

# Latimer Trust

## Monthly Reading List – April 2022

This is a summary of recent books read by Martin Davie, compiling his evaluations and the commendations of others.

In this edition:

Author	Title	Martin's opinion
W Ross Hastings	<i>The Resurrection of Jesus Christ: Exploring Its Theological Significance and Ongoing Relevance</i>	This is not a book for enquirers, or for new Christians, but it is an excellent resource for theological students, ministers and educated lay Christians. It would make an excellent basis for a sermon series or for a series of home group sessions.
Chee-Chiew Lee	<i>When Christians Face Persecution: Theological Perspectives from the New Testament</i>	Christians have an urgent need to know what guidance God gives through the New Testament writers about how Christians should respond to persecution and to think about how to apply this teaching to their own particular situations. Lee's important book provides the groundwork for undertaking these twin tasks successfully.
Rebecca McLaughlin	<i>The Secular Creed: Engaging Five Contemporary Claims</i>	An excellent piece of Christian ethics and apologetics. It engages with a wide range of Christian and secular sources and very clearly explains which parts of the progressive agenda Christians must support because they are in line with Christian teaching, and which parts Christians need to reject because they are not.
T A Noble and Jason Sexton (eds)	<i>British Evangelical Theologians of the Twentieth Century: An Enduring Legacy</i>	Anyone who wants to understand the development of British evangelical theology in the last century should read this book. Not everyone will agree with everything that is said, but everyone will find their knowledge of British Evangelical theology increased and be stimulated to think what was good and what was less good, and to consider how Evangelical theology should develop in the future
Emerson B Powery	<i>The Good Samaritan: Luke 10 for the Life of the Church</i>	This is a book that is well worth referring to by anyone called to teach or preach on the parable of the Good Samaritan. It doesn't replace more traditional commentaries on the parable, but it is a very valuable supplement to them.

W Ross Hastings, *The Resurrection of Jesus Christ: Exploring Its Theological Significance and Ongoing Relevance*, Baker Academic, 978-1-54096-492-2, £18.80 (Hardback and e editions also available).

#### Overview:

W Ross Hastings is a pastor and a theologian who is currently Professor of Theology at Regent College Vancouver. He has written a number of books, including *Total Atonement*, *Theological Ethics*, and *Missional God, Missional Church* and his new book 'is about the theological significance and ongoing relevance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the twenty-first century, including and maybe especially in its times of crisis.'

The book consists of ten main chapters plus an introduction and conclusion.

The first chapter 'The Resurrection as Good History' sets out the good historical evidence for believing that the resurrection really happened while insisting that belief in the resurrection is also a work of God in which the Father acts through the Spirit to bring us to faith in the risen Christ.

Chapters 2–6 then 'focus on what the resurrection has accomplished – that is, what it means for our salvation.' Chapter 2 considers what the resurrection has to do 'with the atonement, our salvation, and, in particular, our regeneration and justification.' Chapter 3 focuses on 'the significance of the resurrection for the three great themes of the Christian tradition: 'Christ's participation in humanity, recapitulation, and the Christus Victor (Christ the Victor) model of the atonement.' Chapter 4 explores what the resurrection has to do with 'our actual transformation as persons – that is, our progressive sanctification' and links this to a discussion of the ancient Christian idea of *theosis* or deification, 'our transformation to become like God in character as a result of our union with Christ.' Chapter 5 looks at what the resurrection means for 'our vocation or mission as humans, as the church and as individual Christians.' Finally, chapter 6 links the resurrection of Christ to the future resurrection of Christians, discussing 'the glorification of the believer, bodily resurrection, and what we can know about resurrected bodies in the light of Jesus' resurrection body.'

Chapters 7–10 move on to look at the 'ontological significance' of the resurrection, looking in turn at what the resurrection means for our understanding of the person of Christ, the renewal of creation and the nature of the second coming. Chapter 7 looks at the how the resurrection declares Jesus' 'unrivalled supremacy' as the Lord who is the victor over death and the devil and who rules over all creation as the exalted Son of God who pours out the Spirit. Chapter 8 explores 'what the resurrection means for Jesus' office 'as our Great High Priest, who is also King-Priest-Prophet' and what this in turn means for Christian worship and preaching.' Chapter 9 considers the resurrection as a reaffirmation of God's commitment to creation and what this means for 'the study of science and the arts.' Finally, chapter 10 consider what the resurrection tells about the nature of Jesus's second coming.

