

in many cases to be certain of the validity of the traditions they record, but these writings do point to the NT as the most authentic account of the history of Jesus.

The chapter on the hypothetical sources behind the canonical Gospels presents an interesting assessment of historicity. Given the fact that none of these documents actually exist but are mere hypothetical reconstructions based on a study of the Gospels, it is somewhat surprising to see them evaluated as noncanonical evidence for the historicity of Jesus that is independent from the witness of the Gospels. The results, however, are not so surprising, since the hypothetical sources are, *prima facie*, reconstructed based on certain selective characteristics which are assumed to distinguish them from the other Gospel materials. What kind of independent historical witness can these purported sources offer that cannot be found in the Gospels themselves, except to confirm the distorted, selective portraits created by the reconstruction process postulated by the critics? There is a strong element of circular reasoning involved in such a process.

The book is a valuable contribution to Jesus studies. The collection of the various sources in a readable English translation is helpful, but the scholarly evaluation and summary of the evidence makes this a most useful compendium of the ancient evidence for Jesus from outside the NT. For those who would like to add historical evidence to the faith testimony of the Gospels and other NT sources, I recommend this book.

Edwin E. Reynolds

Vyhmeister, Nancy Jean. *Quality Research Papers: For Students of Religion and Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001. ix + 228 pp.

This work is the culmination of many years of guiding research and writing for Nancy Vyhmeister, recently retired from Andrews University, where she taught research and writing and served as editor of *Andrews University Seminary Studies*. She also recently edited the book *Women in Ministry: Biblical and Historical Perspectives* (Andrews University Press, 1998).

Vyhmeister first compiled a guide for research writing in Spanish while teaching theology students in South America. Later she reworked it in English for the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in the Philippines, where it became the approved style guide for the seminary for a number of years. When Vyhmeister moved to Andrews University in Michigan and began teaching research for the seminary there, she determined to revise and update her research guide again. This book is the result. One can thus see this work as the product of extended experience and reassessment of the task and methodology of research and writing.

The book covers all the essential areas of research and writing for students of religion and theology, with examples given for each step in the research and writing process. It begins with a discussion of what research entails, then progresses in logical sequence through the various steps that are necessary in the process of

doing research and writing the paper. Special attention is given to matters that pertain to the field of religion, such as biblical exegesis, theological issues, and the special styles used for pastoral case studies and Doctor of Ministry projects.

It is evident that the book was specially written for seminary students at Andrews University, since the style guidelines follow those of Andrews University, which are based on Chicago style (Turabian) and tend to follow also the Society of Biblical Literature's style guidelines, and many of the examples are taken from the works of students and faculty at Andrews University. Nevertheless, the book is still useful for students in other schools. Not only is the general methodology broadly applicable to scholarly research and writing in the field of religion, but for those that use the American Psychological Association (APA) style, Vyhmeister provides appendix A, which shows appropriate APA style citations for the same examples given in Turabian style in chapter 9.

Although the predominant form of research covered is descriptive, or bibliographic, Vyhmeister also briefly covers program development, case studies, critical reviews, Doctor of Ministry projects, and the use of statistics from field research. She also has a special chapter on theses and dissertations, which includes how to do a review of literature, how to write a proposal, and even how to prepare for the oral defense of the work.

This book fills an important gap, addressing the special needs of the student doing research in religion and theology. It should be widely useful in a variety of academic contexts within the disciplines for which it was written. I highly recommend it, though individual schools may have special requirements in particular areas that may differ to some extent from the details specified for Andrews University students.

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