

simplicity of God, would likely have objections to this view. In particular, to say that God decides something other than what he is does not seem to be consistent with the Cappadocian Fathers or Maximus. This, of course, does not mean that it is not true; nevertheless, full context here would be helpful.

This book is the product of a lucid mind and a faithful imagination engaged with his tradition and is worthy of deep respect.

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A. Donald MacLeod, *C. Stacey Woods and the Evangelical Rediscovery of the University*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2007. Pp. 244. \$25.00, paper.

Biographer and church historian Donald MacLeod has put us in his debt with this illuminating volume. As with his previous offering of twentieth-century Protestant biography, *W. Stanford Reid: An Evangelical Calvinist in the Academy* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), the well-traveled MacLeod has fastened upon a person who played a formative role both in his own development and career as well as in wider North American evangelical Protestant culture.

The theme of this work, despite the somewhat hyperbolic implication of its title that North American evangelical Protestantism had *forgotten* the university, is that evangelical *re-engagement* with the world of higher education was very much needed by the 1930s. (This is an important clarification of focus which MacLeod makes more than once in the volume, as, for example, on p. 19.) It demonstrates that a fledgling organization of British origin, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, emerged in North America in that era as a pioneer in this much-needed re-engagement. Evangelical Protestant students had not, by and large, absented themselves from North America's universities by this time, but with these universities moving rapidly down a secularizing path, those adhering to scriptural Christianity found themselves increasingly marginalized, as though "squatters" in institutions their Christian forebears had erected. Already by the late 1920s, an organization somewhat familiar to those who know the overlapping history of Westminster Seminary, the "League of Evangelical Students," was active on numerous American campuses in an attempt to uphold central Christian doctrines and to maintain a strong Christian apologetic. InterVarsity Christian Fellowship aimed not only to do these same things but still more, to actively evangelize students.

The central player of this drama, C. Stacey Woods (1909–1983), would seem a most unlikely person to fill such a role. An Australian by birth, and son to a Christian Brethren evangelist, he emerged on the North American scene when he enrolled at what was then the Evangelical Theological College (now Dallas Theological Seminary) in 1930. Woods had never previously darkened the door of a university, and would only gain university credentials by transferring his Dallas B.Th. credits to Wheaton College; there he subsequently gained a B.A. by supplementing his theological training with a range of humanities. As if this were not already a sufficiently unlikely path to travel by one who would pioneer this university re-engagement, Woods, while a student, spent his summers in children's beach evangelism in Manitoba, Canada. But the Canadian Christian

Brethren circles in which Woods now moved, imbued as he was with the ethos and ideals of the China Inland Mission, soon fastened upon him as the person best suited to the reviving of a fledgling InterVarsity student ministry earlier begun on select Canadian university campuses in 1928 by the peripatetic British student leader, Howard Guinness.

This task, which the young Woods accepted in 1934, was not only the means by which a soon-thriving Canadian InterVarsity Christian Fellowship was exported to the U.S.A. in 1939 (with Woods directing the work simultaneously in both countries), but one of ever-widening circles of influence which embraced a staggering range of persons, many of whom are already familiar to us. While the existing League of Evangelical Students was measurably irritated to be outflanked by this fledgling movement, the young Woods nevertheless drew advice from Gresham Machen and engaged Cornelius Van Til to speak at student summer conferences. Clarence Bouma of Calvin Seminary, Harold John Ockenga of Park Street Church, Boston, and the rising Baptist theologian Carl F. H. Henry were among his confidants and advisors.

In time, Woods—in addition to directing InterVarsity simultaneously in Canada and the U.S.A.—also began the gargantuan task of overseeing that movement's international arm, the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, in which he helped to advance the global voice and influence of the late D. M. Lloyd-Jones (1899–1981) in the evangelical student world. As one reads, one is repeatedly staggered at the astonishingly wide circle of influence this man had. Yet his global reach went hand in hand with the regular exasperation of associates left behind in Chicago or Toronto whose work it was to manage things in his long absences without the modern conveniences of fax, cell phone, and e-mail; Woods could not delegate effectively.