In the conclusion Hastings argues from 2 Timothy 2:8, Romans 1:1–4, Acts 2:24, 31–33 and 1 Peter 1:3 that for both Paul and Peter the resurrection is 'the core of the core' of the Christian gospel because:

...the atonement, our salvation and our future resurrection and glorification, and the renewal of all creation all have their efficacy because they have been accomplished in the *person* of Jesus, the One who became one with us in the incarnation in order to act on our behalf in life and in death and remove death from us in the resurrection.

He also argues from 2 Timothy 1:11–12 that the Christian calling is to:

.... joyfully proclaim the power of the resurrection, knowing two realities: first, that the risen Jesus is the only hope for the brokenness, sinfulness, and ultimate cosmic hopelessness of every person and every culture in every country of the world; and second, that in declaring this to people, even when we do so wisely and respectfully, we will experience some suffering.

#### Martin's opinion:

Hastings' study is an excellent piece of work, which draws on both the New Testament and the entire Christian theological tradition from Patristic times onwards to give us a convincing and comprehensive explanation of why the

resurrection is historically credible and what the resurrection means for our understanding of the person and work of Christ, of our lives as Christians, of creation as a whole and what will happen at the end of time.

This is not a book for enquirers, or for new Christians, as it presupposes some existing knowledge of the Christian faith, but it is an excellent resource for theological students, ministers and educated lay Christians. It would make an excellent basis for a sermon series or for a series of home group sessions (it has 'discussion questions' at the end of every chapter). Highly recommended.

Commendations:

Oliver Crisp writes:

Ross Hastings has a remarkable gift of making theology lively. In this book he considers the vitality and importance of the resurrection of Christ in a fully worked out theological account of the Christian life. From discussion of the historicity of the resurrection, to its importance in our understanding of the atonement and our participation in Christ's work, and on to the implications it has for life today and in the hereafter – this is a work that has a broad sweep, penned by a deft theological hand.

Chee-Chiew Lee, *When Christians Face Persecution: Theological Perspectives from the New Testament*, Apollos, ISBN 978-1-78974-268-8, £16.99 (e edition also available).

#### Overview:

Chee-Chiew Lee is a Chinese theologian who is a Graduate of the Langham Scholars' Programme and is currently Associate Professor of New Testament and Senior Director of Programme Development and Advanced Studies at Singapore Bible College.

As she notes in her introduction to her new book, 'opposition to the Christian faith to the extent of persecution has been a concern to Christians ever since the beginning of Christianity to today'. In the light of this fact her book is 'an attempt to describe a New Testament theology of facing persecution as basis for further theological reflections for various contemporary contexts.'

The book seeks to answer two key questions. First: 'What are the socio-political and theological factors that led to the persecution of Christians as described in the New Testament and how did these Christians justify their responses to it?' Secondly, 'How do the New Testament authors interpret, develop and reapply the gospel traditions of Jesus regarding persecution to their context?'

As she further explains, her book has:

... a few specific focuses. First, it concentrates on describing how the New Testament authors attain the goal of encouraging their Christian audience to persevere in faith despite facing persecution, thus a 'theology of facing persecution' rather than a broader 'theology of persecution.' As such, the persecution of Jesus will be the background cause of Christian persecution, rather than the foreground of our discussion. Second, it is primarily a biblical-theological study of the New Testament, rather than historical study of early Christianity. Therefore, we will concentrate on texts within the twenty-seven books of the New Testament canon that clearly address persecution, but will not include other non-canonical Christian texts such as those of the apostolic fathers. Also, we will concentrate on looking at the first-century historical, political and cultural context as the background to the study, rather than a historical analysis of what happened as foreground. Nonetheless, we will also briefly look into the century before to understand various causes leading up to the first-century context, as well as explore possible areas of continuity into the next few centuries. Third, we will also focus on conflicts with outsiders, rather than intra Christian conflicts (e.g., disagreements between Poole and other Jewish Christians).

The book consists of three main chapters with a conclusion and an epilogue.

