

XABIER PIKAZA, *Evangelio de Mateo: De Jesús a la Iglesia* (Comentarios teológicos y literarios del AT y NT; Estella: Verbo Divino, 2017). Pp. 1,068. €65.

Xabier Pikaza taught for many years at the University of Salamanca. He has authored numerous books and articles on Scripture, christology, and the science of religion, as can be seen in the general bibliography on pp. 1046, 1055, 1062, 1067.

The particularized bibliography of all authors for the present work is also adroitly handled, with a generous assortment of presumably relevant books and articles listed before each major section. No effort is made to list the exact relevance of each entry, however, so the reader is left alone to figure out what role each entry has, if any, in the shaping of P.'s thinking.

The subtitle of the book, "From Jesus to the Church," gives a hint as to P.'s drift of thought: Matthew (dated by P. to around 85 and written in confrontation with the Jewish establishment of Antioch in Syria) contains a modified view of the church Jesus founded. Four novelties not considered by Jesus, P. maintains, must be taken into consideration for their influence on Matthew's view of the church: (1) the rebirth of an apocalyptic mentality among Jews and Christians subsequent to the war of 67–70; (2) Mark's Gospel, retouched

after 66–70; (3) document Q as a source; and (4) a new vision of Jesus as Messiah with more stress on a Trinitarian approach to all the peoples of the world based on Matt 28:16–20. All of this is explained at length on pp. 37–99.

A footnote previous to pp. 37–99 (p. 32 n. 5) uses Matt 28:16–20 to give what P. asserts is “the central argument of Matthew”: that the authority given Jesus by God is not intended to be a source of submission for humankind but a fountain of life and a source of hope for the future; it is God himself who places himself at the service of humankind. This reviewer would like to counter with the assertion that it is precisely subservience to God that is the source of life and the source of hope for humankind. The reasons for this assertion are that God is God and humankind is humankind.

One thing, however, that the present reviewer, who has plowed through each and every one of the 1,039 pages of P.’s text, can assert on P.’s behalf: he is never at a loss for words.

Underlying presuppositions are not always easy to assess. One set seemingly belonging to P., and here advanced by this reviewer with due hesitation, is that P. does not give Jesus and his fellow Galileans sufficient credit for acting in the tradition of the legitimate Judaism stemming from Abraham. Abraham and the sacrifice of Isaac are mentioned only in passing (see pp. 730, 766 n. 164, 796 n. 206, 902 n. 359, 976 n. 443). Even in his discussion of Abraham in the genealogy given by Matthew at the beginning of his Gospel, P. is unwontedly skimpy: he fails to mention that to achieve fourteen generations in the third section of the bibliography “Christ” is needed in addition to “Jesus.” In Matthew this allusion to “Christ” is a clear reference to the resurrection and to the resultant distinction between the heavenly Christ “generated” by God and the earthly Jesus “born” of the virgin. (This interpretation of “generation,” of course, is based on the use of Ps 2:7 in Acts 13:33).

For this reviewer, P.’s handling of Abraham is an indication that he fails to understand the attitude of Jesus as he faces death on the cross. On pp. 974–78, P. wrestles with the words of Jesus in Matt 27:46 taken from the first verse of Psalm 22 and addressed to God: “Why have you abandoned me?” Instead of seeing in Jesus a “son” of Abraham who participated in Abraham’s faith in God’s ability to raise from the dead as found in Genesis 22 and made explicit in Heb 11:17–19, P. is at a loss to figure out why Jesus thinks God abandoned him. But Jesus’s cry, for those who are alert to Jesus’s role in salvation history in regard to Abraham, is meant by Jesus to evoke the entirety of Psalm 22 as an explanation of what is taking place. When this train of thought is followed, the omnipresent phrase “son of man” in Matthew (cf. Matt 24:26–31 and P.’s discussion on pp. 618–20) becomes clear: “man” is Abraham and “son of man” is Jesus, whose fidelity to God expressed in his explanatory citing on the cross of Psalm 22, is a participation in Abraham’s fidelity as expressed in Gen 22:1–18. The use of the genitive case is simply an application of Semitic usage to express an intrinsic relationship.

More needs to be said about the Eucharist in Matthew’s Gospel than is said by P. Much research in recent years has been centered on the “sacrifice of praise” or *tôdâ* spirituality to explain the Eucharist as a reinterpretation by Jesus of an OT ceremony. But this lack in P. is an indication that there is still much to be done in Matthean studies.

Pikaza’s discussion of the granting of the keys of the kingdom to Peter in Matt 16:19 is more confusing than enlightening (pp. 593–96). The impression given by P. is that the many writings of the NT contain many “churches” instead of many views of the one church

founded on Peter and entrusted to him and his successors. This church is not composed, ultimately, of human beings in a human dimension but of human beings in a divine dimension, the ultimate unifying factor defining “church” being the eucharistic Body of Christ that gives rise to the Mystical Body.

Much more could be said about this book, so impressive in its quantity, so disappointing in its quality. There must have been much misunderstanding and confusion attendant on the foundation of the church founded by Jesus Christ, but certainly not as much as this book seems to require. Whatever P.’s personal beliefs, for this reviewer his book has shown that the early church must have been more Catholic and less Protestant than P. thinks.

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