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Reconstructing Practical Theology

The Impact of Globalization

Revd Dr John Reader, Anglican Priest and Rural Officer for the Diocese of Chester, UK and Associate Researcher with the William Temple Foundation

'This book succeeds in a highly original way in linking practical theology, politics and the nature of work. I recommend it highly.' – *Peter Sedgwick, St Michael's College Llandaff, UK*

'A much needed creative reformulation of pastoral and practical theology in the light of the impact of globalization on the religious field, but which also contributes to the development of a more ethically adequate reformulation of globalization.' – *John Atherton, University of Manchester, UK*

'John Reader argues that Christianity has been stifled by "zombie" concepts that are no longer either relevant or compelling, and issues a far-reaching manifesto for a rejuvenated practical theology more suited to an emerging globalized consciousness.' – *Elaine Graham, University of Manchester, UK*

This book argues that the discipline of practical theology needs to be re-shaped in the light of the impact of various influences created through the encounter with globalization. Essential to this is an engagement with the insights of other disciplines, e.g. sociology, politics, economics and philosophy. The content and authority of the Christian tradition is being challenged by the blurred encounters with more fluid lifestyles, alternative spiritualities and indeed other faiths as mediated through information technology and the breakdown of attachments to all forms of institutional life. Traditional ways of "belonging" and relating to places and structures are being eroded leaving the established patterns of ministry, worship, church organisation the province of an ageing population, while those who are now more inclined to search for "communities of interest" avoid being drawn into the practices and structures of formal religion. What is the future for practical theology in this rapidly changing context?

By examining the familiar concerns of the subject John Reader shows how it is in danger of operating with "zombie categories" – still alive but only just – and presents the possibilities for a reflexive spirituality grounded in the Christian tradition as a way into the future.

Contents: A changing world; A sense of place; Pastoral care and globalization; Worship, spirituality and globalization; Reflexive spirituality and globalization; Families, children and globalization; Work and the new economy; Practical theology and global ethics; Bibliography; Index.

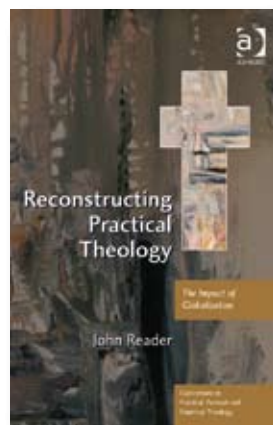
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