Chapter 1, 'Why it all began: exploring the reasons,' surveys 'the religious world views of the New Testament period' and then examines the New Testament texts 'to see who persecuted the Christians and why they did so.' The chapter not only describes 'the insiders' (the New Testament authors') perspectives,' but also attempts to work out 'the outsiders' (non-Christians') perspectives,'

Chapter 2, 'What was happening: responses to persecution,' details 'the various forms of persecution these early Christians faced' and describes 'the diverse responses the New Testament depicts,' namely 'resistance and perseverance,' 'apostasy and assimilation' and 'accommodation and adaption.'

Chapter 3, 'How to stand firm to the end: persuading and empowering perseverance,' looks at 'how the New Testament authors persuaded their audiences to persevere in their Christian faith despite facing persecution.' It looks in turn at Mark, Matthew, Luke–Acts, John, the Pauline epistles, Hebrews, 1 Peter and Revelation.

The concluding chapter synthesises 'the similar theological perspectives among the New Testament authors' but also highlights 'their individual distinct perspectives on certain issues.'

The epilogue, 'Some contemporary reflections' brings the story up to date with the author reflecting on how the 'New Testament theology of facing persecution relates to contemporary churches facing persecution for their faith in Christ.' The epilogue considers what constitutes persecution, how we can properly appropriate 'biblical exemplars and teachings,' and the importance of 'empathizing with the persecuted.'

#### Martin's opinion:

Today Christians are the most persecuted group of people on the planet, and it seems likely that even in the hitherto safe Western world persecution will increase in the years to come. Christians therefore have an urgent need to know what guidance God gives through the New Testament writers about how Christians should respond to persecution and to think about how to apply this teaching to their own particular situations. Lee's important book provides the groundwork for undertaking these twin tasks successfully. It is a serious and up to date academic study that looks in detail at what the New Testament writers teach and how to apply it today. It is thus a key resource and needs to be widely read.

#### Commendations:

##### Patrick Fung comments:

Dr Chee-Chiew Lee's book of well-researched scholarship combines a rich exploration of New Testament theology regarding how to face persecution, the diverse Christian response to persecution in the Greco-Roman world, and an analysis of how the different authors in the New Testament encourage readers to persevere in faith during persecution. The epilogue is a must read as Dr Lee presents her own personal reflections on how to apply a theological understanding of persecution to our current contemporary context. Lee's appeal for readers to empathize with the persecuted is certainly the book's grand finale.

Rebecca McLaughlin, *The Secular Creed: Engaging Five Contemporary Claims*, The Gospel Coalition, ISBN 978-0-99928-430-8, £8.99 (e and audio editions also available).

Overview:

Rebecca McLaughlin is a British Christian writer now living in the United States. In the introduction to her new book she examines five claims which together makes the 'secular creed or statement of belief' for many in the United States. These five claims are 'Black lives matter. Love is love. Gay rights are civil rights. Women's rights are human rights. Transgender women are women.'

She notes that seeing signs making such affirmations:

Christians tend to grab hammers. Some grab one to drive the sign into their lawn. They lament racial injustice, they believe in diversity, they know women are equal to men, and they've been taught that affirming gay relationships, trans identities, and pro-choice positions comes part and parcel with these other things. If black lives matter (which they surely do), then love of all kinds must be love. Others take up hammers with a different plan. Knowing that the Bible rejects some things that underlie this modern creed, they swing a hammer to flatten the sign. Perhaps not literally, but in their hearts and minds. If these ideas stand together, they must all be wrong.

McLaughlin's book, however, offers a third approach:

Wielding a marker instead of a mallet, it will consider five contemporary claims: 'Black Lives Matter,' 'Love Is Love,' 'The Gay-Rights Movement Is the New Civil Rights Movement,' 'Women's Rights Are Human Rights' and 'Transgender Women Are Women.' Examining each claim through the lens of scripture and in light of culture, we'll aim to disentangle ideas Christians can and must affirm from ideas Christians cannot and must not embrace.

The book consists of five chapters, which consider each of these five claims in turn. There is then a final chapter 'Call to loving arms' which suggests an overall Christian response to the secular creed. In this final chapter she uses the image of learning to drive and declares: 'I'm convinced that in order to make progress we must change gears. Rather than just ramming our foot down, we must pull the gear stick back and do the hard work of repentance before shifting to second or third.'

