

616 Broad St. apt. P103

Grimmell, Iowa 50112

Dec. 31, 1990

Dear Sam,

Thanks to a mailing error on the part of the United Board I am impelled to write this letter I have been intending to write for some years. When we retired in 1979 we moved to New York to be near two daughters. During the five years we were there it was our great blessing to be members of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church and to form one of the richest friendships of my life in Bryant Kirkland. I don't know how many people there asked if I were related to you and some even did you the disfavor of saying I looked like you. (Actually I had even been told that before we moved to New York.) I always replied no, but that I would like to be.

Lacy and Kate Moffett, my parents, went to China in 1904 under the Presbyterian Church, U.S., the old "Southern" Church. Five of my father's sisters and three of my mother's also went to China as missionaries of the same Church. Of course I heard quite early of the Korea Moffetts, but as far as I know none of your family or ours ever knew each other personally.

Virginia, my wife, and I went to China in 1935 where she became a mother and taught English to the young doctors of the hospital in Kiangyin, where I served as a surgeon. In 1940 we returned to the U.S. on furlough. It was 1947 before

We could return to China. We had to get out with  
the overthrow of the Nationalist Government in 1948.

From 1950-1979 I practiced surgery in Taylorsville  
NC, always feeling that I had left a job not half  
done in China, but grateful to God for his leading and  
for blessings beyond number.

We are now living in a delightful community,  
the Mayflower Home, quite near our son and daughter  
in law who teach in Grinnell College, grateful for the  
College atmosphere here as I am sure you are in Princeton.  
One daughter lives in Langhorne, not far from you.  
Another daughter lives in Cambridge, England, where she  
is married to a Don (after having taught over 20 years  
in N.Y.C.'s Collegiate School.)

Our church here is small but wonderfully  
loving, and wide awake. A meaningful Advent Season  
has encouraged us in a deep concern for a Christian  
solution to the frightful threat of war in the Mid-East.

I'm still hoping that we shall meet.

Sincerely,

Alex (S. Moffat)

## A BOOK REVIEW

### A History of Christianity in Asia

Volume I: Beginnings to 1500

By: Samuel Hugh Moffett

Publishers: Harper San Francisco

Reviewed by: G. T. Brown

Dr. Moffett's book on the history of Christianity in Asia has been worth the wait! The author has compressed an incredible amount of scholarship, historical data and theological and missiological insights into an understandable and readable narrative. Its fascination is due in part to the fact that its subject matter has been virtually unknown for many of us, for too often historians have equated the history of the church with "Western" church history, and missiologists have assumed the Christian encounter with Asia did not begin until William Carey.

The author is helpful in unravelling some theological and missiological riddles such as fact and fancy in the Thomas tradition in India, the Nestorian controversy and the treatment of Christians by the Islamic conquerors. The evenhanded treatment of controversial issues serves to balance the prevailing bias of traditional Western writers.

There are some surprises: the numerical strength and vitality of Christianity in Asia for 1,000 years; the Christian kingdoms in the Arabian peninsula before and even after the Muslim conquest; the long years when Christianity survived and even to some extent flourished under Islamic rulers, the extensive missionary penetration of Central Asia by the Nestorians which nearly succeeded in "Christianizing" the Mongol empire.

Some great new saints, thinkers and missionaries come to life: Narsai and his biblical seminary at Nisibis, the patriarch Mar Aba defending his faith at the Persian Court, Timothy I and his courteous yet fearless debate with the caliph, The Nestorian Alopen and his famous monument in Tang Dynasty China at Changan (Xian), and John of Montecorvino, the lonely Franciscan at the Mongol capital at Cambaluc (Peking).

Why did Christianity all but disappear from Asia by the year 1,500? The author finds the reasons in seven factors: (1) geographic isolation (2) the failure to achieve "critical mass," (3) persecution, (4) encounters with formidable Asian religions, (5) dependence upon state patronage, (6) ethnic introversion, and (7) internal divisions. In the eyes of Dr. Moffett the chief factor may have been (6) the ethnic and cultural pressure of the melet system (ghettos) which "compromised the evangelistic and missionary priorities for the sake of survival." (p. 509)

Dr. Moffett's history should be of particular interest today because of the resurgence of opportunities for mission in Central Asia. Unlike the church in the West, the church in Asia had no "Constantinian Era" and for this reason its history may have greater relevance for those areas of the

world where the church is under non-Christian political and social orders. We will wait with interest the completion of Volume II.

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## READER'S RESPONSE

### Retirees can serve as Mission Interpreters!

*Reader Lois H. Visscher, MD retired after years of service in India and Thailand now resides at Westminster Gardens. She comments on Larry Sthresley's article "Home Assignment & Selected Giving" in the January 1993 of the APCCM Newsletter:*

"Larry (properly) laments the shortage of "mission co-workers" who, on home assignment, can serve as speakers interpreting overseas mission to the churches. He also mentions as possible speakers, nationals from partner churches visiting the U. S. A. He does not mention as possible speakers (1) recently retired co-workers; (2) Mission Associates...(3) Volunteers in Mission...(4) Vacationing or returned Mission Specialists...It is my impression... that almost no one...consider the above categories as potential interpreters of the Mission of the Presbyterian Church...(Since retirement) no one at 475 or 100 Witherspoon ever suggested that I do any mission interpretation...I wanted to speak about Global Mission Work, as I have been a Presbyterian missionary for 38 years and a Presbyterian Mission Associate for 9 years. ...but it does not seem to have crossed anyone's mind that I might be a potential speaker...I conclude that the various persons concerned with interpretation are leaving a large source untapped...."

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## PEOPLE NOTES

Frank L. Arnold represented the APCCM at the Winter Sharing Conference in Louisville in February. He presented the program of the APCCM including its goals, the recent surveys, the input made to the "Shape and Form" Committee on structure, the close association with the Global Mission Unit, the Re-Entry Consultation, and the Newsletter. He reported that the spirit of the Conference was very good but "we were aware of the fact that many of the staff at the Presbyterian Center were apprehensive..."

Nancy Warlick represented the PC(USA) when prayer leaders of 21 denominations and fellowships of churches met recently in Colorado Springs for the annual meeting of the Denominational Prayer Leader's Network.

Alice Winters, mission worker at the Presbyterian Seminary in Bogota will share her life story in Latin America on the radio show "Passages," April 18 and 25.

## BOOK REVIEWS

Moffett, Samuel Hugh. *A History of Christianity in Asia*. Vol. 1, *Beginnings to 1500*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992. Pp. xxvi + 560. \$45.00.

