblical response.

This emphasis on the heart is critical. If we are not careful, "biblical counseling" can be reduced to behavior modification: expose a problem, find appropriate Scripture, and then call for obedience and behavior change. But true biblical counseling is much more: if the heart is not addressed, then lasting and deep change will not take place, and the one in need may be transformed into a legalist rather than the person God wants them to be.

It is a book of "whys" and "hows": why we need to build relationships with others, and how to build those relationships thereby discovering where and what change is needed. The book, however, is not just about helping others. It calls the reader to personal reflection. As Tripp tells us, "If we are going to be faithful to Christ [in personal biblical ministry], we must begin by examining our own hearts. Are there thoughts, motives, or attitudes (self-righteous, anger, bitterness, spirit of condemnation, vengeance) that would get in the way of what God intends to do? As instruments of Christ's grace, we must confess that we need that grace just as much as the people we are helping" (pg. 209).

Tripp writes well, is faithful to Scripture (with a couple of exceptions), provides much biblical insight, offers case studies, gives practical tools, and develops an overall framework for counseling those in need. The book is not only useful to biblical counselors, but also to anyone desiring to grow in Christ and help others do the same.

—GEG

10 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ON SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM

by Paul Carden, General Editor

Rose Publishing, 14-page pamphlet, \$3.99

One of the more prominent religious movements which, through the years, has been able to escape a strict and biblical investigation has been the Seventh-day Adventist church. Unlike Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons, Adventists have eluded a surge of resources critical of its history, beliefs, and practices. Yet like Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons, the movement is permeated with unbiblical doctrine and a suspicious heritage. That's why this laminated fanfold pamphlet by Rose Publishing is a beneficial resource.

From Adventist roots have stemmed teachers (and their sects) such as Charles Taze Russell (Jehovah's Witnesses), Herbert W. Armstrong (Worldwide Church of God), and David Koresh (Branch Davidians). While nearly all Christians offer no hesitation in labeling these men as heretical, many of these same Christians are unsure or reluctant to apply the same designation to Ellen G. White and Seventh-day Adventists.

The pamphlet covers key, more well-known facets of Adventism, such as Ellen G. White as a prophet of God, the state of the dead and a temporal hell, the "investigative judgment," Sabbath worship, and the Adventist claim of being God's unique "Remnant Church." But other, lesser-known, aspects are also examined. For example, the pamphlet says, "Because [Adventists teach] there is no human spirit other than breath or 'life force,' Adventists make abortion a matter of choice because the fetus has not yet breathed and there is therefore not a living soul. Abortions are performed in Adventist hospitals." An evaluation of *The Clear Word*, which is the Adventists' expanded paraphrase of the Bible, first published in 1994, is provided.

Additional helpful panels in the brochure include a glossary of Seventh-day Adventist terms and the "Do's" and "Don'ts" of a Christian witness to Adventists.

The publication is full-color throughout, attractive, and a quick read. More importantly, it subjects Adventism to the scrutiny that it largely has been able to avoid for 150 years.

—MKG

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