



MEDICINE AND HEALTH

CALLED TO CARE: A Christian Vision for Nursing by Judith Allen Shelly, Arlene B. Miller, and Kimberly H. Fenstermacher. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2021. 328 pages. Paperback; \$32.00. ISBN: 9781514000922.

The third edition of *Called to Care* details a rich biblical foundation and Christian worldview for nurses seeking to integrate their faith in nursing practice. Co-author Kimberly Fenstermacher joined Judith Shelly and Arlene Miller in this recent edition. The focus of the third edition remains similar to the last two, the authors detail a broad nursing metaparadigm and articulate the relationships between person, environment, health, and nursing practice.

I work at a Christian college in the Midwest and nursing faculty have adopted the second edition of *Called to Care* within the undergraduate Bachelor of Science in Nursing curriculum for several years. I was very excited to read the third edition of *Called to Care* to discover what is new in this edition. I believe that this book, as do the previous two editions, delivers a compelling biblical understanding for the nursing profession. The subtitle of the third edition changed to *A Christian Vision for Nursing* from *A Christian Worldview for Nursing*. As I read this book through a nursing lens, I felt a deep unwavering connection between Christian faith, scripture, and the everyday responsibilities, ethics, and expectations that are unique to the role of the nurse.

The authors explored new topics related to cultural competency, palliative care, and addressed recent changes within healthcare and the impact on the profession. Furthermore, the authors continue to help readers apply information in practical methods offered through revised and updated chapter objectives, theological reflective questions, and the use of case studies and discussion questions at the end of each chapter. These resources are easy to integrate within nursing curricula and equip nursing faculty and students to seek out holistic nursing care—caring not only for the physical needs of the patient, but also the mind, spirit, and soul.

Shelly, Miller, and Fenstermacher expand on culture in this new edition, providing nine meaningful guidelines to help nurses relate to their clients cross-culturally. These principles encourage self-reflection, lifelong learning and research, and a personal connection and relationship with God. Furthermore, the authors emphasized walking alongside Jesus in

preparation for the draining physical, emotional, and psychological toils of the nursing profession. How do nurses keep attending to the sick when they cannot see physical improvement in patients? Shelly, Miller, and Fenstermacher emphasize that only through Christ can nurses find realistic hope in the face of suffering and death. As the nursing profession struggles with high acuity patients, limited resources, compassion fatigue, and burnout, the authors encourage and remind readers that many nurses feel compelled to enter the profession to serve God and are willing to embrace suffering to fulfill this purpose. Additional reassurance is offered through examples of how nurses delight in and find joy through interpersonal relationships with patients and colleagues. Finally, another inspirational strength that Christian nurses should seek to demonstrate is the resilient ability to think broadly, considering progressive opportunities that can arise out of difficult situations. Christ-centered nurses embrace risks and courageously focus their efforts on change that can positively enhance the profession and better patient care despite a complex and ever-changing health care environment.

Shelly, Miller, and Fenstermacher casually discussed caring for individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ). The authors suggest that nurses care for all people with respect, sensitivity, kindness, compassion, and understanding but leave no guidance for teaching this topic in Christian higher education. Nursing faculty are navigating difficult terrain as many are uncertain if they have the support of administration when speaking of these conflicting Biblical perspectives. Nursing faculty are required to teach on this topic as some students have already encountered and cared LGBTQ individuals in clinical practice. For example, a maternal newborn clinical rotation left students, faculty, and nursing staff in a puzzling situation. A student cared for a client who identified herself as male and just had a baby. This client requested that all healthcare staff refrain from identifying the newborn as male or female, as the client and partner felt that it was best for the baby to choose which sex they most closely identify with once he or she is older. While this was a perplexing situation for many faculty and students and there was little guidance from nursing staff on the unit. As this topic continues to filter into diversity initiatives, nurses must be equipped and confident to navigate controversial topics with a sound moral Christian foundation. A more substantive section on these issues would have been a helpful addition to this edition.

