and exciting conversations in the philosophy of liturgy. Moreover, this book is thoughtfully organized. For example, Smith’s explanation of the book at the beginning is helpful. He informs the reader that part 1 lays the theoretical foundation that is necessary for his discussion in part 2 of the implications of liturgical anthropology for Christian formation. Furthermore, there are numerous “sidebars” throughout. They are timeouts that give an opportunity for reflection on the work (and oneself and one’s respective institution[s]). I imagine for many, these will be some of their most treasured pages and will enable the reader who is wearied by technical philosophical conversations to keep plodding through part 1.

On another note, Smith’s book will leave the theologically minded reader satiated in some respects and wanting more in others. On the one hand, theologians often mention habits and habit formation but Smith goes far deeper than most of them by describing this formation clearly and forcefully. On the other hand, he is often hovering above various other traditional theological conversations—such as the means of grace, sin, and the work of the Holy Spirit—and does not make a landing as often as one might like. The many unanswered questions might prove miasmatic for some. Practically speaking, Smith does pave a way forward for positioning ourselves to be worked upon by the Holy Spirit and how we might have a God-glorifying intentionality in all that we do humming in the background. Secular liturgies do get in the way of doing (wrongly called) mundane things for the love of God. Finally, and on a related point, he helps us to guard against the sinister compartmentalization that is so corruptive in the way in which we “mean” the world.

I look forward to Smith’s forthcoming third volume. It will undoubtedly be pedagogically rich, insightful, and challenging. Joining academicians and practitioners (hopefully the former are part of the latter) is no easy project, but he does it well. And thus far Smith has done an exemplary job in helping lead the way in this burgeoning conversation on liturgical anthropology.

—Jonathan S. Marko

Church and Mission


The broad sweep of the life and ministry of John Stott (1921–2011) began to be set out by biographers in 1984. Beginning with a chapter in Christopher Catherwood’s *Five Evangelical Leaders*, there followed the weighty two-volume work by close friend, Bishop Timothy Dudley-Smith,
John Stott: The Making of a Leader (1999) and John Stott: A Global Ministry (2001). Almost on the eve of Stott’s passing, there appeared a breezier treatment by Roger Steer, Basic Christian: The Inside Story of John Stott (2010). In the year of Stott’s passing there appeared a volume of vignettes by lifelong associates, edited by Chris Wright: John Stott: A Portrait by His Friends. With so much biographical material readily available, how could yet another biographical treatment be warranted? The question can be answered at more than one level.

For one, the author, Alister Chapman, a modern historian (of Westmont College, California) wrote a doctoral dissertation on Stott while at Cambridge. Thus we might expect to find things ferreted out that had earlier escaped attention. For another, Chapman’s orientation to the study of the modern world made him especially attuned to questions such as how Stott’s career in post-WWII Britain stood in relation to Britain’s then rapidly diminishing role as an imperial power, to the USA’s post-WWII ascendancy as a superpower and to the aspirations of the many countries in the non-Western world that were in the process of gaining political independence. This work is therefore strong on interpretation and context. Finally, while taking nothing away from what had been published earlier regarding Stott, it needs to be admitted that this had been composed by evangelical Protestants through evangelical publishing houses for evangelical Protestant readers. Chapman’s work, while written out of evident admiration for Stott, is clearly offered by its publisher to a more diverse readership. No doubt Oxford was convinced that a wider readership existed for this study of Stott: after all, the New York Times’ David Brooks (a thoughtful social commentator of Jewish heritage) had identified Stott in 2004 as the type of evangelical more public intellectuals needed to notice.

The trajectory followed by Chapman is disclosed in the title: Godly Ambition. The author perceives that Stott, son to a London surgeon who desired a diplomatic career for him, and the recipient of a very privileged education at Rugby school and at Cambridge University, was always groomed with a view to leading in some capacity. In 1930s Britain, the Empire still stood and the sons of the privileged classes were expected to take their places in the professions or in government service at home or abroad. While John Stott’s conversion to Christ in the late 1930s and determination to train for the ministry of the Church of England ran counter to parental ambition and their ideal of a career of public service, Chapman’s aim is to convince the reader that Stott—never repudiating the grooming for leadership that he had received—quite systematically became the leader of every cause he would associate himself with in subsequent decades.

