

Resensies / Reviews

VAN WYK, J.H. 1993. God sorg en regeer. Die voorsienigheid van God in dogmatiese diskussie. Wetenskaplike Bydraes van die PU vir CHO.

Reeks A: Geesteswetenskappe nr. 79. 48 pp. Prys R9,12. ISBN 1-86822-147-4.

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Na aanleiding van die 'hewige diskussie' wat die belydenis aangaande die voorsienigheid van God onlangs in Suid-Afrika veroorsaak het, besin die skrywer krities oor die standpunte wat oor hierdie belydenis deur die eeue na vore getree het. Hy behandel kortliks die beskouing van Augustinus, Tomas, Calvyn, Bavinck, Barth, Moltmann en König. Vervolgens wys hy die volgende strominge paarsgewys af: monisme en dualisme, deïsme en panteïsme, fatalisme en kausalisme, futurisme en teopaschitisme, kwiëtisme en aktivisme, pessimisme en optimisme. Daarna evalueer hy oorspanne beklemtonings ten opsigte van: rede en geloof, ervaring en openbaring, Satan en Christus, Vader en Seun, liefde en oordeel, liefde en almag, menslike verantwoordelikheid en Goddelike soewereiniteit, protologie en eskatologie. Hy sluit af met 'n kort samevatting.

Die skrywer gee in hierdie werk blyke dat hy 'n ryp, belese, wetenskaplike vakman is wat baie goed tuis is in sy onderwerp. Hy beheers 'n ontsaglike hoeveelheid materie op bewonderenswaardige beknopte wyse. Hy omskryf moeilike sake op 'n eenvoudige, glashelder manier. Dit maak hierdie werk toeganklik ook vir wetenskaplik ontwikkelde lesers wat nie teologies geskool is nie.

Die aanleiding tot die ontstaan van hierdie werk is kennelik die artikels wat in 1992 in die openbare pers verskyn het – artikels waarin bekende Afrikaanse teoloë die standpunt bepleit het dat God nog nie heeltemal in beheer van sake is nie maar dat Hy dit wel eenmaal sal word. Daarmee word die leer van die voorsienigheid van God soos dit in die belydenisskrifte van die Afrikaanse Kerke bely word, ernstig aangetas. Na 'n kort maar effektiewe historiese ondersoek en 'n deeglike prinsipieel-kritiese besinning, kom Van Wyk tot die gebalanseerde konklusie dat die debat rondom die voorsienigheidsleer by alles wat afgewys moet word, tog bepaalde winspunte opgelewer het. Daar is byvoorbeeld opnuut besef dat die Skrif nie 'n statiese Godsbeeld bevat nie. In hulle beswaar teen so 'n Godsbeeld moet die skrywers van genoemde koerantartikels dus gelyk gegee word.

Maar dit is nie die Godsbeeld van die Skrif en die gereformeerde belydenisskrifte nie. Daarby stel Van Wyk tereg dat God onbegryplik is en dat 'n mens moet besef dat jy die misterie van die voorsienigheid van God nooit ten volle kan deur-

grond nie. Daarbenewens toon hy aan dat die leer van die voorsienigheid alleen tot sy reg kom as dit trinitaries verstaan word. Ten slotte is dit 'n aktiverende en hoopvolle belydenis – ook met die oog op die huidige situasie in Suid-Afrika. Ek haal aan:

God sál sy doel bereik. Sy koninkryk sál finaal en volkome kom. Die God wat tans alles beheer, sal dan stralend aan die lig tree. Die Seun sal dan die heerskappy aan die Vader terug gee (1 Kor 15:24), en God sál alles wees in almal (1 Kor 15:28) (p. 41).

Dit is eg-Skriftuurlike taal waarmee ek volmondig instem. Daarom wil ek die lees van hierdie werk van harte aanbeveel.

ROSSOUW, DEON. 1994. **Business Ethics: A Southern African Perspective.**
Johannesburg : Southern Book Publishers. 150 pp. Price R44.95. ISBN 1 86812 507 6.

Reviewer: Paul Styger, Dept. Economics, PU for CHE

The publication of this book coincides with the growing emphasis placed on business ethics by large South African corporates. It has become fashionable to include statements on business ethics in corporate statements and to promote the projection of corporate culture and image. The enormous increase in white collar crime has resulted in public demand for corporates to commit themselves to ethical conduct.

Business executives, employees, students and the public in general thus need guidance on ethical business behaviour.