Occasionally in each generation an outstanding work appears that becomes a standard reference for future scholars, such as Kenneth Scott Latourette's seven-volume *History of the Expansion of Christianity*. In our time a work of such significance is Samuel Hugh Moffett's *A History of Christianity in Asia* in two volumes, the first of which appeared in late 1992. The study represents the harvest of a lifetime of scholarship by Moffett, who was born in Korea of American Presbyterian missionary parents and was himself a missionary-educator in China and Korea for most of his career until he joined the faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary in 1981 as the Henry W. Luce Professor of Ecumenics and Mission. He is now Professor Emeritus.

The scope of Moffett's project is vast—all of Asia, all of Christianity, and all of history, since the great commission was given "on a hill in Asia, at the far western edge of the continent" (p. 4). It is also a pioneering effort; never before has a single study on this single subject by a single scholar endeavored to encompass the whole field. The author is a master of summary and synthesis, writing with passion and perception about a cause to which he has devoted his life. The work is well documented with notes, bibliography, and maps.

Moffett modestly sees his work as a "small step toward restoring global balance to the study of church history" (p. xv). The balanced global view recalls that Jesus was an Asian and the church began in Asia. But Asian church history is a virtual desert compared to western church history among students and scholars. Apart from a few outstanding figures, such as de Nobili, Ricci, Valignano, Carey, Judson, Plütschau, Rhenius, Schwartz, Taylor, and Ziegenbalg, the names and events in the expansion and development of Christianity in Asia are largely unknown, especially in the West—a sign of provincialism in North Atlantic Christianity. And yet the Asian story is every bit as dramatic and important as the western saga. Moffett reminds us that Christian missions started in Asia, that the gospel reached China with missionaries from Persia as early as it reached Scotland with missionaries from Ireland. "The seed was the same: the good news of Jesus Christ for the whole world. . . . But it was sown by different sowers; it was planted in different soil; it grew a different flavor; and it was gathered by different reapers. . . . It was a Christianity that has for centuries remained unashamedly Asian" (p. xiii). One of the special contributions of the study is that it will help Christians—Asians in particular—appreciate the rice roots of Christianity in Asia.

Like the story in the West, the history of Christianity in Asia is marked by controversy. Much of it was competition between Nestorians and Monophysites, going back to the rivalry between Alexandria and Antioch. In Moffett's treatment, Nes-

torius is restored to reasonable doctrinal respectability: "his image as left to history was that created by his enemies," while "judged by his own words, Nestorius is revealed as not so much 'Nestorian' and more orthodox than his opponents gave him credit for" (pp. 176-177). Certainly the Nestorians were a major missionary force across Asia, particularly in China, beginning with the arrival there of Alopen from Persia in 635.

Internal controversy, external persecution, missionary expansion, with the growth and disappearance of Christian communities, are themes that dominate *A History of Christianity in Asia* to 1500, as the author traces the waves of four empires: Greco-Roman, Iranian (Persian), Chinese, and Indian. His last two chapters describe "The Eclipse of Christianity in Asia" and "The Church in the Shadows." After fifteen centuries, says Moffett, "the story of Christianity in Asia beyond the Euphrates nearly ends about where it began, in two small circles of survival . . . one in the northern hills of eastern Syria, and the other in India . . . all that is left of an Asian church that once spread across the continent from Mesopotamia to the Pacific" (p. 496). It is his judgment that what caused the decline of Christianity in Asia was not persecution so much as the church's own decisions "to compromise evangelistic and missionary priorities for the sake of survival" (p. 509).

But it is not the end. Volume two, Moffett reminds us, will see Christianity in Asia "revived and renewed, emerge from the shadows and begin again to outpace the West in the growth of the church and in mission to the world" (p. 509).

Gerald H. Anderson  
Overseas Ministries Study Center  
New Haven, CT

Metzger, Bruce M., Robert C. Dentan, and Walter Harrelson. *The Making of the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991. Pp. viii + 92. \$7.95.

The three authors of this little work about the making of the NRSV are well qualified to comment on the project. All three are long-time members of the RSV Translation Committee, and all shared the final say in shaping the translation of the Old Testament in the NRSV. Bruce Metzger was the chair of the NRSV Translation Committee and as such served as the chair of the final editorial subcommittees for both the Old and New Testament. After the full committee had completed its translation work, those editorial subcommittees were charged with checking the translation of the larger committee for stylistic consistency. Robert Dentan and Walter Harrelson were the other two members of the final editorial subcommittee for the Old Testament.

Their account of the making of the NRSV is presented in four chapters. In the first chapter Robert Dentan gives a brief history of the background behind the NRSV and a fairly accurate description of the goals, organization, and method of work followed by the NRSV Translation Committee. As he says, "The program

From Choice July/August Religion

*homo religiosus*. The new humanism, characterized as a "participatory morphology," aims to give meaning to existence by helping humans understand their lives through symbols. Cave emphasizes the creativity of the new humanism, "for in creating one engages in life yet also participates in the divine initiative." The new humanism offers our modern materialistic, alienated culture the means to a meaningful spiritual existence. Lots of typos, but excellent notes and bibliography. Recommended for all students of the humanities.—*N. B. Palmer, Western Maryland College*

**30-6127** Computer Software  
**Comparative religions.** D.E.D. Electronic Publishing, 10306 E. Live Oak Ave., Arcadia, CA 91007, 1992. \$19.95. System requirements: IBM PC or compatible; DOS 2.11 or later; 256K RAM

One of a series of 12 software packages. Not for systems with DOS 3.20 and math coprocessor. A hierarchical, user-friendly menu-driven program; its first level divides the subject into two parts: "The World's Major Religions" and "Comparative Characteristics." Selecting the first alternative brings the user to another menu divided by religions originating in various parts of the world. The user can select a particular religion and from there choose from 17 topics under the subheadings "Worldly Authorities," "Supernatural Beings or Powers," "Morality & Salvation," "Rituals," and "Communities." Selection of "Comparative Characteristics" provides the same information for each religious group. Information is rather complete and factual; students of comparative religions could benefit from exploration of this program. Drawbacks include the failure to use color, and no procedure for moving back in the display to retrieve something that has scrolled off the screen; one must start again and page down to the desired part. Very little written material accompanies the program, but there is extensive online documentation. Excellent low-cost software for personal or library purchase; can be networked for easy access from remote stations.—*J. C. Biddle, University of Louisville*

**30-6128** BS500 92-20017 CIP  
 Grant, Robert M. **Heresy and criticism: the search for authenticity in early Christian literature.** Westminster-J. Knox, 1993. 180p bibl indexes afp ISBN 0-664-21971-3, \$17.00