In particular, she says: '... white Christians like me must recognise the ways in which our tribe has been complicit in the pain of black Americans: from slavery to segregation to racial inequality today.' This is not only because a failure to do will hold back evangelism, but because:

If we don't fight for the biblical goals of racial justice and equality, we're playing into the script that says Christian sexual ethics come bundled with oppression. In order to make progress, it's vital that we unyoke these ideas. To show where progressives are wrong, we must also freely acknowledge where they are right.

Furthermore, she argues:

Whatever our racial background, we Christians must also repent of the ways we've allowed actual homophobia – fear, hatred, and mistrust of gay and lesbian people – to infect our churches. Too often, LGBT+ people outside the church have only heard a message of hate. Too often, we've left our same-sex attracted siblings within the church shivering in the dark believing they're unwanted and unloved. If you want to pour lighter fuel on sexual temptation, you leave someone alone. But if we want same-sex attracted Christians to thrive, we must embrace them with loving arms. This doesn't mean affirming same-sex romance. It means obeying the Bible, which calls us to bear each other's burdens (Gal 6:2) and to love each other deeply (1 Pet 4:8). What's more, in a world in which people block their ears to the gospel because they think we're homophobic bigots, the faithful same-sex attracted Christians in our congregations are a God-given SWAT team to burst through those defences. There is no more powerful way to testify to Jesus in this generation than to turn away from sexual and romantic fulfilment because you believe in a better love.

In addition:

We must also acknowledge the ways in which we failed to follow Jesus in his treatment of women. Rather than sidelining women, we must celebrate women's gospel ministry, cultivate women's theological growth and encourage women as they serve the Lord, whether in the home or in the workplace. In a world where women are pushed into commitment free sex, the counter culture of the church should affirm both marriage and singleness as compelling options for Christians, rather than making women who aren't married or don't have children feel marginalised. And against the history of shaming women for having babies outside of marriage, our churches should validate women who have chosen to keep their baby against all social pressures to abort, and offer the extended family and practical support that single mothers need.

Finally:

In a world where transitioning to the opposite sex or rejecting the gender binary has come to seem for some like salvation, we must affirm the goodness of male and female bodies without clinging to unbiblical gender stereotypes ... Christians must repent of the ways in which our embrace of cultural stereotypes has made some people feel as if they don't belong in their own skin. We must take those who experience gender dysphoria seriously and sit with them in their discomfort, not claiming to understand when we don't, and not affirming a gender identity that goes against their sex, but listening to each person's story and seeking to support them however we can. This action may not always be received as love. God's rule over our lives is heresy to modern self-determining ears. But we must speak the truth with tenderness and not let our sin take the wheel.

Above all, McLaughlin writes:

... we must fight hard with the weapon God has given us: self-sacrificing, unrelenting love. Rather than shouting progressives who want love and justice down, let's call them in with a Jesus song: his song of good news for the historically oppressed, his song of love across racial and ethnic differences, his song that summons men and women, married and single, young and old, weak and strong, joyful and hurting, rich and destitute into eternal love with him.

Martin's opinion:

McLaughlin's book is primarily written for an American audience and is therefore full of American references and illustrations. However, American and British culture and society are sufficiently similar for this not to be a problem for British readers.

Her book is an excellent piece of Christian ethics and apologetics. It engages with a wide range of Christian and secular sources and very clearly explains which parts of the progressive agenda Christians must support because they are in line with Christian teaching, and which parts Christians need to reject because they are not. It also properly emphasises that even when Christians have to reject aspects of the progressive agenda they must always be diligent in showing the love of Christ to people who are deeply hurting because of issues to do with their race, their sex, their sexual attraction, or difficulties with their sexual identity, and who have hitherto experienced the Church as a body full of hatred and rejection. This is an important book that needs to be widely publicised, widely read and then acted upon.

Commendations:

John Dickson has written

Rebecca McLaughlin's first book was the best all-round defense of the Christian faith I had read in a decade. This one is the perfect complement. In it the author points the way to a different kind of 'muscular' Christianity, one that is able to flex the muscle of conviction and the muscle of compassion at the same time. For a church – and a world – too often forced to choose between smug conservatism and acquiescing liberalism, McLaughlin recovers the genius of Jesus Christ, showing us how to love the truth and humans with equal passion. The result is an utterly compelling and humane treatment of five vital contemporary issues.

