THE HEART OF CHRISTIANITY

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Categories: Mission, Reviews

Not everyone likes reading from a computer screen. It isn't always easy on the eyes, and, let's face it, it can be fairly inconvenient setting up your desktop computer to read from a pdf on the train. But, there are lots and lots of really good books available in electronic format these days (some of ours are listed on the right) and many of these are FREE! This plethora of free books is one reason why I think people should seriously think about getting hold of a Kindle or an iPad (other ereaders and tablet computers are available).

One excellent example of a free electronic book is Schirrmachers World Mission: the Heart of Christianity. To be honest, I'd beÂ recommendingÂ you read this book even if it cost ten pounds or more, but as a free download, it is outstanding.

The book consists of a series of essays (listed below). This means that it doesn't read as a connective narrative, and some of the material is repeated (once you have read chapter 4, you can safely skip chapter 5). However, the content is thought provoking and well worth a read. If I have time, I'd like to look at some of the issues raised in more detail, but for the moment here are a couple of quotes on favourite topics of mine to get you thinking:

> *In Christianity everything is rooted in the Trinity. The center of salvationÂ history is that God sends Himself to earth and Jesus Himself sends HisÂ Church into all the world while the Holy Spirit at the same time is sent byÂ the Father and the Son to be the executor of world mission. (p.30)*
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> *In studying the New Testament discussions on the justification of missions, we discover that wherever we would have quoted the Great Commission, the apostles referred to the Old Testament. The Great CommissionÂ is theÂ fulfilmentÂ of the Old Testament, a signal that the long-announcedÂ plan was now to be set into action. The Letter to the Romans, particularlyÂ Chapter 15 is an obvious example. (p.34)*

The full list of essays is:

1. Romans as a Charter of World Mission: A Lesson in the Relation of Systematic Theology and Missiology (1993)
2. â€˜Missio Deiâ€™ â€“ God, the First Missionary (1994)
3. Biblical Texts on Mission â€“ Seven Lessons
4. Biblical Reasons for Evangelical Missions: 31 Propositions
5. An Evangelical View of Missions â€“ A Summary (1995)
6. Jesus as Master Educator
7. Social Responsibility in the New Testament Church according to Acts 6
8. The Trinity in the Old Testament and Dialogue with Jews and Muslims (1991)
9. Postmillennialism and Missions

10. Great Missiologists
11. Great Commission
12. The Gospels as Evidence of the Necessity for Cultural Adaptation in the Missionary Proclamation
13. About the Author