With 50 years of experience analyzing the correlation between Christianity and Greco-Roman culture, Grant now gives us a most significant monograph on literary criticism in the ancient world. The essential thesis of the study is that Christian "heretics," using the same methods as their pagan contemporaries, were the first to apply both lower and higher criticism to Christian writings. Literary criticism, having entered the church via those heretics, rapidly was adopted by the orthodox and became valued by both bishops and philosophers. This book is a gold mine of information on the literary critical perspectives of the ancients, among them Marcion, Ptolemaeus, Galen, Apelles, Tatian, Irenaeus, Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome. Grant's dialogue with modern authors, and even with some of his own previous positions, which no longer satisfy him, also supplies much useful material. This book should be acquired by collections serving faculty and graduate students with interests in the classical world, early church history, and the history of biblical criticism in Christianity.—*F. M. Gillman, University of San Diego*

have already aroused extensive, often critical, discussion in Israel and will almost certainly continue to do so in this new English language context. Alternatively, his rich reworking of the manner of the composition of the *Zohar* is persuasive and a significant contribution beyond Gershom Scholem's basic researches on the subject. In sum, a valuable addition to the growing literature on *Kabala* in English that libraries serving upper-level Judaica and religion programs will want to purchase.—*S. I. Katz, Cornell University*

**30-6130** BR1065 91-55085 CIP  
 Moffett, Samuel Hugh. **A history of Christianity in Asia: v.1: Beginnings to 1500.** Harper San Francisco, 1992. 560p bibl index afp ISBN 0-06-065779-0, \$45.00

Today, in the field of early Christian studies are valuable monographs treating virtually every subject and theme imaginable. But as this specialized literature continues to grow, readers seeking more general, synthetic overviews are often left without up-to-date resources. Such is especially the case with regards to early Asian Christianity. Under review is the first of a two-volume study with which Moffett attempts to fill the void. Acknowledging that he is no expert in all that he covers, nevertheless Moffett makes judicious use of other researchers' investigations and presents a convincing and well-balanced picture of Christianity's origins and development in Asia to 1500. From the turbulent history of the Syrian church to the missionary activities of Christians during the reign of Kublai Khan, the story is one of fascinating individuals, ideas, and images. Moffett is also to be commended for the bibliographic guidance which is provided for each chapter. This is a book that all can consult with profit. No academic library should be without it. Highly recommended.—*C. I. Hanson, Muskingum College*

**30-6131** BR563 92-21041 CIP  
 Montgomery, William E. **Under their own vine and fig tree: the African-American church in the South, 1865-1900.** Louisiana State, 1993. 358p index afp ISBN 0-8071-1745-5, \$29.95

Montgomery's comprehensive study of African American churches during the Reconstruction period and its aftermath in the South is one of the few excellent and judicious works available. By focusing on their holistic dimensions, he has shown how the roles of African American churches were critically significant to the development of black communities in politics, economics, education, music, and worship. Montgomery's unique work fills in some of the historical details that were missing in Carter G. Woodson's treatment of the same period in *History of the Negro Church* (1921). He has succeeded in creating a readable historical narrative of one of the truly heroic periods in the history of black churches. The strengths of Montgomery's study include his sensitive treatment of the new synthesis of African survivals in African American worship, his inclusion of the complex interactions between blacks and whites as African Americans separated to form their own churches, and his detailed elaboration of the political role of black clergy in local, state, and national politics. The only lacuna is in Montgomery's failure to examine the collapse of the Freedman's Savings and Trust Company in 1874 and the subsequent efforts of African American churches, fraternal lodges, and mutual aid groups to establish black owned banks and, later, life insurance companies, which were the major examples of black economic development in the late 19th century. This book, which

features a chivalric code as a "trickster" ideology in its careful enemies by dutifully powerful recognize negatives. She also suggests the of "an ideology of manipulation. The implication, pointingly, not elucidate. R. Davila, Central Coll.

**30-6133**  
 Young, David. **F.D. M.** bibl index ISBN 0 19 1

Regarded today as a Frederick Denison Maurice intensely controversial communion. Young's Maurice's thought that ing a competent account time, the biographical of rebaptism, troubled can the Christian Socialist in sorship at Cambridge. theology is similar to U hood rather than sovee propitiation; man's natu ity; eternal life as prese Young denies that he Unitarian, the effect of offers no comparable ac his specifically Anglican to see Maurice as a hug closer to his heart's desi ology. Graduate; faculty

■ **Scien**

**30-6134**  
 Bechtel, William. **Di localization as strat** and Robert C. Richard 0-691-08762-8, \$39.50

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less would transform African Americans into the generation of pallbearers Evans himself warns against.

WILL COLEMAN

Columbia Theological Seminary  
Decatur, GA

## A History of Christianity in Asia Volume I: Beginnings to 1500

*By Samuel Hugh Moffett*

New York, HarperCollins, 1992. 560 pp. \$45.00.

The first known church building was in Asia. The first New Testament translation was also produced here. Asia probably had a Christian King before Constantine, and, in the early centuries, there were Asian monks and theologians to rival those of the West. As we approach the end of the twentieth century, when attention is again directed to the peoples and churches of Asia, it is important to reconsider Asian Christian beginnings. We can now do this with Moffett's historical survey of Christianity in Asia before the year 1500.

This book takes us from the time of the apostles and earliest missionary efforts in Asia to its eclipse, when the Reformation was taking hold of Europe. It tells the story in broad strokes, taking us from Jerusalem to Syria, from India to Persia, and from the central Asian steppes to medieval China. The names of Clement of Alexandria, Origin, and St. Anthony are familiar to all students of early church history, but equally significant were Bardaisan, Tatian, and Jacob of Nisibis in the East, whom we learn about here.

Moffett, Henry W. Luce Professor of Ecumenics and Mission Emeritus at Princeton Theological Seminary, has been involved in Asian Christianity all of his life, both as a teacher and, for more than thirty years, as a Presbyterian missionary in China and Korea. He gives us a wealth of historical detail in this volume and an extensive bibliography for both the general reader and student of church history.

When Christians were being persecuted in the Roman Empire, they found toleration in the East. Yet, by the late fourth century, the situation had changed, and Persian Christians endured a persecution far worse than any suffered in the West. Christians often lived peacefully as the church developed in India, Persia, and China. But, in the period under discussion, they were also subject to social ostracism and religious persecution more frequently than elsewhere in the world.

Moffett tells this complex story as it unfolds in a wide variety of times and situations. He helps us to separate fact from fiction in stories about the Apostle Thomas and his mission to India. He provides us with the background we need to understand the early history of relations

between Islam and Christianity, the entry of Christianity into China, and the growth of Nestorian Christianity in the East. And, he suggests, rightly I think, one important reason why the church began to decline in Asia, when he quotes the words of a ninth century Christian apologist in the 'Abbasid Empire: "But now the monks are no longer really missionaries."

