

viewing of sexual activity are highlighted: (1) the availability of increasingly realistic and explicit depictions, and (2) the increasing ease of anonymous viewing. While some Christians might argue that depictions of nudity or eroticism can express appreciation of the beauty of God's creation, the digital experience tends to promote consumption, rather than appreciation. Despite reporting results from research studies that clearly identify the tendency of online pornography use to contribute to compulsivity and sexual dysfunction, Ott concludes that "online pornography use can have positive and negative effects on our sexual embodiment" (p. 34). She includes as a positive the potential for pornography viewers to educate themselves about sexuality and promote creativity (part of the pursuit of erotic attunement). While the author emphasizes here and in other sections of the book the potential for use of digital technology to shape us in ways that are not always easy to discern, I'm not certain that she takes this potential seriously enough in making recommendations. As an engineer who has been trained to identify and manage risks, I wonder if the value of avoiding harm (to individuals and society) has been weighted appropriately in the overall evaluation.

The second chapter considers the world of online match-making apps. Although many believers already use these tools to find partners and might view them as innocuous, the author points out the problems with the criteria and algorithms used to sort and match people. The standards of beauty and status markers that are promoted by online dating sites may be biased against minorities. Here, Ott describes the goal of forming a lifetime marriage partnership as a "myth" that is generally not in alignment with the values that contribute to erotic attunement. She also points out that using these apps for casual "hookups" is unlikely to promote erotic attunement.

Chapter 3 lays out the dangers of digital technologies that enable individuals to threaten others and invade their privacy. Ott is correct to point out in this chapter the ways that some aspects of Christian theology and practice have been used in the past to justify intimate violence and relationship abuse. Believers should be encouraged to increase their awareness of the potential for abuse of power in the digital realm and commit to promoting privacy protections and advocating for victims of online bullying and stalking.

The fourth chapter explores sex in the virtual world. The author describes examples of online universes and suggests that our avatars in these digital domains might be ethically used for exploration of sexual identity as long as the values of love and honesty are prioritized in these interactions. She can foresee a time when virtual reality will allow humans to interact in ever more "realistic" ways with others and with artificially intelligent entities in these constructed worlds.

In chapter 5, the analysis of technologically mediated sexual activities is extended to human interactions with robots. Ott sees robot companionship as potentially having positive influences on sexual health for some people.

I would propose that the extent to which we might consider robots as participants in human sexual activities depends on whether we categorize them as tools (just more-sophisticated sex toys) or as potentially sentient persons. Either way, believers who situate sexual activity within a normative framework that directs it toward a lifelong committed relationship between two consenting human beings will be far less accepting than Ott is in this chapter. It seems inevitable that sex robots will be designed and made available to the public, and while Ott argues that this technology could be designed to encourage the development of Christian virtues in its users, I suspect most Christians will remain unconvinced.

In the end, reaction to the author's perspectives on sex-tech will depend strongly on the reader's prior personal experience and understanding of biblical norms for sex and marriage. Those who have struggled with gender identity and stereotypes, same sex attraction, and involuntary singleness, as well as those for whom the effort of trying to conform to overly constrictive expectations around sexual activity has been damaging to their mental health, will certainly be open to the progressive values championed in the book. On the other hand, those who hold that sex is intended only in the context of a lifelong covenantal marriage will be resistant to many ideas in this book. I did not find the tone of the book to be particularly conducive for convincing "traditional" Christians to be more open. Although Ott's stated goal is to avoid shaming and to honor a range of perspectives, she applies that goal unequally. She seems to assume that any Christian understanding of sexual ethics that attempts to set boundaries must be directly opposed to erotic attunement and be motivated by the desire to control the behavior of others.

Read this book to expand your horizons and stimulate reflection—both on the place of sexuality in our Christian walk and on the risks and opportunities for integrating technology into that sphere of human flourishing. But keep in mind that, ultimately, the only way to banish shame, particularly around our tech-enabled sexual behaviors, is not to banish all boundaries, but to discern God's will for this area of life and to be reminded that our Savior Jesus Christ died so that we all might be considered blameless for the things we get wrong.

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THEOLOGY

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THE BEGINNING AND END OF ALL THINGS: A Biblical Theology of Creation and New Creation by Edward W. Klink III. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2023. 208 pages, including discussion questions and indices. Paperback; \$24.00. ISBN: 9780830855223.

Whereas many people tend to associate the doctrine of creation with the origins of the world, Edward Klink is con-

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cerned to form a theology of creation that envelops all of scripture. Klink is senior pastor of Hope Church, Roscoe, IL, and formerly on the faculty of Talbot School of Theology, Biola University.

