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Gregg Allison and Chris Castaldo

The Unfinished Reformation: What Unites and Divides Catholics and Protestants After 500 Years (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 176 pp., \$16.99 (ISBN 9780310527930).

Among the many books published in the year commemorating the Reformation, *The Unfinished Reformation* is a small but remarkable book. Gregg Allison and Chris Castaldo attempt to answer the question of whether the Reformation is over. The authors are inspired by a question from one of Tony Lane's students, who had asked him "to recommend a resource that surveys the commonalities and differences between Roman Catholic and evangelical Protestant theology with reference to the Reformation" (13). Due to the lack of such a resource, Allison and Castaldo have written this book. During their writing, they especially had in mind students and lay members of the church interested in theology.

The authors first provide a brief sketch of the Reformation. They are aware that the Reformation of the sixteenth century is an important moment in a long tradition of desiring a renewal of the church. And even what we call 'the Reformation' is not a unified movement with Martin Luther as leader, but a collection of disparate movements. Nevertheless, there is a discernible core of convictions that unites the reformers.

The body of the book consists of the seven chapters dealing with the commonalities and differences between the Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions. It is in line with the pleasant tone in which the authors have written that they begin by underscoring what both traditions have in common. Important issues are: God as triune, the nature of God, God's revelation, the person of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the glory and travesty of human beings, the conviction that God initiates salvation, the belief that God makes us his people, and the conviction that believers may have legitimate hope for the future. In contrast, four chapters discuss differences regarding to scripture, tradition, the Virgin Mary, purgatory, the role of good works, and, naturally, the church and the sacraments. The authors try to do justice to both traditions and to abstain from caricatures. Only sporadically do they give their own judgment, for instance when labelling the Catholic distinction between mortal and venial sins incorrect (92). To provide a fair description of Catholic theology, Allison and Castaldo have used the official documents of the Roman Catholic Church. With this choice they give the impression that even nowadays we could speak of one official Roman Catholic theology, as if there are no differences between Catholic theologians in Latin America, for example, and Western Europe. At the same time, it becomes clear how deeply Protestants differ on an issue such as baptism. Catholics and Protestants both agree on the importance of bap-

tism, but the question of infant baptism has divided the Protestants from the very beginning of the Reformation up to our time.

From their Protestant position the authors view the Catholic Church as an essential part of the Christian tradition, because Catholics also subscribe to the ecumenical creeds of the church. The actual situation, however, can be described as a divided family: despite the differences here and now the members share a common heritage from over the centuries. The Catholic denial that Protestant assemblies are real churches and the insistence that they are only 'ecclesial communities' remains a stumbling block. The final chapter leads to the question: Is the Reformation finished? The authors do not opt for a simple yes or no, but for "no, but ...": "We recognize our differences and also our commonalities, concluding that while development in mutual awareness and selective collaboration has occurred, key differences still persist" (151). The final sentence sounds like the voice of a minister in the pulpit: "Whether you are Protestant or Catholic or something else, we urge you to embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ."

This book is intended as an elementary introduction to Catholic and Protestant theology and their mutual relationship. Therefore, it would be asking too much to expect a more profound treatment of the often difficult relationship between both churches since the sixteenth century and the use of violence in the era of the Reformation. Students are stimulated to deepen their knowledge of the Christian tradition, both undivided and from 1517 onward, that was unintentionally separated into two traditions.

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