It is especially the Nestorian controversy that led to the great divide between Christianity in the West and the East, setting the terms for a separation that is still with us. The controversy between Nestorius (died c. 451) and Cyril of Alexandria (died c. 444) was a Western, not an Asian, dispute, but it was exported to the East after the Council of Ephesus in 431. Then, as now, Asian Christians were less interested in theological speculation than the church in the West, but they were equally committed to the Bible and to living out their faith in difficult situations. They do not stand under the judgment of Western orthodoxies. This volume allows us to see some current theological controversies in Asia and the West in historical perspective.

The specialist will challenge different aspects of historical interpretation in this volume, although this does not detract from its overall usefulness. There continues to be a good deal of scholarly debate over the early history of Christianity in India, in Persia, in China, and along the old Silk Road. To take one example, in his section on Christianity in Tang China, Moffett seems to dismiss the claim that Christianity remained a foreign religion in the hands of Persian missionaries. Yet this is a standard interpretation in most contemporary Chinese and Western scholarship, and it has an important bearing on the whole history of Christianity in China.

Such issues will become more prominent in the second volume of this history, as Asian Christianity enters the "Vasco de Gama Era" of the Christian missionary enterprise. Sam Moffett is to be heartily congratulated for producing a highly recommended book that refocuses our attention on a subject too long neglected in church and mission history.

PHILIP L. WICKERI

The Amity Foundation  
Nanjing and Hong Kong

## The Politics of God: Christian Theologies and Social Justice

*By Kathryn Tanner*

Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1992. 262 pp. \$15.95.

Kathryn Tanner has joined the company of those theologians who, like Karl Barth, recognize that in the end "all theology is practical"

A History of Christianity in Asia: Vol. I: Beginning to 1500. By Samuel Hugh Moffett. ISBN 0-06-065779-0. Harper San Francisco. pp. xxvi & 560. 1992. 45\$

This is a splendid volume. Professor Moffett is a Presbyterian minister; he has been a devoted missionary in China and a professor in Princeton Seminary. Part of his research was conducted in Cambridge where he was always a welcome guest in Westminster College.

This volume covers fifteen centuries of time and a vast geographical area stretching from the Mediterranean to the Pacific.

The Christian Faith was at first an Asian religion. In ancient times, Asia included Palestine and Turkey. A trace of this is still seen in the fact that Turkey is often called Asia Minor. The Greeks and the Romans tried to incorporate Turkey and Palestine into their Empires, but they retained an oriental flavour. Therefore, when Paul answered the call to go to Macedonia, he was not simply crossing a strip of sea but was entering a new continent, Europe. The story of the spread of the Gospel in Europe has been well recorded by historians across the centuries.

The spread into Asia is much less known. Moffett has opened up fresh fields through his research and he lays before the reader a fine and clear panorama.

Evidence of early moves to the east comes from India where there is a Church, the Mar Thoma Church, which claims to have been founded by the Apostle Thomas. Moffett thinks there is sound evidence for this claim. A further sign of the missionary spread into India is the presence there of Pantaenus, the second-century head of the Christian school in Alexandria and the teacher of Clement and Origen.

The story moves on to Assyria and the city of Edessa almost five hundred miles from Jerusalem; it is on the road taken by Abraham from Ur to Canaan and also on what was the silk-trade route to the far east. The Christian penetration into this city was made by Addai, probably sent from the Church already founded in India. He preached first to the Jewish community. The message soon spread to other peoples and cities. Surviving writings from the period reveal a joyful faith in an all-embracing Gospel: 'The Word is with us in all our ways - the Saviour who gives life and does not reject us'.

The number of Christians grew in the province of Armenia and they counted one of the kings, Abgar, as one of themselves; indeed, he has been claimed as the first Christian monarch. This church produced two thinkers who influenced the Church in and beyond Edessa; they were Bardesanes and Tatian. By 325, the Church had spread into neighbouring Arbela and into Persia.

At this time, a new dynasty, the Sassanids, took control of Persia; they were devoted Zoroastrians, sun-worshippers. They soon clashed with the Christians. During waves of persecution, many Christians were martyred, more indeed than were martyred in all the persecutions by the Roman Emperors



between 67 and 313. It has been estimated that there were 190,000 martyrs. In a further outbreak of persecution around the city of Kirkuk, 153,000 were martyred. Churches were destroyed and clergy were executed; in one instance, five bishops and one hundred priests were beheaded. One record notes that the chief persecutor, Timesgerd, was so sickened by the horror and so moved by the faith of the dying that he confessed Christ on the spot and joined his own victims in a martyr's death. Moffett also shows how 100,000 Christian families were uprooted and resettled but they did not lose the faith; it was planted in new areas. Fewer apostasised in these trials than did in the West, which shows, as Moffett says, 'the steady courage of Asia's early Christians'.

The Church in Persia survived and had its centre in Seleucia-Ctesiphon. It produced a scholar, Aphrahat, whose writings were and are known in the West. A Synod held at Dadyeshu in 424 made plans to rebuild the Church. The Nicene Creed was adopted. The Synod claimed that the Catholicos of Seleucia-Ctesiphon was equal in rank to any Western patriarch.

However, the unity of the Persian Church was soon shattered by the overspill of the controversies in the West associated with the names of Nestorius and Eutyches. Nestorius so stressed the humanity of Jesus as to neglect his divinity while Eutyches so stressed the divinity as to absorb the humanity and leave Christ with one divine nature; hence the term 'Monophysite'. Both these views were condemned in the West at Chalcedon in 451; Christ was affirmed to have two inseparable natures, human and divine. The teachings of both Nestorius and Eutyches found followers in Asia and to this day some Churches are known as Nestorian and others as Monophysite. However, both have a devotion to Jesus as Lord and this enabled them to retain the missionary zeal to spread the Gospel further afield in Asia.

A new patriarch of the Persian Church, Mar Aba, was chosen in 540. He renewed the Church, spiritually and morally, and brought the factions together in a common confession of Christ as Lord. The situation of the Church was helped by the influence of a Christian wife of King Chosroes; his physician and many of his secretaries were also Christians. Mar Aba was accused of undermining the State and was imprisoned for some years; he made the noble declaration, 'I am a Christian; I preach my own faith and I want everyone to join it, but I want everyone to join it of their own free will and not by compulsion; I use force on no one.'

In the eighth century, the Persian empire went into decline and the ruling dynasty came to an end. The Christian community had enough vitality to send missionaries to Mongolia where they gained a foothold among the Kerait people.