Book Reviews

This book has challenged me to critically evaluate how I integrate faith inside the classroom. Moreover, the authors have deeply moved and inspired me to grow intimately in my relationship with Christ. I highly recommend this book to nursing faculty, students, and to all nurses that have devoted their life to Christ and seek to be in constant relationship with Him. The message within this book softens calloused hearts and motivates nurses to view each client as created in the image of God.

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SCIENCE AND RELIGION

SCIENCE AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH: A Guide for the Perplexed by Christopher C. Knight. Yonkers, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2020. 232 pages. Paperback; \$22.00. ISBN: 9780881416718.

Christopher Knight holds a PhD in astrophysics, serves as a priest of the Orthodox Church, and is a Senior Research Associate of the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies in Cambridge, England. His two previous books also examined the relationship between science and Christian theology but were aimed at a broad academic theological audience. This book however is “aimed specifically at an Orthodox audience and focuses on the kinds of questions that I find are often asked in Orthodox circles” and “is aimed, not primarily at academics, but at the ordinary, intelligent believer whose formal education may have included neither science nor theology at an advanced level. For this reason, it does not attempt a comprehensive survey of the work of others engaged in what is sometimes called the science-theology dialogue” (p. 17). As he states in his Afterword, “My hope and prayer is that what I have written here may be a contribution to that development, both for the theological scholars of our Orthodox community and for the ordinary believer” (p. 226).

These facts on their own do not mean that the book cannot be of value for a non-Orthodox audience. I myself have learned a great deal from Patristic thinkers and have often used their ideas in my own apologetic work. Nonetheless, I do feel compelled to clarify two things for other readers. As the book is written for an Orthodox readership, it does presume a baseline understanding of Orthodox theology and history: the text is sprinkled profusely with the names of Orthodox thinkers and Orthodox theological/philosophical terms. More importantly, though, I found the title of this book (and its description on

Amazon) to be misleading. It is less about the relationship between science and the Christian faith in general, and more about how the Eastern Orthodox Church has navigated that relationship differently (and apparently in Knight's view, better) than the Western church. In effect, it is less a defense of Eastern Orthodox thinking before a Western audience, and more a critique of Western thinking before an Eastern audience. This perception became quite evident in the Afterword:

Throughout this book, I have been critical of the way in which the Western science-theology dialogue has developed over the past half-century ... We cannot ignore those questions [raised in the science-theology dialogue], nor can we ignore the answers that have been proposed by Western scholars, even when we judge them (as I do) to be inadequate or incomplete. (p. 223)

There is an element of pejorative in Knight's referring to the Western scholars as “our younger brothers” (p. 223). In fact, Knight seems to perceive intra-ecclesial conflict or competition in his view of the trajectory of the dialogue between faith and science over the past two millennia. After applauding the Orthodox church for maintaining engagement with science while the West dropped the ball during the first millennium, he acknowledges that the roles reversed during the second millennium. He details how world historical events (including the rise of the Ottoman Empire, Russian politics, and the French Revolution) caused Orthodox thinkers to distance from and become suspicious of secular science, while only the Roman Catholic Church in Italy continued the push to harmonize science and faith (pp. 42–44). Finally, he concludes his description of that trajectory with the following:

In the Western theological community, a rich 'science-theology dialogue' has existed for over half a century ... a comparable dialogue has only begun more recently in the Orthodox world. (p. 44)

... around the middle of the twentieth century our Orthodox theology – through the “neo-patristic” movement – finally escaped from its reliance on those Western Christian philosophical and theological frameworks which had, up to that period, strongly influenced our theological thinking for several centuries ... there can be no doubt that the scholars who led this attempt to escape our “Babylonian captivity” have performed an extremely important task. (p. 159)

So, how does Knight see Eastern thought doing a better job exploring faith, science, and the relationship