

Book Review by Lisa Goble

Bell, Colin and White, Robert S. (eds.) *Creation Care and the Gospel – Reconsidering the Mission of the Church*, Peabody, Ms: Hendrickson Publishers Marketing, 2016

Climate change and environmental issues have been brought to the fore in recent years due to the climate emergency that the planet is facing. This readable book is a good introductory level to those wishing to explore this issue further from a biblical and Christian paradigm. It consists mostly of papers that were presented by biblical scholars, theologians, scientists and environmental researchers at the Lausanne Global Consultation on Creation Care and the Gospel in Jamaica in 2012. It begins with a '*Call to Action*' outlining the argument to be unpacked through subsequent chapters, namely that 'Creation care is a gospel issue within the Lordship of Christ' (Cape Town Commitment, 2010). It acknowledges the accusation that Christianity has contributed to the crisis, either as a result of the dominion language of Genesis or because of dualistic thinking, but recognises the importance of its voice in the current debate and seeks to encourage Christians to think more broadly about mission and faith in the light of the current crisis.

It is divided into 3 sections. Part 1- God's Word - explores the biblical basis for the claim that creation care is a gospel issue and helps the reader look afresh at the gospel and familiar biblical passages. In arguing for a broader and more biblical understanding of mission topics such as dominion, hope, mission and the Great Commission are discussed. Although important, stewardship is viewed as an insufficient response by the church to fulfil God's command to humankind of keeping the earth in good order. The introduction sets the tone of this section by stating, 'creation care is central to our faith and an integral part of our mission and an expression of our worship of God' whilst in the final chapter of the book, Ken Gnanakan concludes, 'what we need is not just holistic mission, but a holistic theology'.

Part 2 – God's World – includes examination of global warming, poverty and climate change, biodiversity loss and planetary boundaries; these are explained in a manner that is readable for those without a scientific background. Chapter 9 'Poverty and Climate Change' would be of particular interest to the Salvationist. By including scripture or Christian ethics this section discusses the relevance and importance of this scientific data to the Christian. Some of the

figures presented date from 2010 and research would need to be updated should this be required. However, this does not detract from this section.

Part 3 – God’s Work – presents various case studies to illustrate the work of churches or A Rocha in environmental mission around the world as ‘a response to the call to obedience of part 1 and the urgency of part 2’. Although these are large scale projects, out of the reach of many individuals or small churches, the Appendix has useful suggestions for both, along with a good list of resources.