

David Beale,
Historical Theology In-Depth:
Themes and Contexts of Doctrinal Development since the First Century
(Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 2013), 2 vols.

David Beale, who taught for thirty-five years at Bob Jones University and is probably best known for his study of Fundamentalism—*In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism Since 1850* (1986)—has put together in these two volumes fifty-seven distinct essays (and four appendices) that cover a good number of the major issues of historical theology from the last two thousand years of church history (chapter 1 in the first volume is an outline of some basic principles of historical theology). The first volume deals with topics from the early second-century Fathers to the late medieval era, with most of the essays focused on the Ancient Church (there are five dealing with Augustine alone) and a good number on the ecumenical councils (chaps. 20–25 and 32). The second volume begins with Luther and ends with “Pagan, Jewish, and Christian Attitudes towards Abortion” (the four appendices deal with the topic of creation).

The essays are mostly basic studies studded with helpful extracts of primary sources and each accompanied by a bibliography: the majority of the essays in the first volume are biographical while half of the chapters in volume two deal with doctrines and movements like the eternal generation of Christ (which Beale rejects in favor of the eternal sonship of Christ), early Baptist theology and the New Divinity. While most of the essays are cast at an introductory level, it is quite obvious that Beale is able to handle the intricacies of historical theology (witness his analysis of the doctrine of eternal generation).

Some subjects are noticeably absent. None of the essays deal with Wesleyan Arminianism (chapter 17 in volume 2 does touch on the holiness movement) and there is little about Fundamentalism, Beale’s *forte*. There is also nothing on missionary theology—I had hoped Beale might have said something about Fullerism, for example—my obsession! These are helpful volumes that could well serve as a textbook for an introductory survey of historical theology.

Michael A.G. Haykin
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