

wishes to speak meaningfully on these questions can do so without awareness of the shape of the Baptist convictions that precede him. Because these questions are of enormous contemporary importance, Baptist leaders and Baptist pastors should acquire this book and read these essays.

It is the reader who must evaluate the scope of Baptist history on matters political and to decide how those convictions will shape his own political theory and practice. And that, we must acknowledge, is appropriate for Baptists.

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Arminian Baptists: A Biographical History of Free Will Baptists, edited by David Lytle and Charles Cook. Nashville: Randall House, 2022. viii + 466 pp. \$27.99.

In their edited book, David Lytle and Charles Cook, have assembled a stellar team of historians to present a unique resource. Much like the volume edited by David Dockery and Timothy George, *Theologians of the Baptist Tradition* (B&H, 2001), *Arminian Baptists* tells a long history through the presentation of individual chapters on specific figures. In the same way that Dockery and George's volume focused more on a particular denomination (Southern Baptists), Lytle and Cook's volume focuses on a different denomination (the National Association of Free Will Baptists, the NAFWB). Lytle and Cook both claim some education from the NAFWB's school, Welch College, and live within that orbit, as do most of the contributors. Though many Baptists are Arminian, this book has the clear intention of presenting key figures from a particular strain of Arminian Baptists that have had Arminian theology at the core of their identity throughout their history.

With the unique focus on self-identified Arminian Baptists, the twenty-eight chapters of this book are organized around three broad eras. The first is the "Rise of the Arminian Baptist." This section begins in the early seventeenth century with Thomas Helwys and considers mostly English General Baptists (including Henry Denne, Thomas Grantham, and Thomas Monck) but also the pioneering ministry of Paul Palmer in early eighteenth-century North Carolina. Arminian Baptists were much like their Calvinist counterparts in that they struggled for identity and toleration. Despite these struggles, the General Baptists demonstrated tenacious evangelism and organization in their effort to survive. One theme of this era is that these Arminian Baptists worked not only to distance themselves from a certain strand of Arminian theology that bordered on semi-Pelagianism but also to demonstrate their theological bona fides. This is clearly seen in an early and exceptionally robust confessional document from this group, "An Orthodox Creed"

(1679), which quoted the entirety of the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds within their own statement.

The second major section of the book considers "Free Will Baptists and Revivalism." In this part the focus shifts to America and the Arminian Baptist strains that became known as "Free Will Baptists." When the Arminian Baptists that could point back to Paul Palmer were converting to Calvinist beliefs, the key influence of Joseph Parker helped an explicitly Arminian Baptist identity survive in North Carolina. While Parker's influence in the South and Benjamin Randall's influence in New England (and the beginnings of the Free Will Baptists) are better known, seven other significant figures are explored, showing how Free Will Baptists began, networked, and developed throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century in America. The northern (Randall) strain expanded from New England into much of the Midwest, while the southern (Parker) strain expanded from North Carolina throughout much the southwestern frontier. These were explicitly Arminian and aggressive evangelistic.

The final major section looks at the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in America and the themes of "Merger, Schism, and Denominational Growth." This is the longest section, including twelve chapters and nearly half the book's pages. While northern, southern, and western Free Will Baptists had some working together in the nineteenth centuries, there was a decisive break when the northern "Free Will Baptist General Conference" decided to officially join with the Northern Baptist Convention in 1911. Some northern Free Will Baptists, mostly in the Midwest, decided to stay separate and retain their explicitly Arminian identity, even forming the "Co-operative General Association" shortly after. In the south, Free Will Baptists had a few General Conferences in different locales, which then joined with the Co-operative General Association in 1935 to form the National Association of Free Will Baptists. Key in this story are figures like John L. Welch and L. C. Johnson who helped forge denominational identity and unity through the NAFWB and the Free Will Baptist Bible College (which would be renamed Welch College in 2012). After the merger that formed the NAFWB, there were times of trial culminating in a schism in 1962 with a significant group of Free Will Baptists in North Carolina leaving the NAFWB. Despite this schism, the NAFWB grew and became more involved with broader American evangelicalism. One of their leaders, Billy Melvin, even served for two decades as the executive director of the National Association of Evangelicals. More recent history of the NAFWB follows men such as Dale Burden, F. Leroy Forlines, and Robert Eugene Picirilli and was known for a developing scholarship and charting a careful path of cultural conservatism without being overly influenced by the Independent Fundamental Baptist orbit.

The book's editors and authors are clear that they intend to highlight a certain type of Arminian Baptist that put Arminianism at the center of their identity. Further, they reject the type that tended toward semi-Pelagianism (which is why they leave off John Smyth and begin

with Thomas Helwys, for instance), that downplayed original sin, that allowed too much of a human initiative in salvation, or that wandered away from classic orthodoxy into high church latitudinarianism or anti-Trinitarianism. In the more recent history, they clearly identify with the southern Free Will Baptist strain that was not against education and was not overly fundamentalistic. The effort to trace a certain legacy with a focus on this theological constellation is the strength of the book. Even still, there is significant variety of Arminian Baptist amongst the twenty-eight chapters.

Lytle, Cook, and their team of authors have done a service for those seeking to understand this less understood part of the Baptist heritage. The format of this book gives not only an overarching narrative, but also a window into the key individuals and the particularities that flavor Free Will Baptists. *Arminian Baptists* succeeds in giving a coherent narrative of where the NAFWB of today has its roots within the winding Baptist story. I highly recommend this work.

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The Reformed Lord's Supper Form: A Commentary, by Bastiaan Wielenga. Edited by H. David Shuringa and translated by David J. Engelsma. Jenison, MI: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 2023. xii + 426 pp. \$39.95.

One of the most important sources of the Dutch Reformed theological tradition has now been made available to an English readership thanks to the labors of H. David Shuringa and David Engelsma. This edition of *The Reformed Lord's Supper Form: A Commentary* by the twentieth-century theologian, Bastiaan Wielenga (1873–1949) complements the English edition of *The Reformed Baptism Form: A Commentary* by the same author and released by Reformed Free Publishing back in 2016. Preceding this work are two helpful prefaces that situate this work within its theological context, highlighting pertinent themes addressed by Wielenga throughout. Additional features include instructive footnotes that direct the reader to an array of Dutch Reformed sources as well as a substantial bibliography of theological works.

Wielenga's work is a commentary on the liturgical form used for the observance of the Lord's Supper in Reformed churches of the Continental tradition like the Christian Reformed Church, the Reformed Church in America, the United Reformed Church, the Protestant Reformed Church, among others. This liturgical form for the Lord's Supper was authored by the theologian Casper Olevianus (1536–87), one of the authors of the *Heidelberg Catechism* (1563), and officially approved by the Synod of Dort (1618–19).

Following Wielenga's own introduction (chap. 1) which is largely a