

the minor role of covenant in the New Testament where the stability of hellenistic groups needed different devices. Even if sacrifice is still valid language for expressing the meaning of Christ's death, it is still metaphorical language; it is *as if* a sacrifice were being made, a verdict were being given, a debt were being paid. Even if we could bring ourselves to learn the meaning of sacrifice as the author describes it (perhaps by substituting *thysia* for 'sacrifice' to keep our minds from wrong associations) what would it actually mean as I receive eucharistic bread and wine? He made *the* paschal sacrifice: how is that made relevant to me when I consume bread and wine? How am I identified with *him* (and what does 'identified' imply)? I seem to make no offering to God, nor am I involved in *thysia* (i.e. slaughter). I need a pattern of words to help me do what I ought to do—simply to do it because it is commanded (as the author implies) is not enough.

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HELPING THE HELPERS: SUPERVISION AND PASTORAL CARE
by John Foskett and David Lyall, *SPCK*, 1988, Pp. xi + 164. £5.95.

The increasing value attached in pastoral work to the insights of psychotherapy should by now have led many pastors (lay or clerical) to seek the same type of supervision or consultancy for their ministry as do professionals in other caring positions. But they don't. The time is right for this latest volume in the excellent *New Library of Pastoral Care*. But should such a volume be written for the supervisors (*in situ* or in the making) or for potential supervisees? That is a question I would have addressed before putting pen to paper, although it is not clear whether the authors have a particular readership in mind. Their constant use of illustrative material suggests that they are appealing to those who know little about the content of supervision. On the other hand the complications inherent in their examples suggest the need for the reader to have considerable experience of supervising or being supervised. What are missing are clearly stated principles and insights into the supervisory process: simple points (a,b,c, etc) drawn out of the examples which would illustrate for the potential supervisee the value of the exercise, and for the potential supervisor the dimensions of the task.

After the briefest of introductions (I felt the need for a much fuller explanation of the value and the necessity of supervision) the authors plunge us into the subject: I say 'plunge' because it felt to this reader that the supervisor in the first example moved in too quickly to personal material in the student's background. That is not my style, but even if it were, I am doubtful about the value of such a rapid introduction of the actual supervisory relationship to clergy who are often (despite their interest in the intimacy of pastoral ministry) initially scared of anyone getting too close. Indeed, in their commentary, the authors suggest the supervisor should have dealt with some of this personal material in a preliminary interview. But is it actually helpful to introduce mistakes in the supervisor's interventions when the reader requires at this early stage a straightforward account of what goes on? This is one point where I am not sure what reader the authors have in mind. As a supervisor I am glad to be shown such errors of judgement; as a potential supervisee I think I would like my meat a little

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more digestible!

After examining the different 'pulls' present in the supervisory process (for example, the supervisor, student, patient, and the employing institution—a valuable series of observations), Chapter Five, on 'Learning and Theology', appears to be central, numerically, in its length, and I imagine to the authors. Here admirable use is made of material from supervision sessions, enabling the authors to make important points about pastoral care as well as about supervision. But again, whom do they have in mind as readers, because the points about pastoral care will be valuable to those beginning in supervision, but rather obvious to most supervisors? Yet the style of the chapter, which interweaves the content of the original interview with the content of supervision, and with theological reflection, requires considerable mental agility on the part of the reader. Supervision is complicated because it proceeds on many levels at once, and these levels need to be clarified if supervision, and the inherent value of its different levels, are to be understood. If it is the beginner they have in mind, (and their points about pastoral care seem to indicate this), it would have been helpful to have summarised points, drawing out the separate strands in the example. Towards the end of the chapter the summary concentrates more upon what the student has learned on the placement than what the reader may have learned about supervision. I have to make the same comments about the next chapter, on triad and group supervision. The examples are useful, but the principles need to be more clearly drawn out (even numbered!) so that the reader is helped to look more at the process of supervision than at the (sometimes over-seductive) content of the pastoral work being shared in the group. The authors also need to watch somewhat high-sounding but mystifying phrases such as 'a lot of loose guilt lying about tripping everyone up'—what is 'loose guilt'?

The seventh chapter looks at some of the tensions present in pastoral care and counselling. It would have been more relevant if these tensions could have been described as part of the supervisor's dilemma—whether to stress one aspect or another in selecting how to comment. Recognising alternative approaches in pastoral care means the possibility of alternative interventions. The eighth chapter examines resistance to supervision, using four different models, including Kadushin's famous games and less well known Biblical analogies by Myler. The chapter concludes with the reflection process—the key in my mind to effective supervision, and attributable initially to Searles, not Mattinson. Had the authors drawn on Searles they could also have included his emphasis in supervision on what it is in the patient which prevents the therapist from being more effective, a useful way of understanding resistance. The final chapter covers practical matters, such as the verbatim, evaluation, the suitability of placements, types of placements and consultancy. This is a valuable chapter although oddly placed.

The authors are highly competent supervisors, but their book reflects upon the difficulty of writing about a process which is much more complex than pastoral care, because of its different levels; but which, simply because of its different levels, holds out the promise of such immense learning that it should be part of every pastor's working week.

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