T A Noble and Jason Sexton (eds), *British Evangelical Theologians of the Twentieth Century: An Enduring Legacy*, Apollos, ISBN 978-1-7897-4379-1, £21.99 (e edition also available).

#### Overview:

This new book, edited by Thomas Noble, Research Professor of Theology at Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City, and Senior Research Fellow at the Nazarene Theological College, Manchester, and Jason Sexton, who teaches at the University of California, Los Angeles, had its origin in a study group of the Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical and Theological Research in 2011. As its title suggests, it is a series of studies of leading British Evangelical theologians from the twentieth century.

The book begins with an introduction by Noble that provides a brief historical overview of the history of Evangelicalism, sets out the key tenets of Evangelical theology, and introduces the theologians covered in the book.

The bulk of the book then consists of studies of twelve British Evangelical theologians from the twentieth century written by a team of different authors. The theologians get a chapter each and each chapter gives biographical details about the theologian in question and introduces key aspects of their theology.

From the early twentieth century, the theologians and chapter authors are:

- James Orr by A T B McGowan
- James Denney by Thomas Findlay
- Peter Taylor Forsyth by Trevor Hart
- W H Griffith Thomas by Andrew Atherstone
- H R Mackintosh by David L Rainey.

From the mid twentieth century, the theologians and authors are:

- W E Sangster by Andrew Cheadle
- Martyn Lloyd-Jones by David Ceri Jones.

Finally, from the later twentieth century the theologians and authors are:

- John R W Stott by Ian M Randall
- James Packer by Don J Payne
- Thomas F Torrance by Robert Walker
- Lesslie Newbigin by Donald LeRoy Stults
- Colin Gunton by John E Colwell.

Noble writes that the twelve theologians included in the book:

... represent the traditional British evangelical theology at its best. Thomas, Lloyd-Jones, Stott and Packer represent the more 'conservative' evangelicals. The others might not have entirely agreed with their way of defending biblical authority or the way in which Lloyd-Jones and Packer embraced traditional Calvinism. But they were all 'conservative' in comparison even with the 'liberal evangelicals' of the 1920s. They were all centred on 'Christ crucified,' for all of them the Bible was in fact authoritative for faith and doctrine, and all of them were truly 'evangelical' in developing their preaching, teaching and writing out of the central *evangel* of the Christian faith. While all of them wrote on many theological topics, we have intentionally highlighted their views on the atonement and the authority of scripture, two topics that particularly concerned evangelicals. The chapters have been written not primarily for experts, but for students, pastors and interested laypeople. Where possible, appropriate personal reminiscences have been included in the later chapters (particularly in Robert Walker's vivid memories of his uncle and John Colwell's delightful essay on Colin Gunton) reminding us that these theologians were not merely thinkers, but men of flesh and blood engaged in Christian ministry. Some were senior professors writing academic theology (though also preachers) others were primarily preachers or wrote mainly for the wider church.



A final 'Coda' by James Sexton 'looking back to look forwards' considers the changing context in which British evangelical theologians have operated, looks at 'British evangelical theology and academic theology,' 'British evangelical theology around the world' and 'Evangelical theology and British culture' and then speculates on how Evangelical theology might develop in future.

Commendations:

As the IVP website correctly says:

*British Evangelical Theologians of the Twentieth Century* is a thorough introduction to twelve of the keenest and most influential minds in British evangelical thought. It will leave you with an appreciation of each man's contribution to English-speaking evangelicalism, as well as helping you to engage critically with their theology and understand how their work is relevant to the development and discussion of British evangelical theology today.

Martin's opinion:

Anyone who wants to understand the development of British evangelical theology in the last century should read this book. Not everyone will agree with everything that is said, but everyone will find their knowledge of British Evangelical theology increased and be stimulated to think what was good about the work of the theologians covered, and what was less good, and to consider how Evangelical theology should develop in the future, building on the strengths of the theologians of the past while avoiding their weaknesses.

Emerson B Powery, *The Good Samaritan: Luke 10 for the Life of the Church*, Baker Academic, ISBN 978-1-54096-066-5, £17.99 (e edition also available).

#### Overview:

Emerson Powery is Professor of biblical studies at Messiah University in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, in the United States, and is the author of number of books on the interpretation of Scripture as well as being the co-editor of *True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary*.

