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BIB 303: Christian Thought

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Book Review

Beauty, Order, and Mystery: A Christian Vision of Human Sexuality, Gerald Hiestand & Todd Wilson, 2017 provided a detailed explanation of the Christian view of human sexuality. In many instances, there have been many misconceptions about what is right and wrong to do in the matter of love. This book talks about how we as Christians can learn and understand how the changing world and be implemented by our faith.

Christianity is a beautiful religion that has helped me to understand the true meaning of love and finding the person for you. To find the one for you it takes time to learn about your inner needs and how to communicate with others. It was said on page 21 “we’ve lost our grasp on the deep logic that connects our created nature as male and female with how we out to live relationally and sexually with one another”. We, Christians, need to understand that God created us for a purpose, and we should all be able to understand the importance of love. When two people find each other “it is about God drawing the couple into God’s own triune life in such a way that each of the spouses come to know themselves as the object of God’s desire” (p.43). Being able to understand the purpose of scriptures helps to see that “theology matters, but sound doctrine connotes replace the healing power of compassion, empathy, and love. Compassion does not compromise theology; it enriches it” (p. 63).

1 Corinthians 13:4 says “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud”. Christianity is a haven for all and we as followers of Jesus need to understand all

sides of what exactly love is. This book has truly opened my eyes to how important it is to listen to other stories and learn from their own experiences. On page 64 it says “that time is no more. God’s people are ‘strangers and exiles (Heb 11:13) who have unique beliefs and a distance ethic that are shaped by the story of Jesus and the authority of Scripture”. This piece of the book stood out to me because it brought to light that everyone finds God in different stages of their lives. Today, there are different forms of love, gender identity, and spiritual acceptance. Learning about these different forms of personality can help us as Christians to see how we can encourage those who may be struggling with their faith. On page 101 it says that there's a “need to balance Scripture against the other two ‘lenses’ the *disability* and *diversity* frameworks... he calls ‘an integrated reality’, it helps us to see that gender dysphoria is a ‘non-moral reality’ and enables us to focus on helping a person to ‘manage’ this pr her dysphoria”. We as Christians can help those who may be struggling and help guide them through any questions they may have for God.

To understand what a person is going through, we may have to step back and be able to listen to them. That way by listening to them we can figure out a better way how to help them. Sexual identity and personal growth are struggles that some Christians may face and for them to navigate their emotions they will need to sit with God. We live in the 21st century and being able to understand God’s purpose for us may need more interpretation in our changing world. On page 50 it said that “Jesus might well have spoken of God’s reign as something that is pressing into new territory, leaving behind the old material of creation as so much rubbish and ushering us into an entirely new way of being human”. Our society is always changing and we as Christians need to make sure we are ready for anything this would throw at us. In Isaiah 43:18-19 “Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. So, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do

you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland”. Change is always going to happen, and we must be prepared whether it affects us or those close to us.

While reading this book I was able to see where in my faith I was lacking, and I believe it was prominently being open to change. I understand that things will not always stay the same and that is okay. But I must be able to give a better understanding of how to be more open-minded and provide a safe space for all. I have learned that “Jesus does not condone judgementalism or moralism. He commands his followers not to judge the interior moral condition of others and to ‘first take the log out of your own eye’ before trying to deal with the speck in a neighbor's eye (Mt. 7:5)” (p. 189). We as Christians should not be so quick to judge others while we ignore the sin going on in our lives. People tend to lash out at others because of differing beliefs, or our inability to accept the change we see. We should not be so quick to judge others because we are too ashamed to accept our faults.

I believe the intended audience would be those Christians wanting to learn and understand how the world of sexuality is changing. It is important for us as Christians should love those around us and not use the idea of sin against others. We must make sure we are being truthful and transparent with ourselves as devoted Christians. I think this book should be an essential reading requirement for those who may struggle with understanding how those may interpret love.

Resources

Hiestand, G., & Wilson, T. A. (2017). *Beauty, order, and mystery: A Christian vision of human sexuality*. InterVarsity Press.