Walter R. Dickhaut. *Building a Community of Interpreters: Readers and Hearers as Interpreters*. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2013. 146 pages. $18.

Biblical interpretation is more than "The Bible says so." Walter Dickhaut, retired Fogg Professor of Sacred Rhetoric and Oratory at Bangor Theological Seminary, writes, "Everything that is said about what the Bible says is *interpretation*" (8). Interpretation depends on interpreters' identities, filters, lenses, and points of view. Addressing "those who listen to preaching" and "those who read and those who hear others read or speak" (xvii), Dickhaut defines interpretation as "an imaginative move (assignment of meaning) that reaches for what is not apparent" (113). When readers assign meaning, they create new stories beyond the writers' stories. Writing, reading, speaking, and hearing are creative acts, creations of new worlds that arise from "between the lines" and surpass the worlds of the texts' creators. Since interpreters vary, so do their interpretations.

Dickhaut divides his book into two parts. The first, consisting of six chapters, presents interpretation in terms of story creation and explores a few dynamics of this process of seeking and finding, a process shaped by filters and lenses. "A filter . . . sets aside or removes what the reader prefers not to engage, often without our awareness. . . . Lenses, on the other hand . . . focus the interpreter's attention on specific interests and features that aim to discover something new" (21-22). Lenses empower interpreters to discover "mystery, surprise, and expectation" in biblical texts (34). Angles of vision also shape interpretation, as the changing of locations on a beach adjusts the view. In this exploration of filters, lenses, and points of view, Dickhaut reflects on the hermeneutical circle that he learned in seminary and proposes that biblical interpretation is more like a spiral than a circle.

The second part, chapters seven through fourteen, presents more fully the lenses of mystery, surprise, and expectation, including three sermons, and concluding with three implications. The author desires to experience wonder when listening to a sermon but more frequently receives explanation. Preaching has largely lost the mystery of God, and Dickhaut speculates that this trend will increase as "our religious institutions continue to suffer loss of size, power, and identity" (49). Embracing mystery, however, can move us beyond rationalization and explanation. In addition to mystery, interpreters can find surprise in the Bible. "Surprise has an eschatological dimension; it is an interruption of our mundane routines by the intrusion of another reality" (63). Surprise can be difficult to perceive in texts when "institutional interests have neutered them" (65). The third lens is expectation, "an orientation, not to some other world outside this one, but to a new world within the one we presently inhabit" (89).

The book's most obvious strength is the creative writing that infuses the pages with life. Dickhaut sprinkles throughout the book inspiring words, both from himself and from other sources, and incorporates colorful images, such as a map overlay, a lighthouse, music, child development, herons, and storm waves.

Although the book is titled *Building a Community of Interpreters*, it reflects primarily on what interpretation is and how it functions and contains little about community building. It leaves me wanting more exploration of the communal dynamics of biblical interpretation and of the process of nurturing interpretive communities.

Homileticians and preachers can find inspiring reflections in this book, and it can teach other readers about the process of biblical interpretation. Lenses of mystery, surprise, and expectation can enable us to expand conversations instead of stopping them and to explore instead of settling issues (26).

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