Rossouw's book is divided into eight short chapters, but it can also be divided into three parts. The first three chapters introduce the issues of business ethics and the need for ethics. In chapter four the concept of a moral decision-making process is developed. Chapters five to eight discuss the practical issues of affirmative action, AIDS, insider training and Christian ethics.

In chapter one the reader is introduced to business ethics and its definition. Although the definition states that ethical conduct is to act morally, the author does not make it sufficiently clear that he perceives ethics and morality as synonyms. This approach leads to confusion in the sections of the book where the author develops his process for moral decision-making, and in the practical application of the process in the subsequent chapters where the discussion focuses on morality. In the last chapter ethics is discussed again and the reader who is new to this field will have difficulty in grasping the connection.

One of the main problems with the book surfaces in chapter one and is more evident in chapter two. Rossouw attempts to give a 'neutral' perspective of ethics. The result is that in an effort to 'please' everybody the book loses its value as a guide and help to businesspeople and students. In chapter one Rossouw gives an overview of attitudes to morality, business ethics in developing countries and in chapter two ten reasons are given for motivating the necessity of business ethics. The author provides no 'value' statements or commentary on these statements and the reader can thus easily deduce, for instance, that it is correct (moral) to steal when survival is at stake.

In chapter three (p. 38) Rossouw states that he intends using the social responsiveness approach for the reasons that he has stated – he has, however, not stated any reasons: he only clarifies so-called misunderstandings of the approach. By accepting the social responsiveness approach he unfortunately confuses the reader because he nullifies his own approach to moral behaviour – see for instance page 36:

The social responsiveness approach is not therefore, a moralistic approach to corporate responsibility but rather an approach based on the conviction that business should, in its own interest, participate in building and developing the social arena in which it has to operate.

On page 48 the line of argument reads: "... corporations should attempt to accommodate these demands as long as it makes economic sense to do so". Although the author tries to fit the 'practical' chapters (5-8) into the frame of his moral decision-making process, they do not fit because the main sub-theme remains that moral issues should be accommodated as long as they are in the interest of the business.

In chapter four his RIMS approach to moral decision-making is developed – an approach that is used as a framework for the discussion in chapters five to eight. Unfortunately this approach leads to further confusion. Step one of the RIMS approach states: "... Any moral argument that satisfies the following three criteria should be taken into consideration in the decision-making process: ..." (p. 66, 98). On page 100 the author states that: "In the first step of the RIMS approach the arguments have already been evaluated for their moral validity ...". If the first step is to evaluate moral validity then the consequence is that not only moral arguments but any argument should be taken into consideration and then be evaluated for its moral validity.

Chapters five to eight give the reader a brief view of the problems of affirmative action, AIDS, insider trading and the position of Christian ethics. Unfortunately the reader will not find any new perspectives on these issues. The application of the RIMS approach to affirmative action, AIDS and insider trading can be useful

for managers who want to reduce conflict in their organization, but it will not give much guidance to specific moral questions that need to be solved. As stated above, the main impression is that the RIMS approach will serve the conscience of business but in the final analysis businesses are serving their own interest.

The lay out and presentation of information do not always offer a logical example for students. Sometimes facts are listed in bullets (e.g. page 3, 39 and 123) and sometimes statements are part of the paragraph and indicated by "first, second, ..." (page 7 and 121). This lay out may be a complicating factor for students using this publication as a textbook. Another example occurs on page 35: The argument commences with a "firstly" in the text but is not followed by the customary "secondly" – the consequence is that the student will have to look for the "alternatively" in the middle of the paragraph. On pages 62 and 63 the theory of Habermas is discussed and although there are statements like: "According to Habermas....; Habermas proposes..... and Habermas denies... ", (p. 62) no reference is given to indicate the source. A bibliography of each consecutive chapter is given – a useful device if only one chapter is evaluated on its own. However, a comprehensive bibliography at the end of the publication as a whole would probably have been more useful.

In conclusion, the overriding impression is that of a book that disappoints. It seems as if the author primarily wanted to propagate his RIMS approach and this aim has not been achieved successfully and convincingly. If one wants to obtain an overview of recent literature on the subject of business ethics, this publication, written very fluently, can definitely be useful. If, however, the reader expects new perspectives and guidance on moral issues, he may be disappointed.

The Christian reader can also be easily offended by the 'neutral' treatment of the text and the relegation of Christianity to merely one of the religions – a perspective that is not rectified in the last chapter.