

## Foreword

KARL BARTH'S DOCTRINES OF ELECTION AND ATONEMENT ARE SURELY among the greatest achievements of Christian theology. They also contain some of the deepest and most daring biblical interpretation ever written. And throughout his works Barth challenges his readers to explore, test, and if possible improve on how he understands Scripture. Matthias Grebe has taken up this challenge.

Dr Grebe both appreciatively sounds the depths of Barth's doctrines of election (or predestination) and atonement (or reconciliation) and also perceptively examines biblical passages that are central to them. The result is a fascinating variation on Barth's understanding of salvation that is based on Dr Grebe's own fresh interpretation of Scripture.

Nor is that all. In chapter five he goes beyond his Cambridge doctoral dissertation, that I had the privilege of supervising, to extend his discussion by relating it to the Holy Spirit and to ordinary life. Here Barth's radical (and rather neglected) theology of the Holy Spirit is drawn upon to face squarely such difficult issues as human freedom and the possibility of salvation for all. The distinctiveness in being Christian lies, as in Barth, not in Christians being the only ones to be saved but in the specificity of the gift of the Spirit to them.

This is a book that immerses readers in good theology and invites them further and deeper into theological, biblical wisdom on some of the most demanding issues in Christian thought.

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