

Christian theology is obvious. This leads R. to see in Catholic social teaching only “a tool to evangelize,” but not to improve material well-being (95). He does not appreciate that the Catholic understanding of the human person is essential for defending union rights and a social free market system. Benedict’s thoughts on human life as gift remain beyond comprehension, as R. does not see the ramifications of human beings created in the image and likeness of God and therefore called to worship him (111–17). Yet for R., only if God is tripersonal is man a person (see 127), are the concepts of “subsidiarity and solidarity” viable (129), and are Catholic positions on social ethics and morality comprehensible. To R. the transcendentals—truth, goodness, and beauty—are “meaningless and hollow words,” incapable of contributing to the solution of the world’s problems (125).

Since R. is not acquainted with theological or metaphysical terms, it is understandable that he accuses Ratzinger of circular arguments: only a hermeneutics of faith can access faith (143). He bases his sweeping conclusions on just four texts of Ratzinger’s oeuvre of over 1600 titles. Using Ratzinger as his preferred opponent, R. settles the score with Christianity in general.

The book highlights an important development since 1989: as ideologies have lost their fascination, Deism becomes *en vogue* in postmodernity. The question then is, What is the common basis for dialogue between Christianity and deistic Enlightenment?

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BIBLE, GENDER, SEXUALITY: REFRAMING THE CHURCH’S DEBATE ON SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS. By James V. Brownson. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013. Pp. xi + 300. \$29.

Contributing in two fundamental ways, Brownson invites us to “reinvigorate the imagination of the Church” in the ongoing debate within many Christian traditions on same-sex relationships (15). First, he attempts to offer a comprehensive and transcultural biblical vision for Christian sexuality. Second, he searches for a moral vision that the Bible commends regarding gender and sexuality, especially in the case of committed and loving same-sex relationships today.

B. begins by pointing out that interpretation of biblical texts is not simply understanding what the texts say, but finding out *why* the texts say what they do. Thus, he first uncovers what he calls the “moral logic” behind the texts. B. recalls the dichotomous moral arguments presented by traditionalists and revisionists, and concludes that neither position is adequate.

The rest of the book is divided into two rather equal parts in which B. introduces several forms of moral logic that shape the Bible’s treatment of

general sexual issues and same-sex issues in particular. The first part treats four broad forms of moral logic identified from the entire canon on sexuality and marriage: patriarchy, one flesh, procreation, and celibacy. But along the way, he reads these four forms in very particular senses. For instance, he reinterprets “one flesh” in Genesis 2:24 to mean a lifelong kinship bond, and that heterosexual and same-sex couples can each enhance the common good when procreation is not seen as the exclusive concern of society.

Part 2 looks into four specific forms of moral logic that B. locates in Romans 1:24–27 (lust, impurity, shame, nature). His findings highlight what he sees as often neglected or downplayed, such as internal attitudes and dispositions, the impacts of culture and society on specific behaviors, and the individual and social dimensions of nature.

By way of conclusion, B. returns to the seven famous scriptural passages that explicitly speak about same-sex relations and rereads them through his forms of moral logic.

As a whole, B.’s presentation reminds me of Richard Hays’s *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*. Just as Hays identifies three focal images (cross, community, and new creation) as lenses for discerning the ethical vision of the NT, B. identifies various forms of moral logic as keys for interpreting the texts. Like Hays, B. extracts certain focal ideas from the writings of Paul and employs them to interpret contemporary moral issues. I have many of the same methodological problems with B. that I had with Hays.

Consequently, I have concerns about B.’s moral logic similar to those I raised about Hays’s focal images. First, on what grounds did B. choose and identify those eight broad and specific forms of moral logic in the canon? Are they adequate for leading us to grasp the canon’s understanding of gender and sexuality? Moreover, what are the reasons for turning to Romans 1:24–27 rather than to one of those seven other passages in order to identify those specific forms of moral logic? And why focus on the negative elements of the text and not on the positive ones as a way to illuminate and discern the underlying forms of moral logic?

Second, the treatment of those seven scriptural passages is rather brief. While B. rightly avoids being trapped in debates over isolated texts and skillfully employs his conclusions to explore these texts, we would expect from a Scripture scholar a more thorough discussion of these passages. Also, treating these texts at the end of the book could give the impression that they are not important in the overall discussion of the subject matter. Furthermore, B.’s use of the term “lust” is at times confusing, if not misleading.

B.’s contribution goes beyond the debate over same-sex unions. First, his attempt to use imagination as the hermeneutical tool is creative and praiseworthy (10). However, he could develop the foundations of his claim better

(readers of this journal will recall William Spohn's same move in *Go and Do Likewise* [2000]). Second, while he attempts to engage with Christian theological ethicists (such as Margaret Farley) and is aware of the views of other traditions, especially in the Roman Catholic tradition, his attention is often short-lived, and his engagement with ethicists is thin. Still, B.'s book is an ambitious challenge to Christians to read the Bible imaginatively if they wish to understand more fully elements found in committed same-sex relationships.

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KINSHIP ACROSS BORDERS: A CHRISTIAN ETHIC OF IMMIGRATION. By Kristin Heyer. Washington: Georgetown University, 2012. Pp. x + 198. \$29.95.

What does it mean to be a Christian in the age of migration? More specifically, what does it mean to be an American Christian in the context of millions of undocumented immigrants marginalized by the injustice of the current immigration system? These are the key questions that Heyer deftly engages in a book that makes a compelling case for a more Christian stance and action regarding undocumented immigration.

H. convincingly lays out her case by exploring the complex moral dimensions of undocumented immigration through the lenses of Christian anthropology, ecclesiology, and especially social ethics. She does this by taking the reader on a thoughtful journey through the tragic nature of undocumented immigration. On the way, she poses an ethical challenge that is especially directed to Christians because she finds them implicated in the injustices that plague current immigration policies and practices. People manifest their implication through inhospitality and direct and indirect participation in a system that creates what liberation theologian Ignacio Ellacuría regards as the "crucified people." In fact, theologians writing on migration, such as Daniel Groody and Gioacchino Campese, refer to undocumented immigrants, particularly those crossing the southern border of the United States, as crucified people.

The book's well-grounded theological and ethical analysis of undocumented immigration drives home the moral imperatives arising from the issue. Indeed, by using a Christian ethical framework and by drawing heavily from the Catholic social tradition and feminist and liberationist theologies, H. makes a case for the full and legal incorporation of undocumented immigrants into American society. She helpfully lays out an ethical alternative through one grounded on human experience rather than through empty rhetoric or purely abstract discourse. Examples of this include the experience of workers forced to put up with unjust wages and