



Books in Review

OUR SUFFICIENCY IN CHRIST

by John F. MacArthur

Crossway Books, 282 pages, \$12.99

John MacArthur's volume, *Our Sufficiency in Christ*, is another of those books which has not received the distinction and wide reading audience it deserves. In a time when fictional and apocalyptic writings, or 30-day-wonder prayer formula books top the Christian best-seller lists, a book such as MacArthur's, which presents a sane and biblical understanding of a believer's position in Christ, all too often goes unnoticed and unread.

Sadly, Christians go looking for truth in all the wrong places. They dig through the garbage cans of psychology, mysticism, spiritual gimmicks, and supernatural quick fixes. "As a result," the book says, "they wallow in a watered-down, pseudo-Christianity that has been drained of its vitality, effectiveness, and security."

MacArthur tackles a wide range of issues in the book. And he clearly shows the complete sufficiency of Scripture. The Word of God need not be supplemented with psychology or other man-made therapies. He writes, "The Bible is like a lion. You don't need to defend it. Just open the door and let it out. It'll take care of itself" (pg. 141). Scripture, he stresses, provides reliable answers for life's hardest questions. And he's right on target. If more Christians were taught and believed this basic truth, they would not be so easily deceived by Satan or search in vain for spiritual truth. "Scripture hasn't failed them — they've failed Scripture," MacArthur writes (pg. 89).

MacArthur also surveys the issue of spiritual warfare and presents a solid case for the sufficiency of God's grace. The biblical principles and understanding he sets forth in both these chapters are extremely helpful in combating the current wave of deliverance ministries and health and wealth theologies.

The book has Scripture and Topical indexes. The latter

is expanded to include entries for several of the illustrative stories MacArthur uses.

This book was first published under the same title by Word Publishers in 1991. Crossway Books (beginning in 1998) is now publishing the volume. They should be commended for keeping this important work in print.

—MKG

THE NATION OF ISLAM Understanding the 'Black Muslims'

by Steven Tsoukalas

P&R Publishing, 211 pages, \$14.99

As the Nation of Islam continues to grow rapidly, it is imperative for Christians to know and understand the workings of this group. Steve Tsoukalas has definitely done his homework to bring to believers a clear picture of the movement of new-found identity and pride from three perspectives; political, social, and religious.

This explicit study is meticulously documented. The first chapter alone has 102 endnotes. The seven-page index is also helpful in retrieving information. A summary at the end of each chapter is an added enhancement to the publication.

The first six chapters deal with the history of the movement, which makes a fascinating read. The fathers of black nationalism, Marcus Garvey and Noble Drew Ali affected the life of W.D. Fard, who "started a massive black nationalist movement from humble beginnings of a silk peddler." His successor, Elijah Muhammad, believed "that Fard was and is God in the flesh" and led the movement until his death in 1975. The two other more recent — and highly visible — leaders are Malcolm X and Louis Farrakhan, both of whom "were groomed to succeed Elijah Muhammad."

The Nation of Islam is not to be confused with traditional Islam. Tsoukalas explains, "There are significant differences between the doctrines of the NOI [Nation of Islam] and those of traditional Islam ... First and foremost is that Islam considers it blasphemy to call any man Allah in the flesh" (pg. 70).

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