A new trial soon came upon the Church, the rise of Islam. Its founder, Mohammed, and his followers at first had a deep respect for Jesus and they did not persecute his followers. Indeed, some Christians expected he would become a Christian, while he hoped they would embrace his monotheistic teaching. The Bible was the holy book of his followers; they stressed their descent from Abraham through Ishmael. However, as Mohammed wrote down the records of his

visions and his teaching, which were collected and published after his death, it was clear how far he differed from the New Testament and how far he had come to dislike the Christians. After his death, his movement might have perished in factional strife, but powerful leaders rallied the divided ranks; differences between the Sunites and Shiites remained but there was sufficient common belief to make Islam a mighty force resolved to spread its Faith. Christians were made subject to Islamic authority in North Africa and in much of Spain. That authority spread over Palestine, Persia and Asia Minor. A mosque was built in Jerusalem. Islam also became the faith of the Turks who had moved westwards from the region of Mongolia. Some Christians, because of their high education, were employed by Moslem rulers as secretaries, teachers and doctors. Heavy taxation became a great handicap upon Christians. They tended to move into ghettos. The attempt of the Christian West to regain a hold upon Palestine through the Crusades caused only a passing dent on Moslem domination.

The scene now moves to Mongolia and China. Christians, as already noted, had been won from among the Kerait people. One tradition says 200,000 had been baptised, though this may be an inflated number. They befriended a Mongol chieftain, Yeougei, who was the father of Temujin, better known as Genghis Khan, a name with still awesome overtones. He united the Mongol people and founded an empire covering much of Asia. He crushed the Keraites who had helped his family, but he took one of their chieftain's daughters to be his wife and another to be the wife of his fourth son, Tolui. Her name was Sorkaktani; she held on to her Christian faith and she became the mother of three emperors, one the emperor of the Mongols, another of China and another of Persia. They too had at least a respect for their Christian subjects.

Genghis, the Great Khan, subdued Tibet and Manchuria and reached Peking, but instead of going deeper into China, he swept westwards along the Silk road, captured Bokhara and reached Persia. His armies got to Merv, the seat of the Nestorian bishop of Persia, where, according to one source, 700,000 people, including children, were executed. The army, known as the Golden Horde, swept across Russia as far as Kiev and put its inhabitants to the sword.

Under Genghis's Successors, the Mongol empire expanded further. Syria was overrun. The city of Damascus resisted the invaders but many of its Moslem citizens were massacred. Due to the influence of Christian queens among the Mongols, the Christians in the city were spared. It is sad to record that the Christians shamefully insulted the surviving Moslems.

Franciscan missionaries from Rome ventured into this Mongol empire and made the long journey to the Khan's residence. They showed much contempt for the native Nestorian Christians whom they met on the way; they gave them no credit for having kept the core of the Faith in hard times but looked upon them as heretics. They were sent back to Rome with a message so chilling that it was hidden away and only came to light again in the nineteenth century.

Sorkaktani's ablest son, Kubla Khan conquered China, As Emperor, he tolerated the Christians but he himself lived as an animist and later tended

towards Buddhism. The Christians in China were a scattered people, mostly offshoots from Mongolia. Among visitors to China were the Polo brothers and their famous son and nephew, Marco. In their reports they told of the Christians whom they met. In their visit in 1265 they reached the summer capital and were warmly received. Kubla enquired about Christianity, and asked them to ask the Pope to send one hundred missionaries. The Pope did not respond. The Polos went back alone in 1275. By 1294 some missionaries, notably John of Montecorvino, had arrived, but by then Kubla had died and there was little welcome for them. Marco Polo gave the extravagant estimate that he had news of 700,000 Nestorian Christians; he looked upon them as heretics.

In the fourteenth century, the Mongol empire began to crumble. At the western end, in Persia, Chazan, the Khan, declared himself a convert to Islam. Churches and temples of all kinds were destroyed. Only mosques were tolerated. Ghazan's Muslim general carried out this policy with such brutality that Ghazan was moved to ease the policy and execute the general. Sporadic persecution continued under several khans. One particular atrocity was the massacre of the Christians in Arbela, one of the earliest centres of Persian Christianity.

In China, a native revolt <sup>against the Mongols</sup> began to demolish the empire <sup>in that area.</sup>. Chinese armies spread and ejected Mongol rulers. China became isolationist, nationalist and firmly Confucian; it threw up a new dynasty, the Ming, which lasted for almost three hundred years. Christianity thus virtually disappeared from China for three centuries. When Christian missionaries <sup>from the West</sup> arrived in the eighteenth century, they were unaware that Christians had been there before them.

A further wave of terror soon burst upon the heartlands of the empire in Mongolia. Tamerlane, a fierce Muslim with mingled Mongol and Turkish blood, began an unparalleled destruction of churches, synagogues and temples. He overran Afghanistan and pressed into Persia, Syria and Egypt. He subdued the Ottoman empire of the Turks and almost reached Constantinople. He also moved into India, reached Delhi, crossed into Punjab and there imposed the Muslim faith so firmly that it still retains a dominant position in present-day Pakistan. He was brutal in his treatment of Muslim dissidents. He also ordered the execution of 100,000 Hindu prisoners so as to release their guards to take part in the advance on Delhi. He died as he was planning to overrun China. Within a generation, his empire had crumbled, leaving only a fragment on the edge of Persia.

When the year 1500 is reached, the harvest of all the missionary effort, of the pains of the army of martyrs, and of the patient witness of the faithful seems a scant reward. There were but a few subservient and scattered companies of Christians. Moffett compares Asia with Europe where Christianity became a deeply rooted feature of life. The sheer size of Asia prevented the growth of an integrated Church. The Christians in Europe by 1000 were about 38,000,000 in number, while in the much larger population of Asia the number never exceeded 12,000,000, <sup>and were</sup> never numerous <sup>enough</sup> to shape the culture and history of the diverse

people. Moreover, the prolonged and vicious persecutions devastated the Church in Asia. Asia never had a Constantine; Christians, at best, were accorded a fitful toleration. Further, the strength of Asian religions was far greater than anything the Christians in Europe had to face. Buddhists, Hindus and Zoroastrians regarded Christianity as an alien and shallow cult.

Professor Moffett ends with a note of confidence in God whose ways are not ours. He finds hope in the promises of God and in the fact that in the following five hundred years the scattered surviving Churches continued their life and worship and that waves of missionary endeavour from the West have rolled on to Asia's shores and have planted fresh companies of Christians who have grown in number, endured further persecutions and yet look to the future with a sense of mission to the world.

This book has set forth the record of fifteen centuries with clarity, Christian conviction and scholarly integrity. The bibliography is extensive and the multitude of notes is a rich mine of information.

Readers will await with eagerness the second volume. Among other things, it will deal with the missionary <sup>effort</sup> from the West. This <sup>effort</sup> included the work of the London Missionary Society founded in 1795 and the work of <sup>the</sup> Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church of England, (both of which are part of the heritage of the United Reformed Church.)

