

*Theological Reflection: Methods* by Elaine Graham, Heather Walton and Frances Ward. London: SCM Press, 2005. ISBN: 0-334-02976-7; 229 pp.

The first of two volumes, *Theological Reflection* aims at introducing models of reflection, complete with references to their use by many of the Church's biblical interpreters and theologians (from Augustine to Isabel Carter Heyward). The rich bibliography reflects the depth and breadth of analysis presented for each model, setting this book apart from "how to" resources regarding theological reflection.

The seven methods for theological reflection include

1. Theology by Heart - God speaks through human experience
2. Speaking in Parables - Scriptural narrative is augmented and challenged by voices of alternative experiences
3. Telling God's Story - Scriptural authority establishes Christian identity
4. Writing the Body of Christ - Communities of faith generate Christian identity
5. Speaking of God in Public - Christian revelation correlates with surrounding culture
6. Theology-in-Action - Work for justice defines faithful discipleship
7. Theology in the Vernacular - Gospel expressions manifesting themselves cross-culturally

Each chapter gives a synopsis of one method, followed by an overview of themes and an introduction of historical and biblical illustrations. Further, the authors identify "particular circumstances from the recent past in which the historical antecedents are crystallized in a more sustained fashion" (15), include critical evaluation and questions and provide an annotated bibliography with examples of each method.

Graham, Walter and Ward conclude that Christian formation and nurture, articulation of community identity and encounter between Church and the world form a triune context from which theology continues to be generated. The companion volume, *Theological Reflections: Sources* (London: SCM Press, 2007 - pending) provides further material for study and conversation.

*Theological Reflection: Methods* is a text inviting integration of academic knowledge and reflective methodologies that are relevant for any context. This resource is an excellent "bridge book" for students and instructors alike who emphasize integration as a value of theological education and religious leadership.

~ Lisa Withrow