

closes with a profound musing on Mark's presentation of Jesus' death as a "triumphal failure" (156–57).

With the small caveat that this book might not be suitable for all educational settings, I heartily recommend it.

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Saint Paul and the New Evangelization. By Ronald D. Witherup. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2013. Pp. x + 147. \$14.95.

Witherup seeks to link the exhortations on the new evangelization made by the magisterium of the Catholic Church with Paul's apostolic life and practices. It is undeniable that Paul's life provides numerous examples of the apostolate of evangelization. Nevertheless, using Paul is not particularly helpful in addressing the unique situation of evangelizing former Christians, people who, either personally or collectively, have renounced the faith they once professed.

The book is a sort of manual, and each chapter concludes with a set of questions intended to help a group discuss the content of the preceding pages. The fact that the book was quickly written leads to certain approximations: the New Testament does mention Paul's origin in the city of Tarsus (22), Jesus' crucifixion is generally located in AD 30, not 28 (23), and the fact that the Philippians' hymn (2:5–11) is pre-Pauline is increasingly discussed among scholars (25). Statements that can be challenged include the observation that crossing the Bosphorus was a "dramatic move" (56); that both sides of the Aegean sea belonged to the Greek cultural world; and that Paul discarded Jewish ritual laws only for pagan converts but stressed their validity for Jewish Christians (94).

I commend many of W.'s points of emphasis: for example, when he underscores our ability to be sent as apostles even if we have not known Jesus according to the flesh (34); the fact that Paul knew perfectly well the persistence of sin in his communities and tried to deal with it (58); and the necessity to call the church a "family of faith" comprised of brothers and sisters (65, 88).

The usefulness of this booklet lies in its practical and accessible dimension, which allows beginners and newcomers to (re)discover Paul's letters with joy.

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Making Sense of Sex: Attitudes towards Sexuality in Early Jewish and Christian Literature. By William Loader. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013. Pp. vii + 168. \$24.

A catchy title, to be sure. Of three other books on the market with that title, only Loader's is a scholarly investigation of ancient literature. In fact, it is the latest in a

series of more detailed studies by him into sexual issues as revealed in early Hebrew Scriptures, the Septuagint, Philo and other Jewish writers, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the New Testament, all published by Eerdmans. It is a concluding summary, as it were, of those separate monographs on beliefs, practices, and laws related to sex and sexual behavior in late Judaism and early Christianity during the four centuries from ca. 300 BCE to ca. 100 CE.

Chapter 1 compares ancient accounts of the creation of human beings, not only in Genesis but also in Greek literature, all of which portray sexuality as basically good but needing to be circumscribed by laws and customs lest the social order be disrupted by uncontrolled desires. The other three chapters summarize attitudes and mores regarding households of men and women, behavior related to temples and other sacred spaces, and control of sexual passions constrained by social norms.

The traditional teaching that the primary purpose of marriage is the procreation of children can be traced directly to this cultural milieu, for in the ancient Mediterranean world, parents arranged for the marriage of their offspring to ensure that someone would inherit the family patrimony and take care of them if they managed to survive middle age. Romantic love had nothing to do with marriage—although mutual affection was regarded as rewarding, should it happen to arise after the wedding. Apparently, however, sexual intercourse even in loving relationships was perceived as driven by passion and even somewhat animalistic, without any thought of pleasuring one's partner or deepening the bond between husband and wife.

For those who are interested in the topic, the book is a handy and readable compendium of sexual mores in the ancient Near East, even if the descriptions are not as exciting as the title seems to promise.

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Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things? Saints and Worshipers from the Martyrs to the Reformation. By Robert Bartlett. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 2013. Pp. xviii + 787. \$39.95.

Advice on how to approach Bartlett's early history of the cult of the saints in the Latin West may be taken from a story he includes about Hugh of Lincoln. While venerating the Magdalene's relics at Fécamp, Hugh bit off two fragments with his teeth and handed them to his chaplain, saying "look after these with especial care" (243). Similarly, B.'s encyclopedic work is a highly synthetic and enjoyable read, especially in small bites. The first seventh of his 637 pages of text sketches the religious phenomenon chronologically. The rest is a systematic review of what the cult of the saints encompassed and its place in medieval society. B. demonstrates how the veneration of saints developed within the context of a religious community that itself underwent tremendous and constant transformation in late antiquity and beyond.