R. BUICK KNOX.

*A History of Christianity in Asia*. Vol. 1. By Samuel Hugh Moffett. San Francisco: Harper-Collins, 1992. 560 pages. Hardcover, \$45.00.

Finally we have an in-depth treatment of the beginnings and development of Christianity in Asia. As strange as it seems, the story of Christianity in the East—in Syria, Persia, India, Tang Dynasty China, and the Mongolian Empire of Genghis Khan and his grandson, Kublai Khan—has received little attention by modern Christian historians. This neglect is equally puzzling when we consider that Christianity is fundamentally an Eastern religion. This multi-volume work should fill this unfortunate vacuum.

This is the first volume of Samuel Moffett's epic history. Writing on a grand scale, Moffett, Henry W. Luce Professor of Mission Emeritus at Princeton Theological Seminary, and scion of a famous Presbyterian missionary family to Korea, spans the great sweep of Asia from Mesopotamia to the Far East, enumerating the rise and fall of empires and dynasties. This volume relates the story to the sixteenth century, and accents the early successes and vicissitudes of the different forms of Christianity in conflict with the traditional Eastern religions. As a missionary to Korea and China, Moffett emphasizes the many bungled missionary opportunities of institutional Christianity before it fell victim to the juggernaut of Islam.

This monumental work tells "the rest of the story" which was happening in Asia while Paul was converting Greeks, Romans, and barbarians of Europe. At the same time, the unheralded Eastern missionaries established centers in Persia, Afghanistan, India, Mongolia, and China. They achieved a degree of global expansion which would not be matched by the West until the time of William Carey.

This work will be a basic reference work for many years. Moffett writes with a fluid style which makes the overwhelming subject and the multitudinous facts not only intelligible, but at times inspirational.

Justice C. Anderson

the Platonizing, "spiritualizing" paradigm of the earlier works simply in virtue of the question being asked.

*University of Notre Dame*

JOHN C. CAVADINI

A HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN ASIA I: BEGINNINGS TO 1500. By Samuel Hugh Moffett. San Francisco: Harper, 1992. Pp. xxvi, 560. \$45.

Emeritus professor of ecumenics and missions at Princeton Theological Seminary, Moffett emphasizes that church historiography in the West accentuates the expansion of Christianity from Jerusalem to Rome but commonly overlooks the Christians in Asia—i.e. in the ancient kingdoms east of the Euphrates River, including the territories along the Silk Road from Persia to China and the water routes from the Red Sea around Arabia to India. By the 13th century the Church of the East (or the Nestorian Church as "most of the early Asian Christian communities came to be called") had "ecclesiastical authority over more of the earth than either Rome or Constantinople."

The tradition about Saint Thomas the Apostle as a missionary in India is discussed along with the visit of Pantaenus of Egypt there and the references to India in the writings of Origen and Clement of Alexandria. Christians, persecuted in the Roman Empire before the time of Constantine, found refuge in Persia. Intent on retrieving past territory, the Persian government later viewed them as a fifth column, so that perhaps as many as 190,000 Christians died as martyrs.

In 431 the Council of Ephesus condemned Nestorius as a heretic, but the Persian Church hailed him as a hero and martyr. Theodore of Mopsuestia, "the pioneer of Nestorian orthodoxy," also was a heretic, according to the Council of Constantinople in 553 which led to the split of Western and Eastern Christianity. After stabilizing the Church's relations with the Persian government, the patriarch Yeshuyab II (628–643) led a peace delegation to Constantinople, where he and his fellow bishops satisfied the Eastern Roman emperor about the orthodoxy of the Persian Church. Among his other accomplishments were the creation of the Nestorian hierarchy of India independent of a Persian bishop and the sending of Persian missionaries to Chang'an, the capital of the Tang dynasty (618–907) in China, where they arrived in 635. In turn they began converting the migrating Turkish tribes of Central Asia.

The rapid spread of Islam meant that the caliphs did not distinguish among the three major branches of the Church in Asia, i.e. Nestorians in Mesopotamia and Persia, Monophysite Jacobites mostly in Syria, and Melkites (Chalcedonian orthodox) throughout the conquered Byz-

antine provinces. Arab rule in Persia legalized the position of the Nestorians and the Monophysites, but when the Arabs moved their center of government from Damascus to Baghdad in 762, they allowed only the Nestorians to establish their patriarchate there. From the middle of the eighth century, social restrictions imposed on the Christians led many to accept the Muslim creed and weakened the Church. By then the Abbasid caliphate faced severe setbacks from the rivalries of Sunnites and Shiites. The Turks overtook Persia and western Asia, but the Latin Crusades against the Turks (1095–1291) did not free the Holy Land from their control.

In 1258 the Mongols seized Baghdad, an extension of "a short-lived but immensely powerful trans-Eurasian empire," whose foundation was laid by Genghis Khan (d. 1227). His grandsons, Hulegu and Kublai Khan, were at the vanguard of the Mongol conquest of Muslim Persia and of China respectively. After 1245, several popes sent Franciscan and Dominican missionaries to Mongolia and to Cambaluc (Peking), where the first Roman Catholic church was erected in 1299. Less known is the journey of Mark and Sauma, two young Mongol Nestorian monks, who left Cambaluc on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, which they could not reach due to the war between Persia and Egypt. Mark later was enthroned as a patriarch near Baghdad in 1281. Sauma became the envoy of Kublai Khan to European rulers and to Pope Nicholas IV, who granted him permission to offer Mass in Rome in a different language, although the rite was the same. Kublai Khan, whom Marco Polo and his father served, tolerated all religions, and even employed Nestorians in his court. After the Chinese overthrew the Mongols and set up the Ming dynasty in 1368, no traces of Christianity apparently existed. Nor could any surviving Nestorians in Central Asia find refuge in Baghdad since the Muslim Chagatai Turk, Tamerlane, captured it in 1401. Most of his empire crumbled, but not until 1500 did the Uzbeks overrun Samarkand, headed by the last Asiatic ruler descended from him. By then the Nestorian Church had no effective administration east of the Euphrates.

The turbulence of Asian church history, M. succinctly argues, was due to geographical isolation, chronic numerical weakness, persecution, encounters with formidable Asian religions, ethnic introversion, dependence upon the state, and the Church's own internal divisions. M.'s clear, balanced narrative enables the general reader to understand why Christianity failed to create stable roots in Asia before 1500. Thereafter Christians entered Asia by different routes—with results yet to be explored in a subsequent volume.