He rose to the leadership of the evangelical summer camping ministry in which he involved himself in his late teens. He similarly rose to prominence while at Cambridge, both in the university’s Christian Union (evangelical student ministry) and in his studies (initially in languages; then in theology).
Upon graduation and ordination, he was straightaway the dynamo curate (assistant) in the evangelical Anglican parish near his London childhood home; soon to be catapulted into the senior pastoral role by the untimely demise of the senior minister. By the early 1950s, he was also establishing himself as a persuasive evangelist to students, taking up invitations from various British and North American university Christian Unions (in North America, InterVarsity chapters) to explain and urge faith in Jesus Christ. In those same 1950s, as if not busy enough, Stott took measures to set up and lead initiatives aimed at the encouragement of evangelicalism within his Church of England—even though there were in existence other organizations (in his view, moribund) with similar aims.

Yet, in the critical decade of the 1950s the cultural context was changing drastically. The Empire, in which Stott’s generation had been trained to lead and serve, was being dismantled. The social conservatism that followed in the wake of world war was giving way to a pronounced secularizing of the fabric of British life: churches and clergy counted for less, universities were no longer expected to maintain a Christian ethos, public standards of morality diverged much more drastically from Christian standards. In the face of such changes, Stott found, as the 1960s advanced, that there was less scope for him to function as a university evangelist and as a leader of evangelical forces within his denomination, where things were deteriorating from the standpoint of evangelicalism. Yet Stott was no social reactionary; in the same decade, he grew sideburns and worked hard at relating to a student generation very different from the one he had known a decade before. He took on board new ideas (such as environmentalism), some of which were broader than he had supported earlier.

Thus, by ongoing adaptation, Stott would still lead—the very thing that he was groomed to do. Many have heard or read of his 1966 toe-to-toe confrontation with Martyn Lloyd-Jones over the question of whether British evangelicalism’s future lay outside or inside the historic denominations; this was for Stott again (as much as for Lloyd-Jones) an attempt to “take the helm.” After 1970 (and with Britain’s role in the world still contracting) Stott’s skills and gifts were increasingly focused outside the United Kingdom. From this time on he was a regular presenter at InterVarsity’s Urbana conferences and in American theological colleges (Calvin Seminary among them). He became the theological advisor to Billy Graham and the Lausanne Congress on Evangelism (1974); in the follow-up (1975) he showed himself ready to openly disagree with Graham when he believed that the evangelist and his closest allies were shirking the need to join the proclamation of the gospel with the pursuit of social justice. Once more, it was Stott’s attempting to lead. Chapman insightfully portrays Stott, in this period, as a not untypical example of the United Kingdom intellectual leader who could still give direction to the wider Christian movement even though his nation’s global role was diminishing.
The closing decades of Stott's long career (he only discontinued public ministry at age 86) were spent in travelling to provide instruction in biblical exposition to pastors in the developing world. The royalties from his many popular books were plowed into financing these travels, as well as into providing theological literature to the developing world and doctoral scholarships for future theological teachers drawn from such countries. Always accompanied by one of a long succession of student assistants, Stott the octogenarian globe-trotter was, in effect, a roving evangelical bishop at the service of evangelical Christians in multiple continents. Yet, shows Chapman, Stott in the home stretch of his long ministry was functioning now not so much as a roving Anglican but as a roving pan-evangelical at the head of a parachurch enterprise. Meanwhile, he was grooming others for leadership as he himself had been groomed sixty years before.

Chapman aptly raises the question, as to when the ambition to lead—so evident in Stott—ceases to be a Christian virtue and passes over into self-absorption. Did Stott discern the difference between godly ambition (i.e., ambition subjected to the advancement of the kingdom) and selfish ambition? Chapman's answer is that Stott did recognize this, did distinguish this, and did consciously pursue godly ambition. May the Lord send more such leaders to his church!

—Kenneth J. Stewart


Intriguing and unique, this title is a decided departure from the historic, particularly evangelical Protestant, with its emphasis on evangelism as word-based, message-centered communication of God's great redemptive-historical events culminating in the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, coupled with an appeal to people to repent and trust in his atoning work for their salvation. "Evangelism rightly understood is the holistic initiation of people into the reign of God as revealed in Jesus Christ," says the author, leaning on the explanation of William J. Abraham (13). It consists of "all aspects of the initiation of persons into the holy life, including catechesis, individual and corporate spiritual disciplines, participation in the sacraments ... and active membership in the life and mission of a local faith community" (13).

Heath rightly recognizes that evangelism is relational and person-to-person. It consists of sharing God's love for neighbor and is nurtured in authentic, vibrant Christian community, which itself is "the greatest apologetic for the gospel." Such existence is holy—being set aside for and devoted to God's mission in the world. The great mentors of evangelism, she concludes in this train of thought, are those who have excelled in the cultivation of holiness throughout the history of the Christian church. These are the towering mystics, those who have contemplated deeply and