

qualitatively different from the pagan human activity that actualises the human self' (p. 34). This priority of divine action also continues justification into the ongoing living of the Christian life.

Whether the relationship of grace and human freedom is a problem to be solved or a tension to be existentially lived out is, in my view, arguable, and Kierkegaard's own way of dealing with it reveals manifold points of stress and even fracture – which, indeed, I find to be a part of why Kierkegaard remains both a compelling and a troubling author. In the last words he ever wrote, Kierkegaard certainly affirms that, for the believer, it is only 'God who does it' – and yet this conclusion is prefaced by the comment that this is because freedom wants it this way. Whether this is merely muddled or true to the existential tension of faith is, I suggest, arguable, but, at the very least, it leaves scope for interpretation. Torrance, however, is clear that overstressing the human element reduces faith to an 'immanent' event, a reduction typical of what he elsewhere calls 'existentialist' readings of Kierkegaard (p. 95), and of which, e.g. Jamie Ferreira, Clare Carlisle, and the present reviewer are representatives. In some ways this polemical edge, characteristic of a certain kind of Reformed theology, is probably (a) unnecessary and (b) distracting in relation to what is otherwise a confident, competent, and lively piece of advocacy for the theological relevance of Kierkegaard's thought.

George Pattison,
University of Glasgow



Dick O. Eugenio, *Communion with the Triune God: The Trinitarian Soteriology of T. F. Torrance* (Eugene, Or.: Pickwick Publications, 2014), pp. xxii + 242, ISBN 978-1625640369. £22.00

Dick Eugenio's volume attempts to demonstrate the Trinitarian character of T. F. Torrance's soteriology. Eugenio's central contention is that Torrance's soteriology is inseparable from his Trinitarian theology, and his Trinitarian theology is inseparable from his soteriology. In short, it is as God the Father, Son and Spirit that God

is Redeemer of creation. In this, Eugenio helpfully adds to the more general introductions to Torrance's theology provided by Elmer Colyer and Paul Molnar, in which no explicit connection is drawn between Torrance's soteriology and his Trinitarian theology. As this text aims to draw out an emphasis in Torrance's large corpus that has gone largely unnoticed, Eugenio's style is mostly exegetical. However, this is not necessarily a weakness, for Eugenio is explicit that he is seeking to fill a lacuna in scholarship on Torrance.

Eugenio's central point that Torrance's soteriology is inseparable from his Trinitarian theology has three sub-points, which are addressed in specific chapters. First, Eugenio argues that, to Torrance, salvation is the work of the persons of the Triune God. Eugenio addresses this issue in Chapters Two, Three and Four. Second, that salvation is ontologically *grounded* in the being of God. Eugenio addresses this issue in the first chapter. Third, that salvation is *teleologically orientated* to communion with the triune God. Eugenio discusses this in the fifth and final chapter.

Chapter One serves as an introduction to Torrance's soteriology from the perspective of Torrance's scientific, evangelical and Trinitarian theology. In this chapter, Eugenio demonstrates that Torrance's soteriology is tied to his scientific and Trinitarian theological method. This chapter constitutes a sound introduction to the Trinitarian, scientific and evangelical character of Torrance's theological epistemology, unique in its focussed inclusion of Torrance's soteriology into the nexus of Torrance's theological method. In this way, Eugenio demonstrates that the locus of salvation is no addendum to Torrance's theological method, but is rather a determinative factor. This is an integral feature of Torrance's 'scientific' approach to theology in which the unique subject matter of God's salvific self-revelation determines human theology. This chapter is the main contribution of this volume and it will be of interest to theological educators and those in ministerial charges alike. To theological educators, this chapter is a cogent analysis of the method of a leading twentieth-century Reformed theologian, of which students will certainly benefit from being familiar. To those in ministerial posts, this chapter draws out Torrance's profound emphasis upon the objective foundation of salvation through the unity of the being and action of God. Eugenio's

work condenses Torrance's voluminous writing on this matter, making this issue central to Torrance's soteriology accessible, through which the preaching of the Gospel of grace may be enriched.

