

Davis helps us to see the brilliance of this rhetorical reversal, not only is the reader stirred, but Davis's argument that the Old Testament can and does open up the new is luminously cinched.

Early in this book, Davis reminds readers of "the discipline of reticence" wherein the preacher says just enough to let the words of the text come alive but not so much as to bury the text's voice beneath the preacher's voice. When such reticence is practiced week to week, the text becomes a living presence among the congregation. Thanks to Ellen Davis's artful combination of assertion and reticence in this volume, the Old Testament text becomes for the reader a real presence in ways that make one eager to probe again those wondrous depths.

—Scott Hoezee

*Princeton and Preaching: Archibald Alexander and the Christian Ministry* by James M. Garretson. Edinburgh, U.K. and Carlisle, Pa.: Banner of Truth, 2005. Pp. 280 pages. \$26.99 hardcover.

Seminarians do not often reflect upon the question of what has been the theological discipline standing behind their required courses in practical or pastoral theology. That the lecturer has a basic theological education plus accumulated ministry experience is assumed; any additional postgraduate education might well be in rhetoric, in psychology or counseling, in hermeneutics and biblical interpretation, or in a branch of ethics.

The value of James Garretson's *Princeton and Preaching* is that it introduces us to an era in North American theological education—extending across many decades into the first half of the twentieth century—when pastoral theology and homiletics were regularly taught by systematic theologians who had acquired the credentials for teaching in this second discipline by their own extended pastoral and pulpit ministry. While the particular focus of Garretson's study is the career of Archibald Alexander (1772-1851) of Princeton, the same role of theologian doubling as pastoral theologian would go on being exemplified in the careers of others like him such as the Virginian, Robert L. Dabney (1820-98) and W. G. T. Shedd (1820-1894) of Union Seminary, New York.

Yet, the ironic twist, highlighted by Garretson's volume (which began as a Westminster Seminary, Escondido, D.Min. research project) is that whereas Dabney and Shedd's role as pastor-theologians has been indicated by the twentieth-century republication of their nineteenth-century volumes of pastoral theology and homiletics (Dabney 1870, reprinted 1979; Shedd 1867, reprinted 1965), Archibald Alexander's has not. This is remarkable in that Alexander was the venerable founding professor of theology at Princeton Seminary from 1812 onward. It is still more remarkable when one considers that this very old Princeton, which Alexander so exemplified, has been regularly extolled by conservative Presbyterians of various stripes as exemplifying all the theological qualities that they meant to perpetuate in new denominations and theological

seminaries founded since the modernist-fundamentalist controversy in the early twentieth century. To be fair, the fault lies extensively with Alexander; while there were twentieth-century reprints of his pastoral volume, *Thoughts on Religious Experience* (1844, reprinted 1967) and his volume of eighteenth-century biographical sketches, *The Log College* (1851, reprint 1968), his important “Lectures on Pastoral Theology” were never published and remain in manuscript at Princeton.

Garretson, having ferreted out this fascinating material with the help of Princeton archivists, has done evangelical and Reformed pastors a real service by providing a distillation of Alexander’s lectures (enriched by use of a vast trove of unpublished sermons) in what can be called an anthology format. We are given topical treatments of the man’s considered wisdom on such subjects as call to the ministry, the minister as shepherd, and the difficulties and challenges of the Christian ministry. Woven through them all is an unmistakable emphasis on the cultivation of the personal godliness and character of the pastor as the wellspring of all labor and usefulness. The pastor’s love for Jesus Christ is the *sine qua non* of all. Alexander, the son of godly parents, who was brought to conscious faith in Jesus Christ in the early stages of what came to be called America’s Second Great Awakening, was ever after both pietist and Calvinist. This emphasis, carried into an earnest Philadelphia pastorate and augmented by a growing theological prowess, provided the stature on the basis of which this young pastor-theologian was chosen at age 40 to commence the Presbyterian seminary at Princeton.

I am personally grateful to Garretson for carrying out what, plainly, has been for him a labor of love. A seminary graduate and pastor cannot read this material without personal edification or without being stimulated to helpful reflection on what kind and type of ideals have driven one’s ministry to date. It is my hope that Garretson, who by this project has shown himself to have a firm grasp on the history of pastoral training in America, would soon find opportunity to share more of what he has uncovered—both in some seminary classroom and in the editing for publication of the very Alexander lectures on pastoral theology on which he has here drawn.

Yet, the burning question, which this research inadvertently raises, is that of the extent to which our ideas about pastoral training and pastoral theology can be, or ought to be rooted in the thought of Alexander’s (or any past) era. The impressionable seminarian of today—simply fitted out on the plan that an Alexander, a Dabney, or a Shedd would instill from two centuries ago—would be a walking anachronism. Yet, to return to our point of departure, the strength of these old pastoral theologies is that they were *theologies* produced by *theologian-pastors* who, because steeped in Scripture and sound theological learning, dealt with perennial fundamental pastoral questions in very substantive ways. Today’s seminarians could well be leavened with the perspectives of these writers to their and the churches’ great profit.

—Kenneth J. Stewart



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