

friendship with Ford, and Deborah Hardy Ford (David Ford's wife) on theme of the 'face'.

David Ford is one of our most interesting theologians. *Self and Salvation* and *Christian Wisdom* are two books that open wonderful and thought-provoking theological vistas. This festschrift from his friends is a good introduction and testament to why Ford is a theologian in the university and in the church.

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Jason Goroncy, *Hallowed Be Thy Name: The Sanctification of All in the Soteriology of P.T. Forsyth* (Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), 291pp.

It is unusual to find a book which is both theologically astute and beautifully written. Jason Goroncy has crafted a work of fine prose and strong theological scholarship which deserves to gain a readership well beyond the confines of specialist theologians. It is indeed rare to find a doctoral thesis written in such erudite yet accessible language.

The popularity of the theology of P.T. Forsyth waxed and waned throughout the twentieth century; in the current century it seems, once again, to have been largely overlooked, perhaps disregarded as quaintly out of touch with modern realities. Goroncy's work serves us well in reminding us of the greatness of Forsyth's theological vision.

Goroncy aims to explore Forsyth's theology through the lens of the first petition of the Lord's Prayer. In particular, it is asked whether Forsyth's emphasis on God's holy love necessarily implies dogmatic universal salvation. The question of universalism in Forsyth has been raised before; what is new here is an approach to the question through Forsyth's own doctrine of sanctification. The opening of the Lord's prayer, for Forsyth, finds fulfilment in Jesus Christ who is holiness incarnate, the fully obedient Son who confesses holiness from the side of human sinfulness, bears judgement against sin and creates the possibility of a new humanity. Having expounded Forsyth's christological perspective on the hallowing of God's name, Goroncy then offers a careful examination of Forsyth's moral anthropology; humanity is created, elected and sanctified to reflect the holy love of God within creation. The final chapter argues that Forsyth's theology of holiness logically leads to dogmatic universalism, a conclusion which Forsyth himself did not follow through.

The detailed argument here is worked through with meticulous attention to Forsyth's own reticence with regard to universalism. Goroncy shows that Forsyth consistently rejects limited atonement, double predestination and annihilation. Instead, Forsyth articulates a threefold doctrine of election, located firstly in Christ, then in the community of the church and finally in the individual. When the focus of election shifts to the person of Christ, the question of universalism is often raised. If the whole human race is elect in

Christ soteriological universalism seems to be a logical outcome. That argument has been played out with regard to Barth, with several rejoinders being made. Forsyth offers several qualifications to the universalist thrust of his theology. Firstly, he holds out the possibility of final rejection by God. Jesus Christ exercises faithfulness on behalf of all, but also has faith that each person will choose life and not death; a final 'no' is possible, and Forsyth argues that no individual is finally deprived of their own freely chosen fate. Goroncy suggests that this is ultimately incoherent, leaving open the possibility that holiness might be other than that revealed in Christ. Ultimately Forsyth's theology protests in two directions: he is clearly set against a systematised doctrine of universalism, yet he does not repudiate universalism. For Goroncy this is unsustainable.

Forsyth's second caveat relates to the possibility of final judgement. Judgement is always understood as a word of mercy and restorative in nature. Towards the end of his career Forsyth memorably conjured up the possibility that the doctrine of purgatory may not be wholly wrong, offering the possibility of post-mortem conversion. Yet even here, it is argued, Forsyth is reluctant to follow these thoughts through in a consistent way. Finally, Goroncy criticises Forsyth's reticence on the grounds that he affirms that Christ has fulfilled the demands of God's holiness on behalf of racial humanity; Christ offered himself in racial solidarity with the whole of humanity. The theological consequence – salvation for all – is hard to escape.

Not all will agree with the conclusions to this book. There are Forsyth scholars who take a different view, though this is the first to explore his theology through the lens of hallowing. In particular the passion with which T.F. Torrance argued that Barth's doctrine of election did not logically imply universalism could be applied here. Whether one agrees with the conclusion or not, we are indebted to Goroncy for a theologically generous and beautifully crafted piece of Forsyth scholarship. It is to be hoped that this book will inspire others to engage with the extraordinarily rich and practically relevant theology of one of the truly great British theologians.

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Rowan Williams and Benedicta Ward, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History: an Introduction and Selection* (Bloomsbury, 2012), 174pp.

Somehow the age of the Anglo Saxons has gained a high profile in the past few years, perhaps because of some excellent TV programmes giving us more information, and certainly in the light of archaeological finds such as the treasures found near Tamworth, recently, now in the Birmingham museum. That reminded us of the different power bases and territories in the British isles, including the Vikings and their Danelaw. Perhaps also the prospect of Scotland breaking off from the UK in 2015, and rising sense of Welsh identity and history, brings this era to life in a new way as we read of alliances between the various power blocks on our islands. And our experience of the steep decline of Christianity as a public ethos compares