The second objection is, “Why didn’t Lewis drop a hint somewhere—perhaps even on his deathbed or in a will?” To summarize Ward in a sentence: “he evidently considered the planetary secret to be something that should be won, not given away.”

Whether Ward overstates his case at times is arguable, but that he has made a good argument is incontestable. Lewis was a medievalist, and he often inveighed against the meaninglessness that surrounds modern cosmology. Even if the medieval cosmology is “not true” it conveys a thickness that “space” never can. The symbolism certainly smells of Lewis, not to mention his mentors Milton and Dante.

Recently at an Inklings Conference I asked the scholars around my lunch table what they thought of the book. They all agreed that the book makes a good case. “Whether it’s ultimately right,” mused one professor, “we’ll never really know for sure.”

—Peter Schuurman


In the years since he took leave of the University of Durham, Ward—now Emeritus Professor of Modern History—has set a torrid pace in the production of materials bearing on European Christianity in the eighteenth century. While his earlier career had been marked by the release of such materials as *Religion and Society in England: 1790–1850* and the coediting of *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 19 (1990), his retirement years have unleashed a spate of books that one can only assume were long in the percolator.

*Early Evangelicalism: A Global Intellectual History* completes a trilogy begun with the 1992 release of *The Protestant Evangelical Awakening* (hereafter *PEA*). The latter work is still the best treatment available, demonstrating that the upsurge of Protestant religion we associate with the United Kingdom and New England in the 1730s was in fact a movement whose chronological origins lay in central Europe, and whose reach extended from central Europe directly to America’s middle colonies as part of the wider fabric of a movement that also included the better-known Anglophone developments. In that 1992 work, Ward demonstrated a mastery of the eighteenth-century German materials on the basis of which his expansive interpretation could be offered. He returned to this era again with the 1996 release of another study of European religious history: *Christianity under the Ancien Régime, 1648–1789*. The volume under review here, *Early Evangelicalism* (hereafter *EE*) can best be appreciated when considered as a focus on the Christian thought of the leaders who figured prominently in the trans-Atlantic movements he has earlier described. Earlier, he masterfully sketched out *movements* in various locales in Europe and early America; now he puts under the lens the leading *ideas* that he finds characterized the movements’ leaders.
While this progression onward from 1992 certainly stands on a sound rationale, at the same time it makes hefty demands on the reader by the time it reaches its 2006 denouement. A reasonably informed reader could without too much difficulty follow the argument of the early work even in its complex demonstration that it had been the late seventeenth century Counter-Reformation persecution of the descendants of the Hussites that had occasioned a spiritual reawakening, affecting the young most of all, and that this awakening had spurred the migration to Saxony and the rebirth of the *Unitas Fratrum* movement presided over by Zinzendorf. This, the earliest of all manifestations of the eighteenth-century awakening, had been Central European, and it had had its own dissemination beyond Saxony into Western Europe, the United Kingdom, the middle colonies of early America, and numerous global missionary ventures. The breathtaking sweep Ward achieved in 1992 has required us all to think about eighteenth-century movements more expansively. The 2006 volume seems, on the other hand, less for the reasonably informed reader; it appears to assume that the earlier volume (*PEA*) has been well digested and that we have been left craving for more.

The perceived value of this 2006 *EE* volume will therefore be determined by the level of readiness and expectation the reader brings to the task. Without the background of the 1992 volume, the English reader of *EE* will find himself awash in the analyses of many Christian leaders in the period following 1670 about which he knows nothing—even to the point of admitting that their names are unrecognized. While on the one hand, we find here welcome analyses of the better-known Spener, Zinzendorf, Wesley, and Edwards, one must be prepared also to be introduced to the ideas of Oetingen, Lavater, Swedenborg, and Jung-Stilling. Many a reader will find that his or her lack of prior familiarity with such names and personalities makes Ward’s treatment of them seem to be of very limited usefulness. The specialist reader, however, who is actively seeking information about the leading ideas of such eighteenth-century Christian notables will perceive (correctly) that he has stumbled upon a gold mine. Once more, in *EE*, Ward has read his German sources as has no other writer in English on these subjects.

A few hard questions linger after reading *EE*. Readers standing within even broad confessional Protestantism will have reason to wonder at the inclusivity of Ward’s selection and treatment of leading persons. Of course it is clearer to us than it may have been to eighteenth-century observers that the likes of Swedenborg and Jung-Stilling were crossing the boundaries of Protestant orthodoxy; we after all benefit by the prior judgments made by our forebears. However, with that granted, it still needs to be admitted that Protestant evangelicals in the period under review were more capable than Ward seems to acknowledge of determining which movements in their time were “outré” and not to be trusted. All this is to say that Ward’s treatment
of the thought of transatlantic evangelical leaders has almost the sociologist’s expansive embrace. It is not that Ward is disinterested in theological questions and a poor judge of what was wholesomely Christian; it is that he displays the chronicler’s intention to tell all, and with little differentiation.

Given my own research interests, I will opt for the gold mine verdict about EE. For those wishing to begin to read in-depth about eighteenth-century religious movements, it is Ward’s earlier PEA that represents the better entry into the subject.

—Ken Stewart


This volume, the fruit of a Calvin Studies colloquium at the University of Notre Dame in April 2007, brings together eight papers on the relationship among Calvin, the Reformed tradition, and Roman Catholicism. In the preface, Lawrence Cunningham writes that this volume can be helpful “to get beyond centuries of polemic, apologetics, and *parti pris*” to more useful “conversation” and “dialogue” (7).

In his introduction to the volume, Randall Zachman, as editor of the volume, outlines three reasons why this collection of essays is important: first, this volume helps understand the degree to which Calvin might be seen as a “Catholic” theologian; second, it better understands the sixteenth-century context in which Calvin worked than that scholarship that considers Calvin in “silo-like” fashion (i.e., on his own); finally, it highlights that “a good deal of the best scholarship on Calvin has been done by Roman Catholics” (10).

The volume begins with a pair of essays that sets the relationship of Calvin and Roman Catholicism in its historical context. Irena Backus writes about the French Roman Catholic biographers of Calvin in the decades and centuries after his death. Biographies of Bolsec, Masson, and others evidence changing understandings of historical criticism, but are also sources of apologetic material for later generations of Roman Catholics and, interestingly, Protestants (58). A second historical essay, written by George Tavard, seeks to better understand those French Catholics who embraced justification by grace through faith, yet remained faithful to the historic episcopacy—those whom Calvin labelled “Nicodemites.” Tavard argues against Calvin that these persons ought not to be considered cowardly “Nicodemites,” but rather sincere evangelical Roman Catholics.

The next three chapters broaden the scope of study to that of the relationship between the Reformed and Roman Catholics in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In her essay, Karen Spierling notes that despite Roman Catholics being written out of many histories of Geneva, they still had a significant presence in the city. Further, she notes that the clear distinction between Reformed and Roman Catholic made by the