His latest book is a study of the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25–37 and its application to the life of the Church today. In the first chapter he notes that:

Many contemporary Christians privilege an interpretation of the Luke 10 passage that equates the Good Samaritan with Jesus. Sitting in a Barnes and Noble while reflecting on this chapter, I overheard this interpretation from a neighbouring table. It is understandable why contemporary readers prefer this interpretation. It is even spiritually edifying to see Jesus as the one who cares for us, bandages us up, places us in his immediate care, and transports us to safety (perhaps to the care of the church). This interpretive viewpoint has a long rich history in the Christian tradition.

Nevertheless, he says:

The contemporary individualistic focus that shifts the story to include ‘us’, however, fails to grapple with or account for what might be the most critical element of Jesus story: his choice to imagine a hero his audience would strongly reject. That element seemed as crucial to the story as the act of kindness depicted within the story. Indeed, the lawyer responds to Jesus final inquiry with the reply that closes the account: ‘the one who showed mercy’ (Luke 10:37). The lawyer clearly recognises what is in his mind the irony: the one who is least likely to stop and provide help is the one who did and thereby becomes the one classified as the true neighbour.

Powery goes on to further note that the history of the interpretation of the parable, which he explores in chapter 2 of his book, shows that different interpreters, ranging from Augustine to the nineteenth-century black ex-slave Harriet Jacobs, have interpreted the parable in a variety of different ways in the light of the different situations in Church and society which formed the background to their interpretation, whether, for example, the Donatist controversy in the case of Augustine, or the issue of slavery in the case of Jacobs.

This raises the question of how we should interpret the parable in the light of our contemporary situation, and Powery explores this question in the remainder of his book.

In chapter 3 he looks at how the parable fits into the teaching of Luke–Acts as a whole, and in chapter 4 he looks at how the parable raises the question of how our treatment of the ‘other’ relates to the issue of salvation, how it emphasises that ‘one must act through the body for the sake of the physical well-being of another body,’ how it exemplifies ‘how to express and think about faith in story form,’ and how it relates to the issue of Church’s response to the BLM movement. Finally, in his conclusion he argues that the critical question we must ask about our reading of the biblical text is ‘does our reading call forth an embodied faith? Does our interpretation move us to act on behalf of others?’

As he sees it, the point that we must emphasise today in the light of this principle is that the parable of the Good Samaritan invites us to imagine a future that look different (and better) than the present:

In the midst of his own critical moment, Jesus says, ‘Samaritan lives matter.’ Well, perhaps the lawyer may be thinking ‘all lives matter,’ with the assumption that ‘all’ refers primarily to Jewish lives. But Jesus did not merely select any person to play the lead role of his famous parable. He chose a Samaritan; SLM was his cry.

Our religious spaces will not change if we cannot alter our imaginations. Perhaps before we are able to rethink our communities, we have to imagine the change we want to see. We have to visualise and put into practice the possibility that people who do not share our class, our race, our ethnic background, our religion, might contribute something meaningful to the spaces we inhabit. God loves people that we have not yet

developed the capacity to love. A rereading of Jesus' parable about a Samaritan may provide an opportunity to imagine a future that looks different from the present. How do you read?

What Powery gives us in this book is a reading of the parable of the Good Samaritan shaped by the African American experience of slavery and the contemporary concerns of the Black Lives Matter movement. The importance of this book lies in the way that it challenges us to take seriously the fact that the parable addresses the situation of religious and ethnic division that existed in Jesus' day and as such also addresses the religious and ethnic divisions of our day. It reminds us that taking the point of Jesus' parable seriously means asking who the 'Samaritans' of our day are and how can we extend our imagination to envisage that God's work may be being done through them in ways that we are then called to imitate in an appropriately embodied fashion.

Martin's opinion:

This is a book that is well worth referring to by anyone called to teach or preach on the parable of the Good Samaritan. It doesn't replace more traditional commentaries on the parable, but it is a very valuable supplement to them.

Commendations:

Lisa Bowens writes:

How do we read? How do we embody faith? Powery provides a provocative analysis of the parable of the good Samaritan that challenges believers to engage these questions. By exploring past interpretations of this parable that connect to present concerns in the world, Powery demonstrates how parables continue to surprise us, turn our expectations upside down, and call us to alter our imaginations. Powery urges us to grasp how reading the Bible is both a spiritual and a political practice, beckoning us to get involved in 'good trouble.'