Throughout the introduction and ten chapters of the book, Klink presents an insightful biblical theology of creation with suggestions to engage nature, culture, and life. In the introduction, he emphasizes that he does not want to dwell on the debates about the first six days of creation; instead, he wants to show that the whole Bible tells the story of creation and that this story is at the core of the gospel itself.

In chapter 1, "Creation's Covenant," Klink emphasizes Genesis 1–2 as the foundation of the rest of the biblical story and its message. Creation is designed to be the temple of God, and God has made a covenantal claim on his creation, with humanity assigned to be the prophets, priests, and kings of creation.

"Creation's Curse," the second chapter, discusses the theological meaning of Genesis 3. It reveals the cause and fact of the human fallen condition as well as God's gracious provision of the sacrifice of animals for clothing in Genesis 3:21.

Chapter 3, "Creation's Confusion," begins with St. Augustine's *The City of God*, from which Klink points to Abraham as the founder of the city of God and to Cain as the founder of the city of humanity. Humanity loved themselves and not the Creator, and so placed its trust in human achievement and effort, rather than in God. Surprisingly, in this chapter Klink did not comment on the significance of Noah's Flood.

New Creation is especially emphasized in chapter 4, "Creation's Country." God begins the new creation in one person, Abraham, to whom God says, "In you shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Klink designates Abraham as the second Adam because the redemptive new work was through Abraham, and his descendants are the new humanity (p. 73). Klink's interpretation of Abraham as the second Adam does not preempt the way in which Jesus serves as the second Adam according to the Apostle Paul.

In chapter 5, "Creation's Cry," Klink once again employs the Adam motif, this time identifying the Jewish people as an interim Adam. They served as God's prophets, priests, and kings in the Old Testament (OT) period (p. 84), but they failed the assignment, as indicated in Isaiah 43. Then at the end of the OT period, the prophets cried out to the Lord for a new work of God. Abraham and the Jewish people are an interim Adam in the sense that their Adam-derived roles of prophets, priests, and kings were replaced by Jesus and the church.

The next chapter, "Creation's Christ," has two main sections: Jesus, the revelation of God, is the purpose for creation; he is the Gardener (so Mary Magdalen thought) in "the second garden" (John 19:41, at his resurrection). Klink says the plotline of God's creation can be stated as the story of three gardens: the first garden at Eden, the second

garden at Easter, and the third garden in Revelation 21–22. Following his commentary on the Gospel of John, Klink identifies Jesus as the cosmic temple of God and the revealer of the physical design of creation.

Chapter 7, "Creation's Cross," explains that Jesus is the inauguration of the new creation, and the new life in the Pauline second Adam (Jesus) is God's provision. Then follows, chapter 8, on the church—"Creation's Congregation." Klink describes the church as the true Adamic humanity and descendants of the second Adam. She is also the temple of God in Christ.

Chapter 9, "Creation's Commission," contends that for humans to bear the image of God, and to be fully human, they must be Christ-centered. In an interesting perspective, the Great Commission of Mathew 28 is interpreted as being given for the cultivation of creation. The tenth chapter, "Creation's Consummation," concludes with the new creation, which is the re-creation of all things. In particular, the last two chapters of Revelation reveal the glorious consummation of God's creation project.

In the Conclusion, Klink offers pastoral reflections. He intends the book to correct the truncated and deficient views of the doctrine of creation that are commonly found today, and to emphasize that the end of all things is a new creation. In Klink's view, the concept of a new creation has wide implications, and should influence our spiritual life, the Christian life, our view of the earth, and culture.

Each chapter ends with pastoral insight, practical application, and biblical encouragement for readers to live as God's people of the new creation. The author's ability to develop new connections of theological significance is fully displayed in this volume, particularly through his commentary on the Gospel of John. On the other hand, Klink's interpretations of the biblical events sometimes appear puzzling, such as interpreting Abraham as the second Adam, and the Jewish people as the interim Adam. This kind of unusual interpretation is not new with Klink, however, as it appears part of a recent trend of interpreting many OT persons and events as types of Christ (see, e.g., James Hamilton Jr., *Typology: Understanding the Bible's Promise-Shaped Patterns*). In his grand narrative, Klink does not comment on Noah's Flood, nor the final cosmic cataclysm (2 Peter 3:10; Mark 13:24–25; Rev. 6:12–14). In tracing the theme of creation and new creation throughout the Bible, the book fulfills the purpose of the Essential Studies in Biblical Theology series, which is to describe the grand storyline of the Bible. This volume can serve well the needs of beginning students of theology, church leaders, pastors, and laypeople.

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