

Amos Yong. *The Kerygmatic Spirit: Apostolic Preaching in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018. 243 pages. \$50.

In *The Kerygmatic Spirit*, Amos Yong, a leading Pentecostal theologian, makes a valuable contribution toward a theology of preaching grounded in the events of Pentecost. Building on his previous work, *The Hermeneutical Spirit*, the book illustrates how the interpretive principles that shape Yong's reading of Luke–Acts are embodied in his preaching of the kerygma or apostolic gospel. To this end, the edited volume features fifteen of Yong's transcribed sermons. Most sermons have helpful audio or video links. The book also includes theological reflections on Yong's preaching by Pentecostal scholars Josh P.S. Samuel, Tony Richie, and Yong himself. *The Kerygmatic Spirit* will be appreciated by preachers, homileticians, and theologians of all backgrounds interested in theologically-rich preaching that has ethical import for the twenty-first century.

The book begins with an introduction by Samuel that situates Yong's preaching within North American classical Pentecostalism. A select assessment of his preaching is offered using the categories of Spirit-baptism, the anointing, supernaturalism and the altar call, extemporaneous preaching, call and response, and passion and intellect. While clearly rooted in the Pentecostal tradition as a preacher and scholar, Yong challenges the boundaries of "typical" Pentecostal theological reflection. Drawing on a "Lukan imagination or Acts hermeneutic," he seeks to demonstrate a holistic understanding of the Spirit's work (25).

For example, in a sermon based on Acts 1:6–8 entitled "The Lukan Commission: The Spirit, Im/migration, and the De-Construction of Empire," Yong speaks of Christianity as a religion of migration birthed through Jesus's outpouring of the Spirit. Bringing together issues of eschatology and ethics, he states that in our globalized world the Spirit forms a new people called the church to "bear witness to another world," a world that honors ethnic identities and challenges the homogeneity of empire (58). In a different sermon entitled "Saved from Shame and Stigma: Shortness of Stature and the Gospel in a Disabled World," Yong proffers what he calls a "shortist reading" of the story of Zacchaeus recorded in Luke 19:1–10 (81). For him, the gospel of Jesus reorients how we see ourselves and others in a world of discrimination toward people with disabilities. In yet another sermon, entitled "God's Servant among the Nations" based on Matthew 12:15–21, Yong explores the political dimensions of Jesus's Messianic identity and mission. He concludes that Jesus is Messianic in that he is "anointed of the Spirit" to bring God's healing, reconciliation, and justice into the world (127). Other sermons relate the expansive work of the Spirit to the life of the mind, prayer, creativity and the arts, and hospitality.

In the epilogue, Yong articulates what he calls "a normative pentecostal" theology of preaching (195). For him, apostolic preaching is not simply to be explored in the pages of scripture but is to be embodied in contemporary experience. He surmises, "Spirit-filled kerygmatic preaching connects the apostolic message about Jesus, the reign of God, and the God of Israel to contemporary hearts, minds, and lives" (201). And, since the Spirit knows no borders, Yong claims apostolic preaching should occur in ecclesial, social/global, and academic environments. Tony Richie, in the afterword, suggests Yong's example of theologically-informed preaching is instructive for pastors and scholars. An appendix of Yong's sermons from 1999–2018 concludes the book.

*The Kerygmatic Spirit* outlines a holistic theology of preaching with ethical significance for the twenty-first century. Even more, given Yong's Asian-American (Malaysian) heritage, the

reflections come from an underrepresented voice in theology and homiletics. Yong's sermons evince the breadth and depth of the Spirit's work in the world today, and they present a strong case for theology as "a rich reservoir" for preaching (208). One limitation of the book is that the editors primarily focus on how Yong's preaching translates theology into an "accessible format" for others, rather than considering his preaching as a theological enterprise itself (2). In other words, the volume might have explicitly explored Yong's sermons as an example of preaching as a way of doing theology constructively. This exploration would have been enriched through drawing on the work of David Jacobsen's Homiletical Theology Project.

*The Kerygmatic Spirit* will be of interest to a wide audience, Pentecostal or otherwise. Preachers and homileticsians will find Yong's book offers an example of how a robust theology of the Spirit can enrich and inform their sermonizing. Biblical scholars and theologians will be challenged by the claim that theology is for preaching.

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