*Georgetown University*

JOHN W. WITEK, S.J.

cont. from p. 53

### CHRIS CHRISMAN GOES TO COLLEGE—AND FACES THE CHALLENGES OF RELATIVISM, INDIVIDUALISM, AND PLURALISM

by James W. Sire,  
InterVarsity Press 155 pp

John Hopscotch was a confused college student. He dreamed of books that he could read which would explain his present predicament and make sense of the world. John's girlfriend, Beta, was becoming a New Ager and wanted to live her own life. John was disconcerted and confused. He wanted answers. What he needed was a worldview. A way to find truth.

One can fairly say that a good number of John Hopscotches in the late twentieth century have benefited from the worldview books of James Sire and like-minded individuals such as Peter Kreeft (*Between Heaven and Hell* [IVP, 1982]) and Os Guinness (*The Gravedigger File* [IVP, 1983]). Sire has been at the forefront of the apologetics community since his 1976 book, *The Universe Next Door* (since revised and rereleased in 1988). That book covers such options as Christian theism, deism, naturalism, nihilism, existentialism, Eastern pantheistic monism, and the New Age.

Sire's new book updates the situation to the politically correct atmosphere found at universities in the nineties. What the student Chris Chrisman discovers is the rampant relativism and the intolerant tolerance that continue to make inroads into many areas of life. Radical individualism also figures into the mix. With the imaginative formula largely developed by Socrates, Sire traces the story of Chris Chrisman and his friends and how they go about addressing the important issues in their lives. In the process Sire tackles the dysfunctional ideas of academics such as Richard Rorty, Joseph Campbell, and John Hick.

Since Sire leaves a few germane issues untouched, I hope he will one day write a book that includes a critique of Enlightenment rationality, romanticism, scientism, universalism, and their derivatives. Also, I hope that Sire will expand on his criticism of individualism and add remarks on community life.

The book also borrows from many current thinkers such as Os Guinness, James Davison Hunter, and Robert Bellah. One of the main strengths of Sire's work is a succinct and clear description of ideas that have great currency at present. Those ideas that Sire finds destructive are exposed to the truth.

—K. H.

### A HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN ASIA, VOLUME ONE: BEGINNINGS TO 1500

by Samuel Hugh Moffett,  
HarperCollins. 560 pp

The history of Christianity's expansion from Palestine to Colorado Springs leaves most Western Evangelicals breathing in a great sense of self-awareness. As Western Evangelicals, we

gaze with pride upon our missionary movements into deepest South America and darkest Africa. We have heard of the explosion of our faith even in the Far East, which of course is the result of our dedicated workers from our modern side of the world.

We Western Evangelicals know that we have the most powerful tools of evangelism, and therefore, we have done the most effective job. We Western Evangelicals surely must be the most dedicated Christian missionaries on the face of the earth. Furthermore, we Western Evangelicals rest confident in doing more than anyone else in history to bring Christianity to the world—after all, it is we Western Evangelicals who have gone to the remotest parts of Asia, boldly going onward where no Christian soldier has ever gone before.

Maybe we are a little uneasy with the above rhetorical splendorousness. If not, perhaps we should be. There were many who went before us—in Asia and the Middle East. What became of them?

In Samuel Moffett's *History of Christianity in Asia*, we receive some extremely interesting clues about a vast, hidden group of such witnesses—a long-lost treasure of the forgotten faithful.

In 1623, workmen digging not far from what is now Hsian (Xian), the ancient Tang-dynasty capital Chang'an, uncovered a great stone more than nine feet high and three and a third feet wide of black granular limestone, beautifully inscribed in Chinese characters beneath a design at the top centering around a cross rising from a lotus blossom. Large characters under the cross proclaimed it to be "A Monument Commemorating the Propagation of the Ta-Ch'in (Syrian) Luminous Religion in China." It was a monument erected in 781 telling of the arrival of a Nestorian (Christian) missionary in the Chinese capital in 635.

With the discovery of this stone, Western knowledge of history of Christianity in China proper, as distinct from Mongolia outside the wall, was expanded by almost seven hundred years. It described how a Persian reached the capital of Tang China with the gospel as early as Aidan's mission from Iona into England, fifty-five years before Willibrord's pioneering mission to the Frisian tribes of northern Europe, and a hundred and fifty years before Charlemagne's militant conversion of the Saxons.

We Westerners know little of this history. *A History of Christianity in Asia* is a fascinating, amply documented epic of the other half of Christendom's spread after Pentecost—to the east of Palestine. It advanced to Syria, Iraq, Persia, India, ancient China, and the far-flung central Asian empire of the famous Genghis Khan and his grandson, Kublai Khan. Much of this took place before AD 700. Moffett's book begins to inject a note of balance into our picture of reality as it reveals that the Holy Spirit was quite active in Asia centuries before Westerners ever set foot there. God has ensured the advance of His kingdom in ways that far surpass our limited knowledge.

Moffett describes with a good deal of sympathy the severe trials and misunderstandings the Christians of the East have undergone (and still do to this day, I might add). Moffett deals well with the dangers the early Syrian and Persian churches had to face in the form of the compet-

ing worldviews of Gnosticism, Manichaeism, and Zoroastrianism.

Tantalizing insights from early Syrian church documents reveal the possibility that the Apostle Thomas really did found the ancient, still-existing "Thomas" church around AD 50 in southwest India. Moffett sheds light on the Christian kingdom in ancient Yemen and the difficulty Christians had in penetrating the Arabian peninsula. He also explains the nature of the early creedal disputes and how they affected the life of the church in the East. Although the Christological controversy of the mid 400s has branded Eastern Nestorian believers as heretics in the eyes of the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant churches, Moffett gives a reasonable analysis of why this is not quite accurate. He also shows how weak the Nestorian church was due to its isolation, which was in part responsible for its missionary efforts all but disappearing after the Islamic conquest.

Moffett faults poor contextualization methods and a lack of contact with the common man as causes of the disappearance of the Nestorian outreach in China. The Persian Christians were tolerated within the Chinese imperial court until the political winds changed, and the Nestorians were forcibly ejected. The armies of the Mongol Khan rode under the banner of the Holy Cross at one time due to the influence of Persian missionaries, yet the political persecution these Christians faced later wiped out all their visible efforts.

Moffett promotes an appreciation of our Eastern Christian ancestors that is much overdue and well deserved. Far from espousing an easy ecumenism, his documentation provides a thoughtful, balanced, and sobering view of the strengths and weaknesses of the church of the East. I eagerly await the arrival of Volume 2. In the meantime, to discover the story of our hidden brothers and sisters of the ancient Middle and Far East, read this intriguing and rewarding volume. Truth is stranger, and often more interesting, than fiction.

