

Douglas J. Brouwer, *Remembering the Faith*

Remembering the Faith: What Christians Believe, by Douglas J. Brouwer. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1999. 188 pp. \$14.00 (paper). ISBN 0-8028-4621-1.

Brouwer intends to articulate the basic content of the Christian faith. He does this in a straight forward way, topic by topic: revelation, God, creation, providence, Jesus Christ, atonement, Christian life, and so forth. Brouwer draws upon both classical and contemporary theologians, as well the church's confessions of faith (expressing appreciation for having memorized the Heidelberg Catechism in his childhood (p. ix)), to remember the faith of the church through the centuries and to present it for today. This remembering tends to protect him from the ideological inanities of the moment, so that formulas such as "Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer" for the Trinity are firmly rejected (p. 147).

This book is clear, readable, accessible, and engaging. Its origins in the pastoral ministry of the church are obvious and welcome. Not only did the fifteen chapters grow out of a sixteen-week sermon series on Christian doctrine (what was left out here: a chapter on the resurrection?) and an adult education series on the same themes, but also they are marked by insights and experience from pastoral visits in hospitals, pastoral conversations, and pastoral correspondence. This origin gives the book a dual strength. Church members and prospective members could benefit from its conversational presentation of the content of the Christian faith. Well educated pastors should already know this content, but they could learn a lot here about the presentation of the faith and about being a pastor. This dual appeal of the book would make it a good choice for an adult study group being led by a pastor. It is not clear why the chapter on the Trinity follows instead of precedes the chapters on who the persons of the Trinity are and what they do, or why the chapter on the Incarnation comes at the end instead of with the chapters on Jesus Christ, but no harm is done.

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