Yet it would be a mistake to think that this biography is a kind of evangelical *Who's Who* for the period 1930–1960. There is a larger significance in the story MacLeod narrates, and we must be careful not to miss it. To tease out just a few strands, we can remark first that through this book we are enabled to grasp a somewhat altered understanding of the widely touted neo-evangelical resurgence of the mid-twentieth century. The impetus for the evangelical resurgence which is most frequently ascribed to the formation of the National Association of Evangelicals (1943), the founding of Fuller Theological Seminary (1947) or the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (1950) ought, in the light of MacLeod's researches, to be located at least as early as the 1939 establishment of American InterVarsity with the help of the Toronto-based Woods.

A financier's circle including Herbert J. Taylor, John Bolten, Sr., John F. Strombeck, and Davis Weyerhauser (all prominent also in the launching of additional pan-evangelical enterprises) was powerfully at work. When we remember that not only did American InterVarsity precede the launching of the other 1940s-era movements generally reckoned to mark the onset of the new evangelicalism, but that it was in turn preceded by Canadian and British student movements, we have moved some considerable distance in locating the genesis of the new, more progressive approach American evangelicals demonstrated in the war era.

Second, seeing American InterVarsity in this pioneering light necessitates that the movement's original circle be looked at more closely. It becomes apparent that these individuals—Woods, Charles Troutman, Herbert W. Taylor, and Paul Beckwith—were cut from the same cloth and would later be found regularly associated with the persons

we find in the founding of the National Association of Evangelicals and like movements. This circle of what could at most be called “soft” fundamentalists, all imbued with the piety of the China Inland Mission, and very often connected to Wheaton College and Dallas Seminary, set this movement on its way. We ought not to be in the least surprised to find the transplanted-to-Chicago, Aussie-Canadian Stacey Woods present by invitation of H. J. Ockenga at a 1944 meeting in Plymouth, Massachusetts, aimed at the advancement of evangelical Christian scholarship, or that Woods was on the board of the NAE by 1948, or that both Moody Bible Institute and Wheaton College had active involvement in the early InterVarsity movement.

Third, we observe that from its outset, both in Canada and the U.S.A., InterVarsity gave wide-open opportunity for the ministry of women staffers. It is critical for conservative Reformed readers to grasp this point, as it is now common to hear criticism of this movement for its increasingly egalitarian posture (as though this were some recent concession). Yet, under the leadership of Stacey Woods, a man increasingly under the theological influence of Martyn Lloyd-Jones of Westminster Chapel, London, the movement on both sides of the international border early staked out the principle that in this non-ecclesiastical ministry, there was every reason to employ gifted persons without reference to gender. This reviewer hopes that readers will grasp the wisdom of such a policy.

Finally, it emerges that one very great struggle which InterVarsity faced in its early decades was a difficulty in articulating what might be called a Christian approach to learning. It was one thing to “engage” the university in the sense of carrying the gospel there; it was quite another to furnish (whether through *HIS* magazine or the early titles of InterVarsity Press) a rationale for a distinctively Christian approach to university learning. That this movement has made great strides in this direction today should be evident to anyone familiar with their range of publications aimed at the student world and with their outreach to faculty members. But that the task proved so daunting for the pioneers of the movement was surely indicative that for the early decades of InterVarsity (as for North American evangelicalism generally), the phenomenon which Mark Noll has elsewhere called the “scandal of the evangelical mind” was in full force. It is arguably the case that across the twentieth century, the most fertile reflection on the relationship between Christianity and learning has taken place on Christian campuses upon which InterVarsity plays little or no role. If this surmise is correct, it would indicate that InterVarsity has benefited from the Christian college movement in an ongoing way, as surely as it did initially—when it turned to that constituency to find staffers. Its publishing arm now serves as an effective vehicle by which many Christian college faculty members write for a wider student readership.

This work deserves the widest possible readership; it sheds light on a most important strand of twentieth-century North American evangelical history. It will also necessitate some revision of the conventional wisdom as to how the vaunted mid-century evangelical resurgence was set in motion.

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