

God's Lesser Glory: The Diminished God of Open Theism, by Bruce A. Ware. Crossway Books, 2000. 240 pages. ***No Place for Sovereignty: What's Wrong with Freewill Theism***, by R. K. McGregor Wright. InterVarsity Press, 1996. 249 pages. Reviewed by Christopher K. Lensch.

Both of these useful books are critiques of the open view of God and its theological underpinnings.

R. K. McGregor Wright begins *No Place for Sovereignty* by tracing the history of the debate over man's autonomy from the days of Augustine and Pelagius through the time of the Reformation into the days of Wesley and Whitefield. With a background in apologetics and systematic theology, Wright is skilled in showing "what's wrong—biblically, theologically, and philosophically—with freewill" theism. What gives him valuable credentials in the current openness controversy was his interaction with openness advocate, Clark Pinnock, who was Wright's dissertation advisor. The dissertation was on the necessary interconnection between theistic apologetics and Calvinistic theology, a thesis that Pinnock is said to have chafed under. The strengths of *No Place for Sovereignty* are its breadth of discussion and its readability. There is a glossary of theological and technical terms, plus at the end of each chapter is a list of recommended works for further reading.

Bruce Ware's book, *God's Lesser Glory*, is a straightforward critique of openness theology. He has taught at Bethel College and Seminary, where he found ample opportunity to interact with openness proponent Gregory Boyd.

Because most openness theologians claim to be evangelicals, and because their books are published by evangelical publishers¹ and their papers have been debated at meetings of evangelical scholars, Ware's style is irenic. The urgency he communicates, however, is unabated.

Ware has thought through the implications of the God of the open future Who must learn things through trial and error as events unfold. This kind of God "...suffers greatly from this lack of knowledge and it affects his plans, wise counsel, predictive ability, and providential control of history."² This kind of "less glorious" God undermines the Christian's confidence in prayer, hope, and divine guidance.

While Gregory Boyd has stated that his redefinition of God is "peripheral" compared to Christian love and unity in Christ,³ Bruce Ware sees the dangers and inconsistencies of open theism. He warns evangelical leaders and denominations to take the openness trend seriously because it is a major departure from orthodoxy that will lead to an enervated Christianity with a heterodox gospel.

¹ InterVarsity Press has published many openness books with a handful of orthodox responses. Baker Book House also has begun publishing openness authors like Boyd.

² Ware, p. 20.

³ Cited by Ware (p. 9) from Boyd's *God of the Possible*, pp. 19, 20.