

Emmanuel Y. Lartey, *Pastoral Theology in an Intercultural World* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 161 pp.

In this volume that was initially published in 2006, Emmanuel Y. Lartey, currently at Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, Georgia offers a concise historical overview of pastoral care and theology in order to situate his intercultural approach within a globalized world. He gives careful attention to methodologies that previously have been used and are currently being explored, particularly post-colonial approaches being used across disciplines. He does so in a way that makes theory and practice accessible to both scholars and lay reflective-practitioners. His intent is to involve a wide spectrum of pastoral/practical theologians in a process of reflection on pastoral practices in order to offer deep wisdom to all theological endeavors.

In the first chapter Lartey addresses the nature of pastoral theology as a form of practical theology. Emphasizing the theological significance of *all* caring activities engaged by communities of faith, he draws on “praxis” as the key to unlock the meaning of critical action in conversation with critical theory. He calls this “praxeology:” a defining mark of pastoral theology.

Chapter Two situates pastoral theology within contextual settings. Following a sketch of western pastoral theology, he offers glimpses into practices from various global settings that are pushing the boundaries of given traditions. Stressing the historical processes of globalization, internationalization, and indigenization, he charges pastoral theologians to take seriously the wisdom from all locations in order to discern and respect the different realities at work in various contexts. By doing so pastoral and prophetic practices can join in projects of healing and reconciliation.

Chapter Three tackles the question of methods and methodologies. Here he expands on his notion of praxeology. He debunks the idea that pastoral theology is derived from systematic theology, nor is it an application of “real” theology. Instead, he proposes pastoral theology as a form of practical moral reasoning offering a liberating intercultural praxis to all theological enterprises.

Chapter Four speaks of the nature of God, humanity, and community that reflective methods help make visible. Through stories and examples his approach to theology is modest, tentative in nature, and poetic in form. Respecting silence in the face of the unknowable, as well as the elusiveness of God, Lartey displays a theo-poetic posture as one way to appreciate the under-developed apophetic tradition in pastoral theology.

In Chapter Five, Lartey returns to his emphasis on the global nature of pastoral theology. His main question, which threads through the entire text, involves how people from different ethnic, gendered, religious, cultural, and economic backgrounds can live together in a viable world. To address this critical reality pastoral theology must be self-consciously interdisciplinary in every aspect of its practice. A key to this process is “Otherness” or how we deal with difference. Lartey introduces Emmanuel Levinus in a helpful way to begin entering this question.

Teachers will find this short volume helpful as one of their introductory texts for the discipline. Practitioners will find valuable insights for situations they encounter. All readers will be enriched by the wisdom and challenges presented. Hopefully more works will emerge that continue to explore the diverse contextual nature of practices of care and theology today.

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Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger, *Pray without Ceasing: Revitalizing Pastoral Care* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 264 pp.

Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger is Charlotte W. Newcombe Professor of Pastoral Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary and the author of *Theology and Pastoral Counseling: A New Interdisciplinary Approach*.¹ In this volume, van Deusen builds a strong case for the centrality of prayer in the work of pastoral care, offered by either pastors or parishioners; more specifically, prayer that is grounded and rooted in scripture and liturgy.

She begins by acknowledging the lack of self-confidence and self-consciousness most feel about praying. Her goal is to teach readers to regain the spiritual practice of prayer for the variety of caring situations they might encounter.

A theology of Christian fellowship (*koinonia*) that draws us together with one another and with God in Christ is of paramount importance—for when *koinonia* flourishes, so does pastoral care.

Van Deusen is a Barthian. Karl Barth’s biblical Christology as outlined in *Church Dogmatics*² forms the foundation for her reformed theology.