—Michael Anderson

### BITTER ROOTS

by John L. Moore,  
Thomas Nelson Publishers. 223 pp

The Wild West ain't quite so wild as it used to be, but it still has a smoke flavor all its own. John L. Moore portrays his group of domesticated westerners with a loving irony. Alistair McColley is the now dead probate patriarch, and his induction into the Pioneer Hall of Fame is cause for a family reunion. Reba, a relative through marriage, tells the spiritual biographies (or lack thereof) for each of the family members. Montana ranchers, ex-basketball stars, hardy women, ornery men—all come off as genuine. The way Reba obtains her information through mystic revelations is a little bizarre, but Moore intends her to be a receiver of visions rather than a medium. So for a solid read with only a few tumbleweeds, pick up yer copy of *Bitter Roots*. ♦

—K. H.



explaining what JPUSA is to hundreds of strangers hundreds of times. Boy, this was going to be "fun." Maybe I was just feeling a little burnt out.

If almost nothing is as bad as we make it out to be in our imagination then almost nothing is as easy, either. Prayer about my bad attitude had already left me feeling a bit sheepish, and the more I thought about it the more I wondered what the Lord had in store for the next four or five days. Leaving early on Wednesday morning, we registered, attended orientation for exhibitors (where are we supposed to park?), and went to set up the booth (Mike, are you sure this isn't upside-down?). I wondered how our display would look next to everybody else's. Would its simple black-and-white photographs and pinned-in-place black sheet compete with all the gleaming metal and plastic professional displays? And why was I worried about competition anyway? Time for more prayer.

I wondered about the ministries we were sharing table space with. Would our long hair and casual dress bother them? Would everybody get along okay? Even though I'd had a really positive experience running a booth like this for JPUSA at Taylor University the year before, I was still nervous. There were people everywhere wandering around the way people do before events like this get rolling. Urbana '90 had been criticized for the lack of minority

involvement, but looking the crowd over at Urbana '93 revealed about a quarter of it was Asian-American with large delegations from India and other two-thirds-world countries. How would the two of us be able to talk to everybody?

As we continued working on our booth I heard someone say, "Excuse me." A short Asian woman (evidently an exhibitor) asked with an embarrassed smile, "Can I borrow your tape?" It was nice to see someone else was as prepared as we were. By now World Impact's staff had arrived and was setting up on our right. We introduced ourselves to our new neighbors, Janice and Jim Swanson. They didn't have fur, fangs, and "Bill Gothard for President" buttons, but what they did have was a heart for urban missions and a good sense of humor. Maybe this wouldn't be so bad after all.

Likewise with the Youth Dynamics workers on our left. Paul, Rusty, Mike, and Mark switched places with us at one point, pretending they were JPUSAs while we tried to convince the curious that we were "outdoor-ministry types." "Outdoor-ministry typos" would have been more accurate. These guys were nuts. Over the next four days we laughed, prayed, and shared struggles and stories of life on the mission field. In fact, all of the exhibitors seemed to have two things in common: an understanding of the largeness of God's family and a sincere desire to help the attendees through the maze. No culturally

turned-up noses and no competition amongst the ministries. More than once other exhibitors directed attendees to our booth.

And speaking of the questioners . . . wow! I'm tempted to call them Urbanas because they so often came in bunches. "What is JPUSA?" "Is this short-term or long-term?" "Where are you located?" "Tell REZ and everybody we send our love and we're prayin' for you guys!" During less busy times we had the opportunity to have individual get-togethers with people. It was exhausting and exhilarating. So many people seeking to serve God!! And so many messages to bring back home with us—so many words of encouragement.

The biggest impact for me came while attending the general morning and evening sessions which contained the core of the invaluable Urbana message. Upwards of seventeen thousand missionaries and conference attendees packed the amphitheater. We were attending at normal JPUSA "super saver rates" and had no tickets for the general sessions. An older couple who ran the booth several stations away sought us out. "It's a little far for us to walk but you young people go. I just love you young people—so full of fire and life." As she handed us the tickets I felt like I was being passed a torch.


The exhibitors weren't the only ones handing out fire at Urbana '93. The times of worship and prayer during the general sessions were supplemented by Bruce Kuhn's dramatic readings of Luke. Presented this way the Word came alive. We watched short films detailing the seemingly endless needs of nations all over the world. But most powerful of all were the speakers.

Ravi Zacharias's teaching on "Jesus Christ among Other 'Gods'" was an explosive reminder of the exclusive claims of Christianity and brought the crowd exuberantly to their feet as much for praise and worship of Christ as for applause. Building on this theme, Ajith Fernando gave an exposition of John 10:14 titled "The Good Shepherd" in which he observed that, although many religions see the cross as an example of a cruel and heartless God, everyone understands that "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13, KJV).

As the worship team led the crowd I was reminded many times of the deep and abiding presence of Jesus in the family of God. Seeing so many different "people groups" together in one spot all asking God the same fundamental question, "Where do I belong, Lord?" provoked a startling revelation.

Urbana's theme was "God So Loves the World." And even though it hadn't been my first choice to be there, God had chosen to love the world through me at that place and time. I was a very small but meaningful piece of the puzzle at Urbana and, I realized, at home. In both places I was where I belonged, serving the God I loved. All the inconvenience simply melted away in the face of that love. For the other seventeen thousand attendees that same love called them to the "high" way of laying down their lives on the mission field. I for one went home to help the Christmas clean-up crew. ❖

—Dave Canfield



**CORNERSTONE 1993 BOOK AWARDS**

**POLITICS:**  
*THE AMERICAN HOUR: A TIME OF RECKONING AND THE ONCE AND FUTURE ROLE OF FAITH, OS GUINNESS; THE FREE PRESS*

**CHRISTIAN TEACHING:**  
*KNOWING GOD: 20TH-ANNIVERSARY EDITION, J. I. PACKER; INTERVARSITY PRESS*

**PHILOSOPHY:**  
*WHEN THE NEW AGE GETS OLD: LOOKING FOR A GREATER SPIRITUALITY, VISHAL MANGALWAJI; INTERVARSITY PRESS*

**FICTION:**  
*SILENT PASSENGERS, LARRY WOIWODE; ATHENEUM*

**SOCIAL ISSUES:**  
*SAVAGE INEQUALITIES: CHILDREN IN AMERICA'S SCHOOLS, JONATHAN KOZOL; HARPERPERENNIAL*

**HISTORY:**  
*A HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN ASIA, VOLUME I: BEGINNINGS TO 1500, SAMUEL HUGH MOFFETT; HARPERSANFRANCISCO*

**MUSIC:**  
*THE CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSIC DEBATE, STEVE MILLER; TYNDALE HOUSE*

**MINISTRY:**  
*FREEOM FOR MINISTRY, RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS; WILLIAM B. EERDMANS*