From the second to the fourth chapter, Eugenio presents the involvement of each of the divine persons in the economy of salvation. The problem with Eugenio's approach is his organisation of the material. In treating the distinct persons of Father, Son and Spirit in discrete chapters, Eugenio comes close to obscuring the unity of the threefold work of God in salvation. In this, Eugenio's descriptive account of Torrance's Trinitarian soteriology could be understood as incompatible with Torrance's insistence upon the one common work of the triune God, reflected in the complementarity of the Father, Son and Spirit in their respective involvement in the economy of salvation. Eugenio's reluctance to treat the soteriology of Thomas Torrance more directly as the act of the triune God is perhaps this work's weakest aspect.

This being said, Eugenio's organisation of the material does have its strengths. Eugenio's decision to begin with Jesus Christ (Chapter Two) is consistent with the Christocentric character of Torrance's theology. Moreover, Eugenio rightly emphasises that in Torrance's Christology, the work of Christ arises from his person, such that the reconciling activity of the Mediator is traced back to the hypostatic union and the setting forwards of the *mystery* of the will of God for the union of God and humanity. In his discussion of the person of the Father (Chapter Three), Eugenio emphasises the kindness of the eternal Father through Jesus Christ. In this way, Eugenio rightly demonstrates that knowing God as Creator from the antecedent basis of God as eternally Father of the Son demonstrates the non-necessity of creation and so – therefore – the provenance of creation in the will and the love of God. As such, Eugenio rightly demonstrates the intimate connection of the doctrines of creation and salvation. However, Eugenio's point would have been reinforced by recognising the influence of Georges Florovsky on Torrance in establishing the non-necessity of creation through a contrast between the Son's generation from the being of God, and the making of creation in accordance with the will of God. In this way, Florovsky provided Torrance with the fundamental principles upon which Torrance established the integrity of creation and redemption

upon the triunity of God. In the fourth chapter, Eugenio describes very clearly the integrity of pneumatology to Torrance's soteriology, in the Spirit's activity of enabling of the subjective appropriation of God's salvific activity. Moreover, Eugenio's chapter is a very welcome contribution as Torrance's pneumatology is an often neglected theme.

The final chapter is a study of the *telos* of Torrance's Trinitarian soteriology: the communion of humanity with God in their participation in the triune life. Again, this is largely an expositional chapter, exploring rather than developing or critiquing Torrance's thought. To this end, Eugenio explores this theme through the centrality of Jesus Christ as Mediator, and the core elements of Torrance's relational ontology: *perichoresis* and onto-relationality. Eugenio appropriately concludes his analysis with Torrance's notion of *theosis*, and Torrance's assertion of the eschatological culmination of salvation: the participation of humanity in the Triune God. Although, once again, Eugenio's case would have been strengthened by noting the importance of Florovsky concerning Torrance's thought on *theosis*, for it was he who changed Torrance's mind on this matter.

Overall, this volume makes a good contribution to our understanding of Thomas Torrance's theology, which is important reading for theological educators, students and ministers. Eugenio's approach complements previous studies and develops beyond them with a clear-sighted focus on the inseparability of Torrance's Trinitarian theology and his soteriology. Given that it is Eugenio's stated attempt to comment on an aspect of Torrance's theology that has not been covered in more general accounts, the expositional approach he takes is not necessarily a weakness. That being said, the descriptive character of Eugenio's work does certainly limit its scope. Readers looking for sustained critical interaction with the corpus of Torrance will not find it in this volume. Perhaps it may be that this text's most significant contribution is to drive interpreters back to Torrance himself, and read him with eyes attuned to salvation as the act of God, one being and three persons.

Alexander J. D. Irving,
Wycliffe Hall, University of Oxford